Cash and Food Transfers in Swaziland

An evaluation of Save the Children's Emergency Drought Response, 2007/08

Stephen Devereux [1]

Paul Jere [2]

June 2008

[1] Centre for Social Protection, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton, UK.

[2] PJ Development Consulting Company, Lilongwe, Malawi.

Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

List of Boxes

Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ATM	Automated Teller Machine
CFSAM	Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission
CHH	child–headed household
CSO	Central Statistical Office
DFID	Department for International Development
E	Emalangeni (Swaziland's currency, pegged at parity to the South African Rand)
EDR	Emergency Drought Response
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FDP	Final Distribution Point
FGD	focus group discussion
FHH	female–headed household
HDI	Human Development Index
HHH	household head
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
kcal	kilocalorie
kg	kilogram
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MHH	male–headed household
MT	Metric Ton
NDMA	National Disaster Management Agency
NDTF	National Disaster Task Force
NGO	non-governmental organisation
OVC	orphaned and vulnerable children
RHVP	Regional Hunger and Vulnerability Programme
SC	Save the Children
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAC	Vulnerability Assessment Committee
WFP	World Food Programme

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following for their support during this evaluation:

Save the Children Swaziland: Rosie Jackson (Emergency Programme Manager), Thamary Silindza (M & E Officer), Nathi Vilakati (Programmes Coordinator), Dianna Ribeiro (Team Coordinator), Dumisani Mnisi (Director).

Save the Children UK: Alex Rees (Food Security and Livelihood Adviser), Matthew Wingate (Emergencies Advisor).

Choice Ginindza (Statistician, Swaziland Central Statistical Office), for invaluable assistance with data analysis.

Donors

The implementation of the project was made possible through the financial support of the Department for International Development of the UK government.

The project evaluation was funded by them together with the United Nations World Food Programme and Regional Hunger and Vulnerability Programme for Southern Africa.

Executive Summary

The Emergency Drought Response (EDR) project introduced cash transfers as a response to the food crisis of 2007/08 in Swaziland. Some 6,200 households (close to 40,000 people) in two severely affected regions received a half ration of food (maize, beans and oil) and the equivalent in cash, every month for six months from November 2007 until the harvest of April 2008. A further 1,400 households in the same regions who were unable to open bank accounts (usually because they could not secure ID documents in time) received full food rations, and served as a 'control group' for comparing project impacts between cash transfer recipients and food aid recipients.

The project was well designed and well implemented. The humanitarian objective of ensuring access to food for drought-affected families was successfully achieved. Cash transfers were delivered on time and in full throughout the project period. The cash payment was fixed at a level intended to allow recipients to purchase a half-ration of food (maize, beans and oil) for each household member, to supplement the half-ration that was delivered in-kind. Food prices in local markets were monitored monthly and averaged 21% higher than the cash transferred, but the impact was muted by a series of additional transfers paid by Save the Children: lump-sum grants in the first and final months to protect assets and promote livelihoods, monthly supplements for non-food necessities and transport to cash pay-points.

A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system generated useful data before and during the intervention. These included a market feasibility study and baseline survey (pre-implementation), and monthly monitoring of disbursements (cash and food), markets (prices and availability), and households (income, expenditure, assets and diets). A final evaluation survey was implemented in May 2008 (post-implementation). The sample of 1,784 households included 1,225 'cash plus food' recipients, 491 'food only' recipients' and 68 child-headed households, who also received cash and food but were treated as a separate category (being minors they received their cash transfers directly, not through a Post Office or bank account).

Although the EDR was primarily a humanitarian intervention, cash transfers were envisaged as a mechanism that could contribute to breaking the deepening dependency of rural families on food aid. The EDR therefore served as a pilot for introducing cash transfers as a response to acute (and possibly also chronic) food insecurity in Swaziland. Nine hypotheses about cash transfers were tested; the key findings are as follows.

1. ***Cash improves nutrition and dietary diversity:*** Cash transfers were unconditional, yet all recipients spent some of this cash on purchasing food for consumption. Cash recipients spent almost double on food than 'food only' recipients, and purchased a wider variety of food groups, as evidenced by consistently higher dietary diversity scores among children in 'cash plus food' households. Self-reported hunger fell immediately after cash transfers were introduced (from 70% to 22% of 'cash plus food' recipients), but less dramatically among 'food only' recipients (from 79% to 61%). This positive impact on household food security was sustained throughout the project period, with fewer households that received cash transfers reporting hunger than those that received only food aid. *Hypothesis #1 is accepted*.

2. ***Cash enables purchases of essential non-food items:*** Apart from purchasing food, EDR cash transfers were also allocated to a range of non-food needs, from groceries (99% of cash recipients, 7% of total spending), to health (58% of recipients, 2% of spending), to education (38% of recipients, 7% of spending), to clothing (39% of recipients, 3% of spending), to debt repayment (31% of recipients) to transport (7% of total spending). Cash was especially useful for meeting seasonal needs, such as school fees that are payable in January. 'Food only' recipients spent less on all these categories, and were forced to deplete their assets to raise the necessary cash. *Hypothesis #2 is accepted*.

3. ***Cash is invested in assets and livelihoods:*** After food, livelihoods was the second largest category of household expenditure (16% of total household spending). Many cash recipients

invested in their farm (eg buying fertiliser) or business (eg retailing, or selling cooked food). Monitoring of harvests and business enterprises some months after the EDR intervention would tell us whether these production and income gains attributable to the cash transfers are sustained. Some cash transfers were saved as working capital, or as security against future shocks, and membership of savings clubs doubled. Cash recipients also protected their assets against depletion to meet food and non-food needs more effectively than did 'food only' recipients. Although both groups raised cash through asset sales, cash recipients also purchased assets using their cash transfers, including livestock, farm implements and household goods. Extrapolation from survey data suggests that more than 650 households acquired chickens using cash transfers, more than 200 households bought goats, about 375 bought hoes, and more than 150 bought radios. *Hypothesis #3 is accepted*.

4. ***Local markets are strengthened by cash injections:*** In August 2007 the market feasibility survey predicted that cash transfers would cause food price inflation of 5-7% in local markets. In fact, food prices rose much more than this. The cost of a half ration in monitored markets peaked in January 2008 at 37% higher than when the baseline survey was conducted in October 2007, but the evidence is inconclusive as to what proportion of this was attributable to the cash transfers. Some traders opportunistically increased their prices on cash pay-days. It seems most likely that EDR cash transfers had negligible impact on aggregate food prices at national level, but a (temporary) inflationary effect on prices at the local level. On the other hand, stocks of food and non-food commodities in shops and local markets did increase, confirming that supplies were responsive to increased demand. Purchases of these items by cash recipients certainly contributed to an income multiplier effect, but its magnitude cannot be quantified with the available data. *Hypothesis #4 is neither accepted nor rejected*.

5. ***Harmful coping strategies are avoided:*** Drought-affected households in rural Swaziland adopted the full range of 'coping strategies' observed in food crises elsewhere in Africa – rationing food, borrowing food or cash, migrating for work, selling livestock or other assets, and withdrawing children from school. There were no statistically significant differences in coping strategy adoption rates between 'cash plus food' and 'food only' households: 68% of cash recipients and 67% of 'food only' recipients rationed consumption, for instance. One explanation is that all EDR households were exposed to breaks in the food aid pipeline. If cash transfers had been increased, or if pure 'cash only' transfers had been delivered, these households would have been better protected. More severe strategies such as withdrawing children from school (4%) and selling assets (2-3%) were adopted by small minorities of households. Nonetheless, the similarity across cash and food recipients implies that cash and food transfers were equally (in)effective in protecting families against the need to adopt austerity measures that could undermine their future livelihoods. *Hypothesis #5 is rejected*.

6. ***Caring practices for children improve:*** There is insufficient empirical evidence on this topic, which requires a special in-depth study. *Hypothesis #6 is neither accepted nor rejected*.

7. ***Women are empowered by receiving cash:*** Women were registered as cash recipients and bank account-holders in 90% of households receiving cash transfers, as a deliberate strategy to empower women and ensure that cash was used responsibly on meeting the basic needs of women and vulnerable children. Concerns that disbursing cash to women in male-headed households could result in gender-based violence proved to be unfounded: most men accept that women spend cash sensibly *("our wives know what to buy").* The main challenge to this decision at the intra-household level was not gendered but 'generational'. Many children, knowing that the transfer was calculated at E30 per person, demanded their 'share' of the money given to their mother or carer, even though the intention was that the cash should be used to benefit the household as a whole. *Hypothesis #7 is accepted*.

8. ***Cash delivery systems are appropriate, timely, safe, well targeted and scaleable:*** The delivery of cash transfers raises a number of 'customer care' issues, including targeting, accessibility, timeliness and security at cash collection points. The EDR project performed well on all of these issues. Cash transfers were delivered in full to all recipients on specified dates with no 'pipeline breaks' (unlike food aid), queuing times were long initially (over 4 hours) but fell (to under 2 hours) as efficiency improved, transport costs to pay-points were

reimbursed, there were no reports of serious security problems, bank and Post Office staff treated cash recipients courteously and SC staff were always on hand to provide assistance (eg in using bank ATMs) and to listen to complaints. Many cash recipients switched from the Post Office to ATMs with little difficulty, and many expressed their intention to continue using the ATM after the project ended. A very small number of unpleasant incidents (eg verbal or physical abuse, drunkenness) were reported. On this evidence, there is no reason why cash transfers delivered through Post Offices and/or bank ATMs, could not be scaled up to national level in Swaziland, either in future emergencies or as a predictable social protection measure. *Hypothesis #8 is accepted.*

9. ***Beneficiaries are more sympathetic to cash transfers than before:*** The pre-intervention market feasibility and baseline surveys both recorded an overwhelming preference for food aid among rural households. Given a hypothetical choice, 60% of respondents in the market study (July 2007) chose food, 23% chose cash and 17% chose half food, half cash. In the post-intervention final evaluation survey (May 2008), this question produced very different responses: only 6% chose food, just 2% chose cash, and 91% chose half cash, half food. This finding is ambiguous: pure cash transfers were less preferred after the intervention than before (down from 23% to 6%), but the preference for cash or 'cash plus' increased from less than half to almost all respondents (up from 40% to 97%). This represents an endorsement of cash transfers as at least part of the solution to future food crises. *Hypothesis #9 is accepted.*

Recommendations mainly take the form of building on success – applying lessons learned to future programming contexts – rather than improving or correcting errors. These lessons include:

1. mainstreaming cash transfer procedures into disaster preparedness systems
2. producing a manual for delivering cash transfers in future social protection programming
3. adapting beneficiary identification systems, or implementing national ID registration drives
4. using mobile banking services to deliver cash to isolated and physically vulnerable people
5. building adequate time and support for financial literacy into future cash programming
6. adjusting cash payment levels every disbursement, to track food price fluctuations
7. monitoring the profitability and sustainability of businesses financed with EDR cash transfers
8. monitoring the use of bank accounts, ATM facilities and financial services after the project
9. monitoring the social impacts of cash transfers, both positive and negative
10. devising specifically targeted social protection measures for child–headed households.

Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the Emergency Drought Response (EDR) project by locating its genesis in both the food crisis of 2007/08 and the broader context of food insecurity and vulnerability in rural Swaziland. The scope of this evaluation and its methodology are also described.

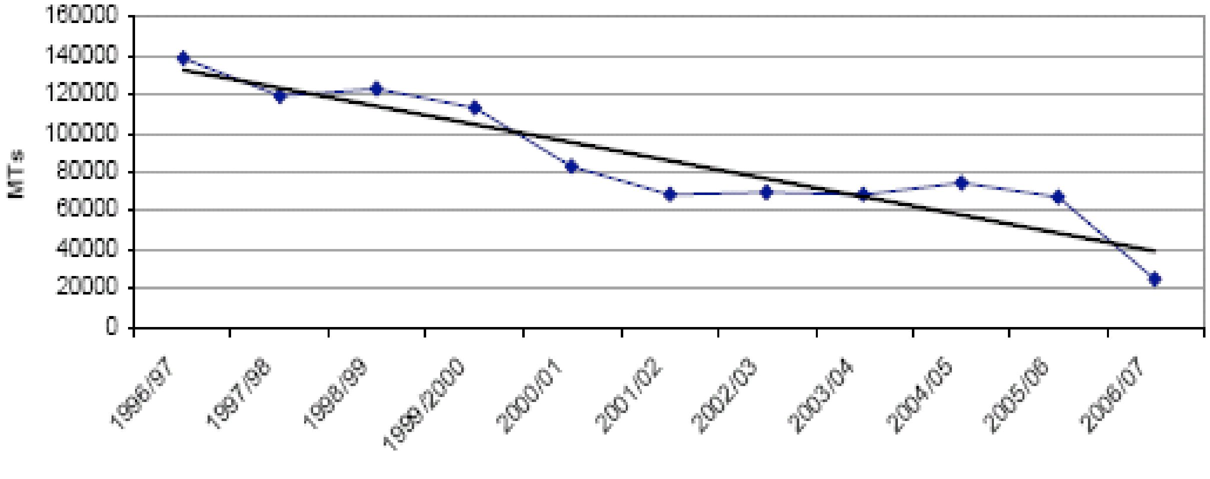
1.1 Project description

The Emergency Drought Response project was implemented by Save the Children Swaziland in partnership with Save the Children UK, as a humanitarian response to the national food crisis of 2007/08. A severe agricultural drought (an extended dry spell during the growing season) caused a 60% drop in national maize production, to the lowest harvest on record. According to the Swaziland Vulnerability Assessment Committee (Swazi VAC), the resulting food insecurity was concentrated in the Lowveld. But drought also affected the Highlands, where crop and income losses were compounded by forest fires that prompted the government to declare a national emergency on 1 August 2007.

Although the food crisis was triggered by shocks – drought and forest fires – it is important to put the crisis into the broader context of vulnerability in rural Swaziland. The national poverty rate currently stands at 43%, 76% of which is rural (UNDP 2005). HIV–prevalence, estimated at 26% of the adult population and 49% among women aged 25-29,.is believed to be the highest rate in the world (DHS 2007). There are approximately 69,000 orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC), largely AIDS-related. HIV and AIDS have been largely responsible for reversals in human development gains that Swaziland enjoyed until the 1990s. Between 1975 and 1995, Swaziland's Human Development Index (a composite measure that combines life expectancy, school enrolment, adult literacy and income per capita) improved steadily from 0.53 to 0.64, but in a single decade the HDI fell back to 0.55 by 2005 (UNDP, 2008: 3).

Smallholder agriculture provides a living for the majority of rural families, but crop yields are low (less than 2 MT per hectare in the Lowveld in a good rainfall year, compared to 5-8 MT per hectare on Title Deed Land in the Highlands) and declining. The collapse in maize production in the 2006/07 season came on top of a trend decline in maize production over the past decade. The 2007 harvest of 26,000 MT was less than half the 2006 harvest of 64,000 MT, but it was less than one-fifth the 1997 harvest of 139,000 MT (Figure 1). This implies that chronic food insecurity is rising and that vulnerability to even moderate production shocks is likely to intensify in future years, raising questions about appropriate policies and strategies either to reverse this decline or to reduce dependence on agriculture-based livelihoods. It also raises questions about appropriate safety nets or social protection responses, in both emergency and non-emergency years.

Figure 1 Trends in maize production in Swaziland, 1996/97 to 2006/07



Source: FAO/WFP (2007: 12)

The Government of Swaziland and the United Nations responded to the food deficit by launching a food aid distribution to 450,000 people (approximately 40% of the national population), every month for the duration of the lean period (October 2007 to March 2008). Food parcels comprising 12 kilograms of maize, 1.8 kilograms of beans (pulses) and 750 ml of cooking oil were distributed by 7 NGOs. The food aid programme was coordinated by the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) and the World Food Programme (WFP), which operated two parallel pipelines. Both food pipelines experienced disruptions in the early months of 2008 that impacted negatively on food (and cash) recipients, as will be seen.

The Emergency Drought Response (EDR) project complemented the Government and United Nations response to the food crisis, but it introduced a new modality to humanitarian relief in Swaziland. Instead of the full food ration, the EDR transferred a 50% food ration, plus cash equivalent to 50% of the nationally agreed food basket, every month for six months. (In this report, these households are called 'cash plus food' recipients.) Additionally, these households received once-off lump-sum payments at the start and end of the intervention, "to protect and/or promote livelihood activities" (Save the Children Swaziland, January 2008: 7). Small amounts were added to the monthly cash transfer to cover transport costs (to the post office or bank ATM) and non-food household needs. Payments were made into personal bank accounts that were opened for adult-headed project participants, and were disbursed on designated pay-days initially through local Post Office branches, with the option of using Standard Bank Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) being introduced later. The Emergency Drought Response project was funded by the British Government's Department for International Development (DFID).

The main achievements of the EDR project can be summarised as follows:

1. Cash and food were distributed to 6,223 households (37,000 people) in Lubombo region (Siphofaneni and Sithobela) and Shiselweni region (Gege and Maseyisini) for 6 months.
2. A further 1,427 households in the same constituencies received food only (full food rations).
3. 6,076 people had bank accounts opened for them.
4. The remaining 147 households were child-headed and received cash and food through direct distribution.
5. About 4,000 people were registered for national identity cards (needed for opening bank accounts).
6. All cash recipients received useful training, including:
   (1) Accessing financial services, investment and savings;
   (2) "Bank accounts: Know your rights";
   (3) Making a will, and Inheritance rights.

1.2 Scope of evaluation

This final evaluation of the Emergency Drought Response project has two broad objectives. The first is to establish whether the intervention achieved its immediate humanitarian goal ("to assess the impact of the intervention on beneficiaries' ability to deal with the current food and income crisis"). The second is to draw lessons on the effectiveness of cash transfers as a modality in future emergencies in Swaziland ("to inform humanitarian organisations and government as to the appropriateness of cash transfers in relief settings").

The terms of reference established "four important functions" of this evaluation – to determine:

(a) the extent to which desired changes have occurred;

(b) whether the project is responsible for such changes;

(c) the impact of the cash and food intervention as compared to the food only intervention;

(d) the efficiency and effectiveness of the process used in the cash and food intervention as compared to the process of the food only intervention (including the cost of each intervention).

Additionally, the EDR 'Monitoring and Evaluation Plan' (SC Swaziland, November 2007) set out nine 'hypotheses' to be tested, by comparing outcomes between two groups of households: those who received cash plus food transfers, and those who received only food transfers.

"Impact of cash and food:

1. The deliveries of cash enable families and children to be better nourished as measured by a more diverse diet
2. Cash enables families to buy essential non-food items which strengthen food security.
3. Cash is used to invest in assets and other relevant forms for recovery of livelihoods demonstrating an increase in income.
4. Local markets are strengthened by the injection of cash – including labour markets – and inflation for core items does not rise to worrying levels.
5. Harmful coping strategies are avoided.
6. Caring practices for children (e.g. breastfeeding, complementary feeding, time for caring) improve as a result of the intervention.
7. Women are empowered by receiving cash.

Process of cash and food:

8. Overall the systems to deliver cash were appropriate, timely, safe, well targeted and could be scaled up.
9. Beneficiaries are more sympathetic to cash transfers than was demonstrated at the time of the market feasibility study."

1.3 Evaluation methodology

The EDR project included a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) component, which generated much data that was drawn upon to compile this report, and informed the design of the final evaluation survey tools. The M&E system included the following methods and outputs:

Pre-project:	1. Market feasibility study (July 2007)
	2. Baseline survey (November 2007)
During the project:	3. Monthly monitoring (November 2007 to April 2008)
	4. Focus group discussions (January and March 2008)
Post-project:	5. Final evaluation survey (May 2008)

Below we briefly review each of these M&E methods.

1. Market feasibility study

A study was commissioned in July 2007 to consider the feasibility and appropriateness of cash-based interventions as a response to the 2007 harvest failure in Swaziland. The analysis focused on the functioning of markets in two geographical areas, especially the market for cereals. A total of 490 households and 235 traders were interviewed, in the two EDR project areas of Lubombo and Shiselweni (de Matteis, 2007).

2. Baseline survey

A baseline survey was conducted in Lubombo and Shiselweni in October 2007, before the first distribution of cash and food transfers under the EDR project. This included a questionnaire survey of 1,261 households (797 'cash plus food' recipients and 464 'food only' recipients), and market surveys of basic food and non-food commodities (prices and availability). The baseline survey provided pre-intervention data on several relevant indicators about households, children and markets in the project areas, including: household demographics; food consumption, assets and expenditure levels; infant and child dietary intake; child care practices; and the state of local markets and prices (SC Swaziland, January 2008).

3. Monthly monitoring

Five rounds of data collection were conducted between November 2007 and April 2008, within one week of the first five distributions of cash and food. (Monitoring following the final distribution in May 2008 was subsumed by the final evaluation survey.) Monitoring served several purposes, including: “to compare the progress of project implementation against the set objectives, to make appropriate changes to project implementation based on the analysis and to enable project evaluation” (SC Swaziland, February 2008: 2). Table 1 lists the main indicators monitored, data collection methods and sample for each component of the monthly monitoring exercise.

Table 1 Monthly monitoring matrix

Indicator monitored	Data collection methods	Sample
Cash and food distribution	1. Monitoring forms 2. Inventory log books 3. Supply log books 4. Post Office records 5. Standard Bank records	
Household income and expenditure	Household Expenditure Monitoring Forms	210 households, randomly selected, stratified by area and modality: • 70 Lowveld food only recipients • 70 Lowveld cash + food recipients • 70 Timber Highlands cash + food recipients
Household asset ownership	Household Expenditure Monitoring Forms	
Children’s dietary intake (dietary diversity, quantity and quality of food intake)	Household Expenditure Monitoring Forms	
Market prices and availability (key food and non-food commodities and services)	Price monitoring forms	1 supermarket, 1 grocery shop, 1 butchery, 2 market vendors, randomly selected from each of the 8 study areas

Specific operational reasons for monitoring each indicator were explained in the ‘Monitoring and Evaluation Plan’ (SC Swaziland/WFP, November 2007):

- Cash and food distribution: “If less than 90% of the expected households receive the food and/or cash then the Field Officer must take appropriate action”
- Household income and expenditure: To track the sources of income and spending priorities of participating households during the project period
- Household assets: “To determine whether the intervention (food and/or cash distribution) affects the levels of key assets owned by the households”
- Children’s dietary intake: “To determine whether the intervention (food and/or cash distribution) affects the nutritional adequacy of the diet fed to children under 36 months”
- Market prices: “To ascertain whether the increased availability of food and/or the infusion of cash into the communities affects the market prices of specific goods and services”.

Process monitoring also included information from Standard Bank on the maintenance and use of bank accounts. This included numbers of account-holders using ATM facilities to access their cash, what proportion of cash transfer payments were withdrawn in full, whether deposits were made, how many transactions were recorded each month. To respect customer confidentiality, this information was not attributable to individual account-holders.

4. Focus group discussions

Save the Children's M&E team collected qualitative data to supplement and triangulate the quantitative monitoring data. Qualitative monitoring included focus group discussions (FGDs) every second month with men and women, and with cash recipients and non-recipients, in communities located in the project areas. A first set of 24 focus groups was facilitated in January 2008. Topics discussed included: EDR targeting and selection criteria; ease of cash and food collection; attitudes towards cash and food transfers; impacts of the project on children; impacts of the project at household and community levels; and decision making within households on the use of cash and food transfers. A second set of 20 focus groups was facilitated in March 2008. Topics discussed in this round included: implementation of the project; impacts of cash and food distribution on gender and inter-generational relations; uses of food; spending of cash transfers. A third and final set of focus group discussions was facilitated during the final evaluation in May 2008, these included discussions in each region with Relief Committees, cash recipients using the Post Office, cash recipients using bank ATMs, and 'food only' recipients.

5. Final evaluation survey

The final evaluation survey was conducted in May 2008, in both agro-ecological zones (Lowveld and Highveld), llivelihood zones (Lowveld Cattle and Maize, and Timber Highlands) and regions (Lubombo and Shiselweni) where the EDR project was implemented, and in all 4 constituencies or *Tinkhundlas* (Siphofaneni and Sithobela in Lubombo; Gege and Maseyisini in Shiselweni).

A total of 1,784 households were interviewed, 20.9% of the 7,650 households that received cash and/or food transfers from the Emergency Drought Response intervention. Since the primary focus of the evaluation was to assess the impacts and effectiveness of EDR cash transfers, the sample was weighted towards households that received cash. Two-thirds of the sample were 'cash plus food' recipients (1,225/1,784 =69%) – this was the 'treatment group'. Slightly less than one-third of the sample were 'food only' recipients (491/1,784 =28%) – this was the 'control group'. A small number of child-headed households were also interviewed (68/1,784 =4%), because the EDR project had a specific objective of providing assistance to child-headed households (Table 2). These households received cash and food transfers, but were analysed separately because of their particular characteristics (for example, they did not use either the Post Office or Standard Bank ATMs, but were given their cash transfers directly).

Table 2 Sample size and composition, final evaluation survey (May 2008)

Region	Cash + Food	Food Only	Child-headed	Total
Lubombo	743 (41.6%)	301 (16.9%)	26 (1.5%)	1,070 (60.0%)
Shiselweni	482 (27.0%)	190 (10.7%)	42 (2.4%)	714 (40.0%)
Total	**1,225 (68.7%)**	**491 (27.5%)**	**68 (3.8%)**	**1,784 (100%)**

The overwhelming majority of respondents were female (1,497/1,784 =83.9%), with less than one in five respondents being male (287/1,784 =16.1%). This reflected the project design choice of nominating women as direct recipients of EDR cash and food transfers, whether or not they were the household head.

In terms of demographically vulnerable groups, our surveyed households included 6,389 children under 15 years old, 2,513 single-or double-parent orphans, 745 people over 60 years old, and 24 individuals receiving a disability grant. Extrapolating from our sample to all 7,650 beneficiary households, this implies that the direct beneficiaries of the EDR included approximately 27,000 children, 11,000 orphans, 3,000 older persons, and 100 people with disabilities.

Chapter 2 Process Evaluation

Several issues in the design and implementation of the EDR project are examined in this chapter: design choices (payment modalities, payment levels, supplementary payments), targeting (geographical coverage, household selection, gender), delivery mechanisms (cash, food), 'customer care' (transport, security, etc.), efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

2.1 Design

2.1.1 Payment modalities

Food aid has become institutionalised in Swaziland in the last decade, as a response not only to food crises but also to chronic food insecurity, the logic being that food aid addresses directly the immediate nutritional needs of hungry people. Food assistance programmes are managed by the National Disaster Task Force (NDTF) and the World Food Programme (WFP), with several NGOs involved in food aid distribution at the community level. With approximately one quarter of the national population receiving food aid every year in recent years (FAO/WFP, 2007: 6), there are fears that dependency on food aid has become endemic. Even the King shares this concern – in two speeches during 2008 he argued that people are responsible for themselves, and families should feed themselves if they can. Save the Children's rationale for introducing cash transfers was partly an attempt to explore an alternative modality to food aid in Swaziland.

> "Food distribution has been the standard response to humanitarian crises in recent years, and whilst it has demonstrated some success in meeting immediate nutritional needs for many of the most vulnerable, it does little to meet longer term nutritional needs (e.g. micro-nutrients), protect or promote livelihoods and has limited the involvement of affected households in identifying their own solutions to the causes of these crises" (SC Swaziland, January 2008: 7).

Questions have also been raised about whether food distributions are the most appropriate response to chronic poverty and food insecurity. In most years Swaziland imports 50-60% of its national food consumption requirements, mainly from South Africa, and poor rural households are accessing more and more of their food through markets as food production per capita continues to decline. A key factor in making the case for cash transfers is the capacity of markets to respond positively to demand signals generated by cash injections. Two sources provide positive indications that markets and traders in Swaziland are in fact up to this task. Firstly, data on food demand and supply from the past several years reveals that commercial imports are responsive to fluctuations in demand (e.g. increased market dependence in drought years) and supply (e.g. declining trends in national maize production) (FAO/WFP 2007). Secondly, the market feasibility study commissioned by Save the Children Swaziland included interviews with 235 local food traders, and found that these traders do "have the capacity to scale up their tonnage ... in response to an increase in effective demand" (de Matteis, 2007: 28).

More generally, the case for introducing cash transfers in Swaziland builds on a growing evidence base from several 'social cash transfers' and 'emergency cash transfer' programmes in countries across Southern Africa, which confirm the multiple benefits of providing cash to poor people, either permanently as 'predictable social transfers (eg social pensions) or as humanitarian relief . The balance of evidence concludes that cash transfers are empowering (cash gives choices and dignity), cash allows non–food needs to be met, cash is effective in meeting more diverse and long–term nutrition needs (e.g. it permits the purchase of micro-nutrients), cash protects and promotes livelihoods, cash is (usually) more cost-effective than food aid, cash generates positive multiplier effects on markets and local economies, and recipients generally prefer (some or all) cash to pure food aid.

But there are also concerns about introducing cash transfers, especially in food crisis situations. The case against cash includes:

1. possible inflationary effects, undermining the value of cash transfers and reducing access to food;
2. possible 'misuse' of cash by recipients for purposes that were not intended and are considered to be negative (eg. alcohol);
3. possible 'leakages' or appropriation by elites and others not intended to benefit from the intervention;
4. possible intra-household conflict (including gender-based violence) over the control and spending of cash transfers.

The FAO/WFP 'Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission' concluded in May 2007 that cash transfers would be an inappropriate response to the food crisis. "Given the reduced availability of maize and already observed price hikes cash transfers are presently not seen as a suitable mechanism for ensuring household food security" (FAO/WFP, 2007: 23). Given these concerns, Save the Children Swaziland decided on a risk-minimising strategy, and delivered cash transfers as part of a package that provided a full ration of food, but half in cash and half in-kind. The primary aim of the EDR project was humanitarian: this intervention was a contribution to the national emergency response. The secondary aim was to pilot the use of cash transfers in an emergency context in Swaziland. Nine hypotheses about cash were put to the test:

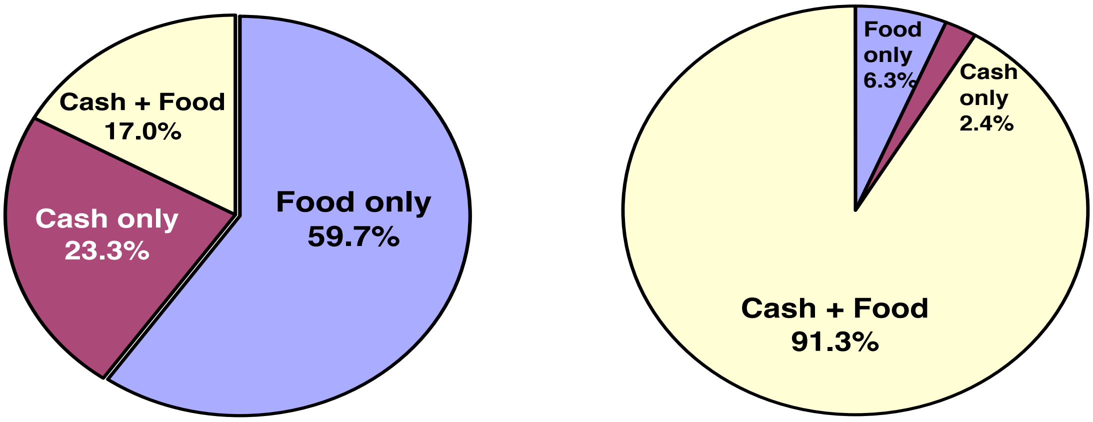
1. Cash improves nutrition, measured by more diverse diets.
2. Cash allows purchase of essential non-food items.
3. Cash is invested in assets and livelihoods that raise incomes.
4. Local markets are strengthened by cash injections, and inflation for core items does not rise as a result.
5. Harmful coping strategies are avoided.
6. Caring practices for children improve.
7. Women are empowered by receiving cash.
8. Cash delivery systems are appropriate, timely, safe, well targeted and scaleable.
9. Beneficiaries are more sympathetic to cash transfers after the intervention than before.

Evidence concerning the first eight of these hypotheses is presented later in this report. Here we consider the evidence on the ninth hypothesis. The pre-project market feasibility study found that: "In general, communities seem to prefer in-kind distributions of assistance (possibly because these are the norm)" (de Matteis, 2007: 4). This preference for food aid was reinforced by the baseline survey: "Consultation with communities and feedback on people's perception of food aid and cash evidenced a bias towards food aid, rooted in up to 15 years of food distributions." (SC Swaziland, January 2008: 8). One aim of the EDR intervention was to challenge this bias and to ascertain whether cash transfers would be accepted by people in need of emergency assistance.

The market feasibility survey and the final evaluation survey both included a question about beneficiary preferences for cash and/or food transfers ("If there is another drought and you qualify for assistance, would you prefer to receive food only, cash only, or a mix of half food and half cash?") In the pre-EDR survey, food aid was favoured by three in five respondents, with 'cash only chosen by one in four and 'cash plus food' getting the fewest votes. In the post-EDR survey, a completely different pattern emerged. An overwhelming majority of respondents (91.3%) expressed a preference for transfers to be made in a combination of half cash and half food, while 'food only' (6.3%) and 'cash only' (2.4%) getting very little support (Figure 2).

So food still ranked second, slightly ahead of cash, but its vote had collapsed from 60% to just 6%. This indicates a decisive shift away from 'food bias' among recipients, not towards cash as a substitute for food aid, but in favour of cash as a complement to food. Clearly, cash and food are perceived as meeting different – but equally important – needs and priorities, and delivering both together are preferred by recipients as providing a comprehensive package of support. (*"Cash is good for school fees, but food is needed to survive."*)

Figure 2 Preferences for food or cash transfers, pre- and post-intervention



Source: de Matteis (2007: 20) Source: Final evaluation survey

It should be added that this overwhelming endorsement of 'cash plus food' serves as a strong endorsement of the EDR intervention, which evidently generated a very positive reaction. It should also be noted that this pattern of preferences was shared by respondents who had not received 'cash plus food'. (Often respondents tailor their answers to endorse the intervention being evaluated, in anticipation of future benefits.) Although the choice of 'food only' was higher among respondents who had received 'food only' transfers, at 11.8% *versus* 4.2% by 'cash plus food' recipients, the choice of 'cash plus food' was not much lower among 'food only' recipients, at 86.8% *versus* 93.0% by 'cash plus food' recipients. Intriguingly, however, the rejection of 'cash only' transfers was shared almost equally, being preferred by only 2.8% of 'cash plus food' and by 1.4% of 'food only' recipients.

2.1.2 Payment levels

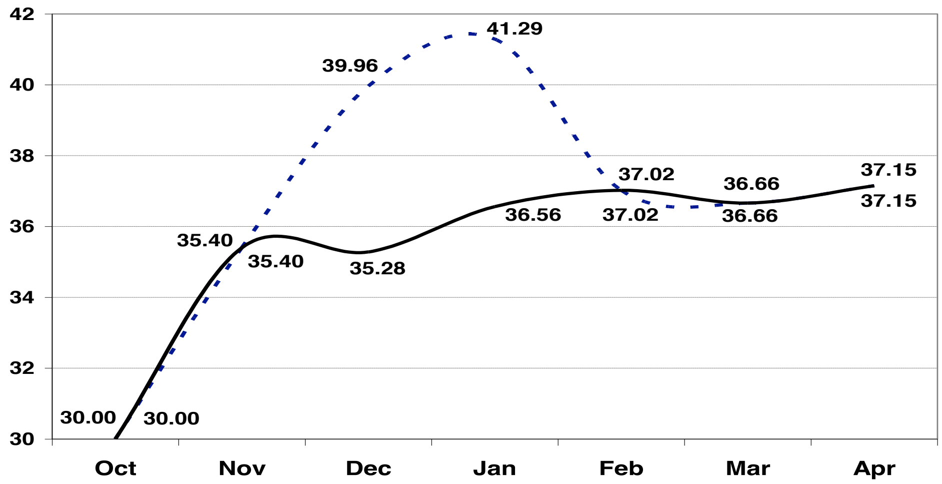
The EDR project incorporated many innovative design features. The main payment was a monthly cash transfer that was intended to be equivalent in value to a half ration of food for every household member (recalling that the other half ration was provided in-kind), so the amount transferred was proportional to household size. The average cost of a half food ration was estimated at E30 in October 2007, based on a market survey conducted before the project started, and this set the per capita payment level, which remained constant throughout the project's six months duration – payments were not adjusted in line with changes in food prices.[3] So an average-sized family of six received E180 every month from November 2007 to April 2008 inclusive, in addition to their half ration of food.

According to Save the Children's monthly market monitoring, however, the retail prices of maize, beans and oil rose steeply between October and January, when the cost of a half ration peaked at E41, before falling back and stabilising at E37 between February and April (see the dotted line in Figure 3). However, this was distorted by one trader who charged double the normal price for maize. After he went out of business the cost of the half ration fell from E41 in January to E37 in February (SC Swaziland, February 2008: 6). In fact, this price monitoring data suggests that the

[3] This is standard practice with social cash transfer programmes, but is at variance with recent innovations in Malawi, for instance, where monthly payments were adjusted in line with fluctuations in food prices, to maintain constant market access to a specified food basket (Devereux 2008).

cost of a half ration on local markets averaged E37.91 over the project period, some 26% higher than the EDR cash transfer of E30. Removing this trader from the cost calculation produces a much flatter price trend (the solid line in Figure 3) and a cheaper food basket – the average cost of a half food ration was E36.35 – but still 21% higher than the per capita cash transfer.

Figure 3 Average cost of a half food ration in rural Swaziland, 2007/08



Source: Save the Children Swaziland, price monitoring data, 2007/08

Save the Children offered four explanations about this under-payment and why they did not correct it.

1. Prices did not fluctuate sufficiently to justify recalibration of payments every month, but remained relatively stable for the duration of the project period.
2. The payment level was miscalculated – the cost of a half ration was underestimated – but this was distorted by the inclusion of the 'rogue trader' in the market monitoring survey.
3. Explaining how payments were calculated was complex for recipients to understand, and adjusting the per capita food component every month would have added to the confusion.
4. Cash recipients were able to absorb the higher food costs by drawing on the other payments they received – the lump-sum grants plus monthly supplements for transport and non-food items (SC Swaziland, March 2008: 5).

It is true that food prices trends were fairly stable between November and May, and that the cost of a half food ration rose by only about 1% month on month, once the rogue maize trader is removed from the equation. But under either cost calculation the cash transfer payment was – consistently, every month – at least 20% too low. The third rationale relates to the complexity of the cash payments calculation, which included one component that was adjusted for household size, and two (discussed below) that were not. Explaining to recipients how their entitlements were calculated certainly required a great deal of training and sensitisation by project staff, and changing the payment every month would have required more training. Finally, it is true that the generous supplementary payments cushioned cash recipients against food price inflation, and compensated for the under-payment on the food basket – but this was not the intention, and cash recipients were never told that the non-food payments should cross-subsidise food purchases.

2.1.3 Supplementary payments

A number of supplementary payments were made to cash recipients by the EDR project that were innovative and impacted positively on recipient households. These payments included:

- an initial lump–sum grant (E450)

- a modest monthly supplement for transport costs (E25/month)
- a modest monthly supplement for non–food items (E20/month)
- a final lump–sum grant (E380).

Lump-sum grants: The EDR project provided two lump-sum grants to each 'cash plus food' household, to boost their livelihood base and protect their assets against 'distress sales' for food. The first grant of E450 was made in the first month of cash distributions (November 2007), and this amount was based on the costs of seed, fertiliser and ploughing services required for one hectare of land. The intention was to support investment in family farming, to ensure a good harvest in 2008 and minimise the risk of protracted food insecurity. People were however free to use the money for other purposes, such as starting or investing in ongoing small businesses. One woman from Shiselweni, for instance, used her initial lump-sum payment to start a chicken farming business. A second lump–sum grant of E380 was paid in the last month of the project (April 2008), to support post–drought recovery and stabilise livelihood activities. It also served the purpose of assisting cash recipients make the transition out of the project, since they would no longer receive any monthly cash payments.

Business ventures that were part-financed by EDR cash transfers should be monitored for a reasonable time-frame beyond the EDR project itself, to determine their profitability and the sustainability of the cash impacts. On a related point about sustainable livelihood impacts, several community members interviewed for this evaluation indicated that they lack business skills and, given the increasingly precarious nature of farming-based livelihoods, they would welcome support in the form of training and micro-finance to assist them to diversify their livelihoods and reduce their dependence on subsistence-oriented agriculture. If successful, providing this package of support would have the dual advantage of promoting livelihoods and reducing poverty, thereby reducing the need for food aid or cash transfers in future.[4]

Supplements for non-food expenses: The project provided E20 to each household every month, to meet the costs of essential non-food items (e.g. soap) that were not intended to be purchased using the cash grant. A further payment of E25 per household was introduced to cover the costs of transport to their cash distribution points (the nearest Post Office or bank branch) every month. Like the main monthly cash transfers, the payment levels of E20 and E25 respectively were also determined based on an analysis of local prices, but they were not calibrated by household size (transport costs to collection points, for instance, are no different for large or small households). Our survey found that average monthly spending on transport to the Post Office or ATM was E12.35 each way, so the payment of E25 was adequate. The survey also revealed that 'cash plus' food' recipients spent significantly more on transport than did 'food only' recipients (see Figure 10 below), because food aid was delivered directly to communities, so this supplementary payment was justified.

2.2 Targeting

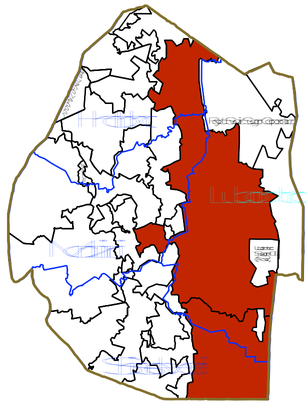
Targeting – the process of establishing eligibility criteria, identifying eligible households and excluding the ineligible – is one of the biggest challenges facing social assistance programmes. Targeting for the Emergency Drought Response project was implemented as part of the national consortium, and occurred at two levels: geographical coverage, and household selection.

2.2.1 Geographical coverage

The first level of targeting was geographical. The EDR targeted food insecure households in two regions: Lubombo in the 'Lowveld Cattle and Maize' livelihood zone, and Shiselweni in the 'Timber Highlands' livelihood zone. Selection of these regions was informed by the Swaziland

[4] This model has been adopted by the 'Productive Safety Net Programme' in Ethiopia, where cash or food transfers that provide 'livelihood protection' are complemented by 'Household Extension Packages' that generate secondary incomes for farmers and aim at 'livelihood promotion'.

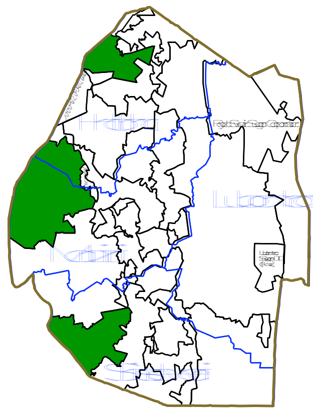
Vulnerability Assessment Committee ('Swazi VAC'), which is widely used to identify areas and numbers of people in need of support.



The 'Lowveld Cattle and Maize' zone has been characterised as drought–prone and food aid dependent. People in Lubombo Region are both chronically food insecure and acutely vulnerable to shocks.

"The Lowveld Livelihood zone: About 70% of their food comes from food aid. On the other hand there is no opportunity for expand-ability in income sources. The very poor in this zone have both expenditure (E1690) and food deficits (42%) while the poor are faced with an expenditure deficit (E1786-00). Agricultural production contributes very little in terms of food sources (about 6%), they are expected to rely more on purchases and will be affected by the rise in the price of maize. However, the food aid masks this reality as even the middle income group receives food aid (as of the baseline year)" (Swazi VAC, 2007: 13).

Unusually, the Highveld was affected almost as severely as the Lowveld by drought in 2006/07, receiving only half (51%) of its long-run average rainfall (FAO/WFP, 2007: 8). However, food production in the 'Timber Highlands Livelihood Zone' makes a relatively small contribution to household consumption, and livelihoods are dominated by low wage seasonal employment on timber plantations. Generally, rural families in the highlands are considered to be less vulnerable to drought-triggered harvest failure, because their incomes are more diversified. The Swaziland Vulnerability Assessment Committee reached precisely this conclusion in its Rapid Assessment Report of May 2007:



"The Timber Highlands Livelihood zone: Agricultural labour (about 40%) and own production (about 20%) form the main sources of food for the very poor. Although the season is very poor there is not likely to be an effect (deficit) as their sources of income are not related to production" (Swazi VAC, 2007: 12).

Shortly after the Swazi VAC published this assessment, however, devastating forest fires undermined off-farm employment opportunities in the Highlands, and the Timber Highlands zone was reclassified as highly vulnerable and a priority for receiving emergency assistance.

In terms of coverage, the EDR reached a small proportion of households declared in need of humanitarian assistance in 2007/08. The target group was 7,500 households (45,000 people) in the two regions of Lubombo and Shiselweni, while the national emergency response programme targeted 450,000 people. So the EDR took responsibility for 10% of the humanitarian caseload. In fact the final number of cash recipients was 6,223 households (37,300 people), for reasons explained below, which amounted to 8.3% of total beneficiaries nationwide. This could be seen as an enormous under-coverage or exclusion error (had the EDR been a stand-alone pilot project, for instance), but the EDR was an integral part of the national humanitarian response, so the food security needs of the remaining 91.7% of vulnerable individuals who did not receive cash transfers were addressed by the Government of Swaziland (NDMA) and World Food Programme (WFP) food aid programmes.

2.2.2 Household selection

The VAC analysis identifies vulnerable areas but it does not go further, to identify specific households and individuals who should be prioritised for receiving relief assistance. The EDR project used a form of community-based targeting to select beneficiaries, following targeting guidelines developed by the Food Security Consortium and WFP. Community Relief Committees, comprising individuals identified by communities to assist in coordinating relief activities (and are often beneficiaries themselves) used the participatory technique of proportional piling to classify all households in their community into three wealth categories.

- Pile 1: Most vulnerable – people with no harvest, no employment and no means of survival; elderly-, female- and child-headed households; HIV and AIDS-affected people with no means of livelihood (chronically food insecure);
- Pile 2: Middle wealth group, but affected by the drought (temporarily food insecure);
- Pile 3: Well-off group (food secure, even in the drought year).

In general, the criteria used were the same for 'food only' recipients. According to community consultations, the type of people classified in Pile 1 were generic vulnerable groups ('children who have no parents supporting them', 'elderly people looking after orphans', etc.) rather than households specifically affected by drought or forest fire. This is a common outcome from community-based targeting: chronically vulnerable households tend to be selected rather than households left temporarily vulnerable by a livelihood shock. This may be an accurate reflection of the distribution of severe poverty and food insecurity within communities, but it raises questions about which sources of vulnerability should be targeted by a drought relief intervention.

In Shiselweni region, households from Pile 1 only were selected for inclusion in the EDR project, while in Lubombo region households from both Pile 1 and Pile 2 were selected and registered, following a decision by the national consortium. The reasoning was that Shiselweni is generally better off and rarely needs emergency relief, whereas Lubombo is chronically vulnerable and dependent on food aid. Nonetheless, this is obviously a rather arbitrary decision rule – the assumption being that 'Pile 2' households in Lubombo are roughly equivalent in terms of incomes and assets as 'Pile 1' households in Shiselweni – and it highlights a limitation of participatory techniques like community-based wealth ranking and proportional piling: the impossibility of comparing across communities. Even if the decision to include 'Pile 2' households in Lubombo is intuitively justified by knowledge about relative levels of vulnerability between the two regions, this does not provide a methodology for the identification of vulnerable households. A more accurate and credible approach would include some way of benchmarking the wealth ranking, for instance, using a 'proxy means test' that identifies 4-5 robust local indicators of poverty or well-being, and supplementing the wealth ranking with this rapid assessment targeting tool.

Our consultations with communities revealed that most people understood the criteria used for targeting, but there was evidence of dissatisfaction and resentment about the targeting process and its outcomes by people who were not selected and did not receive cash or food transfers.

A number of stakeholders interviewed felt that the criteria for identification of beneficiaries were neither sufficiently specific nor clear. Strictly speaking, targeting 'drought-affected households' excluded almost no-one in farming communities, and even relatively wealthy farmers asserted their right to compensation for crop and livestock losses. (*"We did not get anything from our fields."*) In extremely food insecure communities, especially in Lubombo region, broad-based wealth ranking resulted in very long lists of potential beneficiaries. Relief Committees members, being residents of the same communities where they were implementing targeting, faced social pressure to register as many people as possible, so they often included borderline or undeserving households in Pile 1. (One project staff told us: *"It's good to have Relief Committees but you have to correct their wrong decisions and protect them against their communities."*) This practice is allegedly more prevalent in Lubombo because of the many years of widespread distribution of food aid, which according to some stakeholders has created a 'dependency syndrome' or 'entitlement culture' – all households feel they should be registered to receive food aid or cash transfers. Food aid even became politicised, in the sense that people believed it came from the King to support his drought-affected subjects and as such everyone should benefit.

Save the Children implemented a rigorous verification and re-registration exercise in 10% of project communities. This procedure identified large numbers of targeting errors. Most of these were inclusion errors: many households that were initially classified as 'Group 1' (poorest') were reclassified as ‘Group 2’ (middle) or even ‘Group 3’ (better off) in the re-targeting exercise. Some ‘Group 2’ households were also moved to ‘Group 3’. Very few ‘Group 3’ households were reclassified as ‘Group 2’ or ‘Group 1’. The net result was that the number of households eligible for food and/or cash assistance was reduced in almost every community where the verification exercise was conducted. In one community alone, the verification process reduced the number of households in ‘Group 1’ and ‘Group 2’ by 23% (see Box 1).

Box 1 EDR re-targeting in one community

Save the Children’s targeting verification exercise in one community of 368 households resulted in one in five households (76/368 =20.7%) being reclassified from poorer to wealthier categories, and therefore being removed from the list of EDR project beneficiaries. Also, a re-count of resident household members identified a total of 129 individuals as not being members of these households as originally claimed; this amounted to a 7.4% over registration of beneficiaries (who were reduced from 2,007 to 1,878).

	Households			Beneficiaries		
	1st target		Re-target	1st count		Re-count
Group 1	158	(-13)	145	469	(-116)	353
Group 2	170	(-63)	107	1,240	(-13)	1,227
Group 3	40	(+76)	116	298	(-0)	298
Total	368	(+0)	368	2,007	(-129)	1,878

Reasons recorded for reclassifying 76 households from poorer to wealthier groups included:

- Employed (eg teacher, driver, farm worker, miner) [n=47]
- Supported by relatives (eg son, daughter, brother) [n=9]
- Owns property (eg livestock, motor car, tractor) [n=8]
- Has a public or private pension (eg teacher, widow) [n=7]
- Has own business (eg bakery, shop, commercial farm) [n=5]

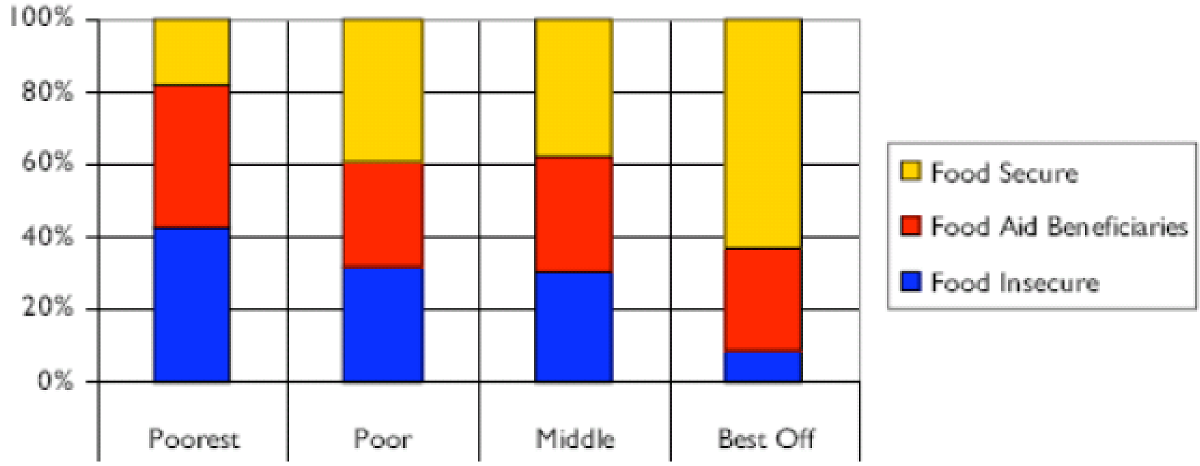
Since only one in ten communities were verified, there appears to have been a substantial over-registration of households (i.e. inclusion error) across the project area as a whole. The verification exercise found that targeting efficiency was 50-60% in Lubombo and a little higher in Shiselweni. In Lubombo, reclassification of wealth groups 1 & 2 led to the removal of 890 people from the original list of beneficiaries before the project started and another 200 after the project started. Those removed included salaried teachers, dead people, households that were ‘double dipping’ (having more than one person registered), even a Member of Parliament.

The removal of wealthy and powerful households from beneficiary lists created conflict between community members and Relief Committees. After the project started, Save the Children staff also faced accusations of discriminating against excluded households. (*“Why are you giving the same people food and cash again and nothing for us? Why give them food and cash? Why not give some people food and give the cash to others?”*) In this context of raised expectations and resentment about exclusion, Save the Children should be commended for implementing a rigorous re-targeting exercise, which other agencies distributing food aid did not do.

Another source of error related to the number of individual household members registered for the EDR project. Since payments of cash and food were made proportional to household size, there was an obvious incentive to over-report or exaggerate household membership. Save the Children also verified beneficiary numbers by re-counting household members. This verification procedure identified significant levels of over-reporting of individuals, and hence of over-registration of beneficiary numbers.

The problems experienced with targeting were not unique to cash transfers, and in a sense the EDR cash transfer intervention ‘inherited’ many of the challenges that Swaziland faces in targeting food aid. It is well known that many people who receive food aid don’t deserve or need it, yet the NDMA faces constant pressure from politicians to extend food distributions towards universal coverage, especially in election years. A survey by the Swazi VAC in 2006 found that there was no correlation between the probability of receiving food aid and the recipient's food security status, or wealth (Figure 4). Apart from a slight bias towards the poorest and most food insecure group, it appears that food aid was disbursed almost at random to the rural population.

Figure 4 Food aid beneficiaries by food security and socio-economic status, 2006



Source: Swazi VAC (2006)

2.3 Delivery mechanisms

The EDR project delivered cash and food transfers through three mechanisms: direct distribution (all food, and cash for child-headed households), the Post Office (cash), and bank ATMs (cash). Note that a technical evaluation of the role of bank accounts in delivering cash transfers was undertaken by FinMark Trust (Beswick, 2008), so those aspects are not examined in depth here.

2.3.1 Cash

A key secondary objective of the EDR was to explore the potential for integration of emergency cash delivery systems within longer-term government social transfer programmes. With this in mind, Save the Children negotiated a contract with Standard Bank to manage the EDR cash transfer operations. Standard Bank was already well established in Swaziland with a fairly wide network of branches, and it was bidding to manage delivery of the government's Old Age Grants. Another attraction was that EDR cash recipients would be given bank accounts and ATM cards, which further enhanced the long-term spin-off benefits – benefits that are not normally associated with manual cash delivery systems.

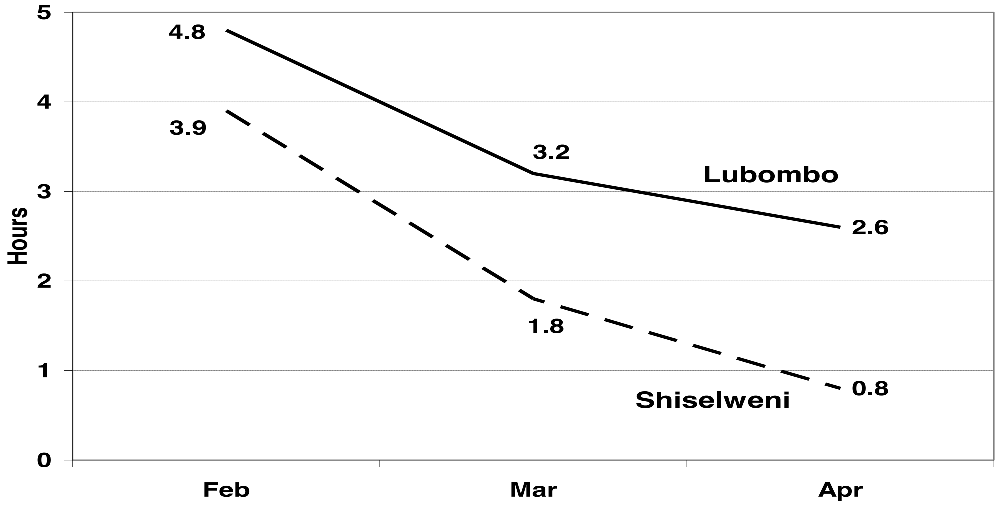
Standard Bank subcontracted the Post Office to handle the actual disbursement of cash, until ATM cards were introduced in March when cash recipients had a choice between queuing at the Post Office or using an ATM. Bank accounts were opened at Standard Bank for 6,076 people, so that they could access their cash transfers at a bank or Post Office. This raised a legal obstacle – opening a bank account requires presenting a national identity card – which many rural citizens (especially older persons) do not have. Save the Children worked with the Ministry of Justice to help approximately 4,000 cash recipients get identity cards. This can be regarded as a useful secondary impact of the EDR project. Recipients paid for the costs of their identity cards, including transport for two visits (registration and collection) to the Ministry of Justice.

Anyone who did not have an identity card and chose not to get one could not open a bank account. They were therefore not registered for the cash transfer and received full food rations instead. A third group of 147 households was child-headed; being legal minors they could not open bank accounts and they received their cash and food transfers through direct distribution.

Standard Bank waived their minimum balance requirement (E50) to allow project beneficiaries to open and maintain bank accounts even if they withdrew the entire cash payment every month. The beneficiaries were thus provided with a free bank account and an ATM card – another useful secondary benefit of the project. From November to February all cash disbursements were made at Post Office branches, using swipe-cards and point-of-sale devices provided by Standard Bank. On each monthly pay-day, hundreds of beneficiaries queued outside their designated Post Office in a queue arranged alphabetically by surname. Especially in the early months of the project when the procedures were still unfamiliar to both Post Office staff and beneficiaries, this resulted in lengthy delays, with most people having to wait several hours before receiving their cash.

After the ATM cards were introduced queuing times fell dramatically, from 4.4 hours on average in February to 1.9 hours in April (Figure 5). The main reason was a rapid uptake of the ATM option, with close to half of all recipients choosing to collect their cash transfers from their nearest ATM, which halved the length of the queues and eased congestion at the Post Office.

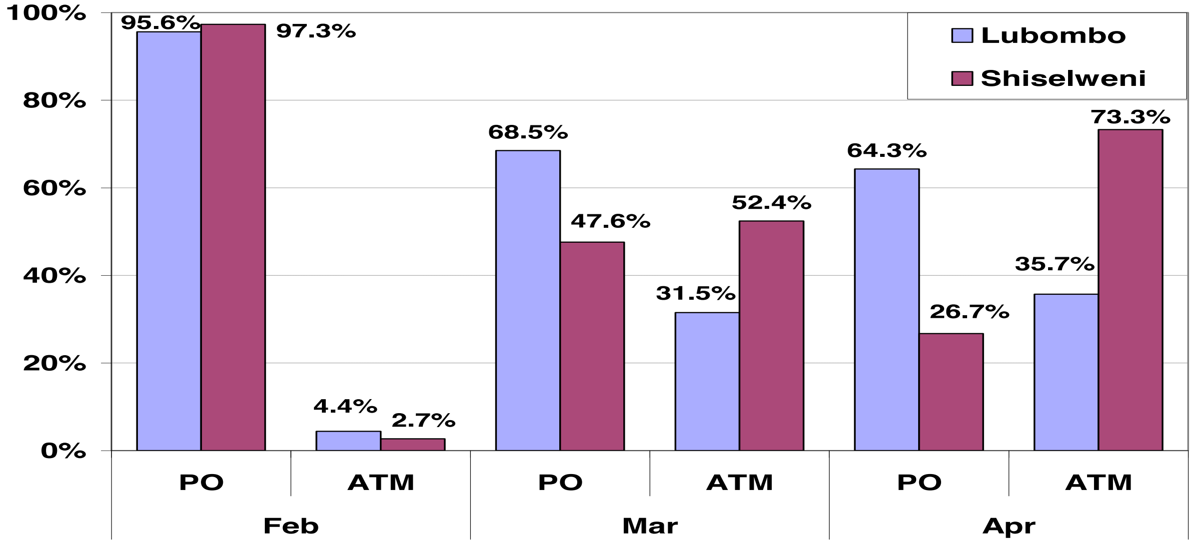
Figure 5 Average queuing times at Post Office or ATM to collect cash transfers



Initial concerns that recipients would be unwilling or unable to switch to ATMs, due to Illiteracy and unfamiliarity with banks and ATM procedures, proved to be unfounded. In the first month (February) only 3.5% of 'cash plus food' recipients withdrew their cash from an ATM, but this was mainly because of delays in distributing the ATM cards – due to a system failure, 4,000 PIN numbers were lost and Standard Bank had to re-print all the cards. In the next month (March) the proportion using ATMs jumped to 42%, and by the third month (April) this had increased to 55% (Figure 6), suggesting rapidly increasing acceptance of this technology. Adoption was facilitated by training in ATM use and personal support at ATMs on pay-days by a SC 'point person'.

People who switched from the Post Office to the bank gave several reasons for choosing this option. Firstly, queues and transaction times were shorter, so the opportunity costs in terms of time spent collecting cash were reduced. (One young woman in the ATM queue told us: *"I don't understand why everyone does not save time and use the ATM instead of the Post Office."*) Secondly, cash could be withdrawn at any time, unlike the Post Office which paid out only on a specific day each month. This flexibility is a feature of 'push' delivery systems, which give recipients choice over when they choose to access their transfers, in contrast to inflexible 'pull' systems which require recipients to congregate at a designated location on a specific date. Thirdly, use of the ATM allowed cash transfer recipients to leave some money in their account, so it offered a savings facility. In our final evaluation survey, 32% of households that had bank accounts opened for them by the EDR project reported that they had left some of the cash transfers in their accounts as savings, but disaggregating by region reveals that the proportion was much higher in Shiselweni (62%) than in Lubombo (14%). This was not an option with the Post Office, where all cash had to be withdrawn on the pay-day itself. More broadly, the ATM gave account-holders 'banking literacy' and a possible entry-point into other financial services.

Figure 6 Proportion of recipients collecting their cash transfers at Post Office or ATM



One dubious advantage of the ATM was that no proof of identity was required, only a PIN code and an ATM card. Some older people and people who were ill sent a relative or friend to withdraw their cash on their behalf. This was not recommended by either Save the Children or Standard Bank staff. In one incident reported from Shiselweni, a grandson who knew his grandmother's PIN code stole her card and withdrew all her money for his own use. (This was anecdotal; there was no evidence of systematic abuse of this kind.)

People who chose to remain with the Post Office mentioned several reasons for not choosing the ATM option. First was fear of losing their card and/or PIN code and being unable to access their funds. Secondly, many illiterate recipients (36.8% of beneficiaries in our survey had never attended school) admitted that they found the ATM technology intimidating and preferred being assisted by Post Office tellers. Some believed if they made a mistake on the keypad, or if they took too long, their card would be swallowed and never returned to them. (It is true that the ATM retained the card after one minute.) Illiteracy might explain regional differences in ATM use. In Lubombo where 46% of 'cash plus food' recipients had never attended school, only 36% used the ATM in April. In Shiselweni, where a much lower 28% had never attended school, the ATM adoption rate was a much higher 73% in April (Figure 6).

Another factor that might explain a reluctance to switch to the ATM is bank charges. Standard Bank charged Save the Children E20 for each transaction, to cover its costs. The bank allowed each account-holder one free transaction every month, but charged E35 for every subsequent transaction. This relates to one final issue – attitudes and perceptions. According to several key informants, poor people in Swaziland generally have a higher level of trust in the Post Office than in banks. They were also more familiar with the Post Office. Many cash recipients were using the Post Office for various purposes before the EDR intervention, such as receiving remittances, paying school fees and electricity bills. Banks are seen as commercial businesses that take people's money, but the Post Office is seen as a government service that gives people benefits.

Nonetheless, attitudes and perceptions can change. Cash recipients in the final evaluation survey were asked whether they would prefer (in future emergencies) to collect their money from an ATM or from the Post Office. Overall, 58% of respondents indicated that they preferred the ATM, and only 39% expressed a preference for the Post Office (Table 3). The vote in favour of ATMs was higher in Shiselweni region, at close to 80% for both male- and female-headed households. Households in Shiselweni are closer to Nhlangano town and South Africa where many find work and income, while many others depend on employment from local timber and forestry plantations. These factors mean that Shiselweni households are more integrated into the cash economy, and could explain why they have a greater inclination to use banking services for savings and other financial transactions. Among households that opened bank accounts during the EDR project, 73% of respondents in Shiselweni and 50% in Lubombo reported that they intend to continue using their bank account and ATM facilities after the project ends.

Table 3 Household preferences for collecting future cash transfers

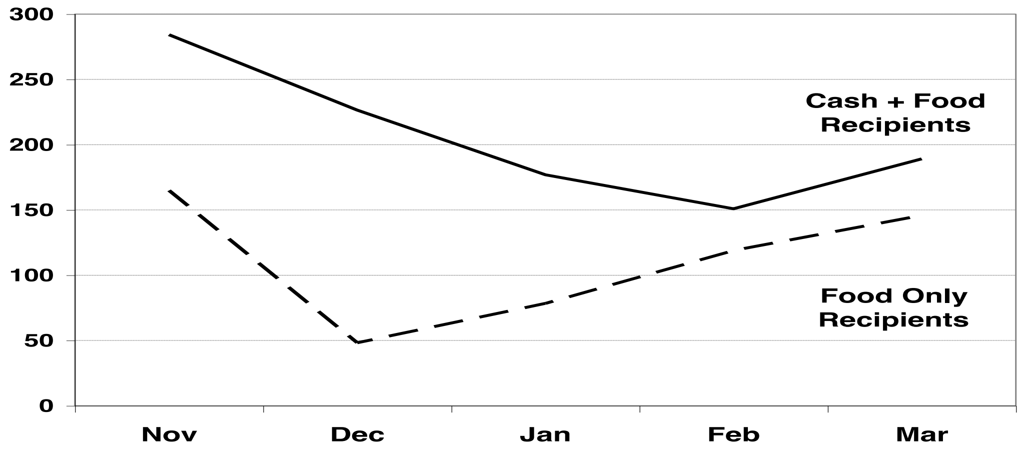
Region	Household type	ATM/Bank	Post Office	Not sure	Total
Lubombo	Male-headed	51.5%	46.5%	1.9%	100%
	Female-headed	34.6%	63.6%	1.8%	100%
	Child-headed	100.0%	0%	0%	100%
	Total Lowveld	45.4%	52.7%	1.9%	100%
Shiselweni	Male-headed	77.7%	18.8%	3.6%	100%
	Female-headed	79.2%	17.3%	3.5%	100%
	Total Highlands	78.5%	18.0%	3.5%	100%
Total		**58.4%**	**39.1%**	**2.5%**	**100%**

2.3.2 Food

For both 'food only' and 'cash plus food' recipients, food transfers were delivered by direct distribution at 'final distribution points' (FDPs) in each rural community. (Some cash recipients, especially older people and people with disabilities, felt that the cash should have been delivered the same way, rather than having to travel long distances and queuing for hours.) There were two food aid pipelines – one operated by government (NDMA) and one operated by international donors (WFP). The EDR can therefore be seen as a partnership between government (NDMA), donors (WFP) and an NGO (Save the Children). WFP delivered a double ration every second month. On the other hand, the food pipeline was disrupted more than once during the humanitarian relief programme, most severely during the last two months of the cash transfer project (March and April), when no food aid was distributed in Swaziland at all. For these two months, 'cash plus food' recipients received only their normal cash transfer, equivalent to a half ration of food, while 'food only' recipients received nothing.

These breaks in the food aid pipeline complicate our assessment of the impacts of the EDR project, and especially of the cash transfer component, since the cash and food together make up a full relief package. In the early months of the project, both sets of recipients spent declining amounts on food, as food transfers reduced the need for market purchases. With pipeline breaks in the early months of 2008, this trend reversed and spending on food started to increase. In March, when no food was distributed, 'food only' recipients were spending almost as much on food purchases as 'cash plus food' recipients (Figure 7).

Figure 7 Effects of food pipeline disruption on spending on food (E/month)



Save the Children could perhaps be criticised for failing to increase cash transfers to compensate recipients for the lack of food aid in March and April. This was certainly one option: since Save the Children had assumed responsibility for the food security of 37,000 drought-affected people, disbursing a full ration in the form of cash would have assured them of protection against hunger throughout the pre-harvest months. On the other hand, this would ignore the wider context of the humanitarian intervention. The fact that the EDR targeted a relatively small group within a much larger food aid programme already raised questions about discriminatory treatment between cash and food recipients. Increasing cash transfers to a minority when food aid failed to be delivered to the majority would have exacerbated tensions within communities and possibly provoked hostility towards Save the Children. As one staff member told us: *"Doubling one household's cash ration while their neighbour's food ration is cut to nothing would seem unfair and unjustifiable."*

In any event, the underlying problem was inadequate communication and coordination between different stakeholders in the relief programme. NDMA constantly assured other members of the Food Security Consortium that food would be arriving at any time, and on this basis Save the Children decided not to adjust its cash payments when food failed to arrive. The policy implication is related not to cash transfers but to relief management – clear and transparent communications and joint planning are prerequisites, if the humanitarian objective of meeting the subsistence needs of vulnerable individuals timeously is to be prioritised and achieved.

2.3.3 'Customer care'

It is increasingly accepted that recipients of social grants should be treated with respect and that every effort should be made to maximise the accessibility and flexibility of registration and grant collection procedures. Perhaps 'beneficiaries' should even be relabelled as 'customers' or 'clients' or at least as 'participants', to reinforce this enhanced status and concern for the individual's dignity and self-respect. We have already seen how the EDR project successfully reduced queuing times and provided project participants with identity documents, bank accounts and ATM cards to allow cash recipients to access and manage their transfers at their own convenience. Here we consider some related aspects of 'customer care' around the delivery of cash transfers – transport to and from pay-points, security at pay-points, and the environment at pay-points.

Transport

Cash recipients made their own way from their homes to pay-points and home again afterwards. Because the cash was disbursed through Post Offices and Standard Bank branches or ATM points, distances to the nearest pay-point were quite far for some – up to 30 kilometres in a few cases. (By contrast, food rations were delivered directly to rural communities.) Because of these distances, only 10% of people were resident within walking distance of their pay-point; 88% used public transport (bus or taxi); and a small minority used their own vehicle (bicycle or ox-cart). In the early months of the project some people were reportedly left stranded due to lack of transport after queuing all day at the Post Office, but taxi-drivers quickly realised that there was good business to be done on pay-days, and taxi-ranks formed outside Post Offices and banks to ferry cash recipients back home.

Average spending by cash recipients on public transport to pay-points was E12.35 return. Public transport costs increased during the project period, according to some respondents by as much as 40-50%. There was consensus that this increase was due to rapidly rising food prices in the country as a whole, and was not an inflationary effect related to the cash transfers. As noted above, Save the Children provided a supplementary payment of E25 to cash recipients to cover transport costs, which ensured that the net value of the monthly cash transfer was not reduced by the transactions costs incurred in collecting it.

Security

Appropriate security precautions were taken to ensure that EDR project participants could collect their cash safely. There were no reported incidents of theft or robbery at Post Offices, banks or

ATMs during the EDR project period. Save the Children informed the Royal Swaziland Police when and where cash payments were happening, and the police provided security at pay-points free of charge. Our personal observation of a pay-day in Siphofaneni confirmed that an armed policeman patrolled the environment around the Post Office all morning. At the Standard Bank ATM across the street, a security guard armed with a rifle stood guard at the ATM while EDR cash recipients queued to withdraw their cash.

Pay-point environment

According to one key informant, one old woman collapsed of heat-stroke while queuing outside Siphofaneni Post Office early in the project (this report could not be verified), so Save the Children hired a large marquee tent to provide shelter from the sun. A water-tank was also provided to assist people suffering from heat stress.

A few negative incidents were reported by cash recipients as happening to them while they were collecting their cash (see Table 4). These ranged from theft of cash transfers (18 cases or 1.2% of recipients), to drunkenness on pay-days (admitted by 15 or 1.2% of cash recipients), to verbal abuse by Standard Bank, Post Office or Save the Children staff (9 cases or 0.7%). The most commonly reported unpleasant event was ‘conflict or fighting’ at pay-points (31 cases or 2.4% of cash recipients). Nonetheless, the numbers are so small for all these negative incidents that they can be considered as anecdotal or episodic rather than systematic. Most of them – with the exception of bad treatment of cash recipients by staff – are also beyond the control of project staff. Most reported thefts, for instance, occurred after cash recipients left the Post Office or bank, as they were heading home.

Table 4 Negative incidents reported by cash recipients at pay-points

Incident	Lubombo	Shiselweni	CHH	Total
Theft of cash transfers	12 (1.6%)	2 (0.4%)	2 (2.9%)	16 (1.2%)
Theft of other property	2 (0.3%)	2 (0.4%)	2 (2.9%)	6 (0.5%)
Drunkenness	13 (1.7%)	2 (0.4%)	0 (0.0%)	15 (1.2%)
Verbal abuse by SC staff	2 (0.3%)	1 (0.2%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (0.2%)
Verbal abuse by PO staff	3 (0.4%)	1 (0.2%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (0.3%)
Verbal abuse by Bank staff	1 (0.1%)	1 (0.2%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.1%)
Physical abuse	4 (0.5%)	1 (0.2%)	1 (1.5%)	6 (0.5%)
Sexual abuse	1 (0.1%)	1 (0.2%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.2%)
Conflict or fighting	22 (3.0%)	9 (1.9%)	0 (0.0%)	31 (2.4%)
Total households	743 (100%)	482 (100%)	68 (100%)	1,293 (100%)

2.4 Cost-efficiency and cost–effectiveness

An assumption often made about social transfers is that delivering cash is considerably cheaper than delivering food, mainly because the costs of shipping, storage and transport are very high for food aid but are negligible for cash transfers. In reality, however, cash transfers have their own associated costs that can challenge this assumption. Because the Emergency Drought Response project (unusually) distributed both cash and food, a direct cost comparison is possible. Detailed cost data are available, and are presented in this section.

The main direct costs of the EDR project were the transfers themselves. The average monthly cost per household of the food transfers (maize, pulses, oil) came to E344.50, based on an actual average household size of 6.5 individuals and food costs provided by NDMA. The average monthly cost per household of the cash transfers came to E468.37, based on the local price of a full food ration (Table 5). This means that the assistance provided directly to each cash recipient household cost E123.87 more than the assistance provided to food recipient households – to be precise, 36% more.

The costs of managing and delivering these transfers amounted to E39.33 for food and E29.55 for cash per household per month. For food the main costs were: field and support staff (E16.19), transport (E12.50) and delivery expenses (E8.64). For cash the main costs were bank charges (E20.04) and training (E4.58). Staff costs were much lower than for food (E3.21) and transport costs were negligible (E0.88) (Table 5). As predicted, cash transfers did cost less to administer than food. However, adding all these costs to the direct transfer costs means that overall, the additional cost of distributing cash amounted to E114.09 per household per month, or 29.7% more than the cost of distributing food in-kind.

Table 5 Costs of food and cash distribution (E/household/month)

Costs	Food	Cash	Difference (Food–Cash)
Direct Costs			
Bank charges	0.04	20.04	-20.00
Delivery charges	8.64	0.00	8.64
Food Costs			
Maize	182.00	0.00	182.00
Pulses	104.00	0.00	104.00
Oil	58.50	0.00	58.50
Cash Payment	0.00	468.37	-468.37
Support Costs			
Vehicle costs			
Car Hire	5.00	0.00	5.00
Fuel & Maintenance	7.50	0.88	6.62
HR Costs			
Field Staff			
Field Co-ordinator	2.25	0.00	2.25
Field Officers	7.00	2.33	4.67
Drivers	1.49	0.50	0.99
Support Staff			
Finance staff	0.00	0.38	-0.38
Logistics staff	1.91	0.00	1.91
Warehouse officers	0.28	0.00	0.28
Loaders	2.17	0.00	2.17
Security Guards	1.09	0.00	1.09
Administration Costs			
Printing costs			
Ration cards	0.14	0.00	0.14
Waybills etc	0.90	0.00	0.90
Communications	0.92	0.23	0.69
One-off costs (spread over the life of the project)			
Registration costs	0.00	0.61	-0.61
Training costs	0.00	4.58	-4.58
Totals	**383.83**	**497.92**	**-114.09**

Source: Data provided by Save the Children Swaziland

A reasonable conclusion to draw from this analysis is that distributing cash transfers is more expensive than distributing food aid. The main reason for this is not the actual delivery costs but economies of scale in commodity costs – importing food in bulk at wholesale prices is cheaper than giving people cash to buy the equivalent food at retail prices in local markets. Two important qualifiers should be taken into consideration, however.

Firstly, the actual transfers to recipients accounted for over 90% of total project costs, but this proportion – known as the 'alpha-ratio' – was higher for cash (94.1%) than for food (89.8%). This means that cash was more cost-efficient than food. The proportion of total costs that went to project management was only 5.9% in the case of cash, but it was 10.2% in the case of food.

Secondly, the intention of the EDR project was to provide the equivalent in cash of a half food ration, so a more appropriate comparison of costs would hold transfer costs constant (i.e. assume both food and cash cost E344.50 per household per month) and compare only management and delivery costs. On this basis, too, cash transfers appear to be more cost-efficient than food aid: at E39.33 per household per month, delivering food transfers cost 33% more than delivering the cash equivalent, at E29.55.

In short, the only reason why food was cheaper to transfer than cash was because importing food aid in bulk was considerably cheaper than buying the same food at retail prices on local markets. This price differential is not a factor that is normally considered when comparing food and cash transfers, but it was the critical determinant in the Swaziland EDR project.

This analysis is therefore inconclusive on the question of cost-efficiency. Food is clearly the more efficient transfer if there is a significant price differential between imported food aid and food purchased locally using cash transfers, but cash is more efficient in terms of management and delivery, because the handling costs (staffing, transport) for food exceed the bank charges and other costs associated with disbursing cash.

On the more complex issue of cost-effectiveness, this financial analysis is inadequate because costs need to be expressed in relation to impacts. In the next chapter we present empirical evidence on impacts that suggests that EDR cash transfers achieved far more substantial and diverse impacts than did food transfers, on a range of indicators. Some of these outcomes are intangible, such as 'choice, dignity and empowerment', but the overall conclusion we would draw is that cash transfers were almost certainly more cost-effective than food transfers, because the positive impacts derived from equivalent transfers of cash and food were higher for cash.

2.5 Training, mobilisation and sensitisation

An important reason for the success of the Emergency Drought Response project was the heavy investment by project staff in community mobilisation, training and sensitisation. Apart from training of temporary staff who were recruited specifically for the EDR project (e.g. warehouse supervisors who received and dispatched project materials; M&E staff who collected data from beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries and monitored prices in local markets), communities and beneficiaries received almost continuous information updates and training on various aspects of the intervention. Although the scope of this evaluation did not include an assessment of these activities, it is clear from our discussions with beneficiaries, communities and other stakeholders that they made a major contribution to ensuring broad acceptance and effective implementation of the cash transfer innovation. Key training and sensitisation activities included the following.

1. ***Publicity and communications:*** An in-country communication strategy was devised to explain the cash transfer intervention to the wider public in Swaziland. This included a poster campaign with story-boards and cartoons posted in shops, post offices and other public buildings; a radio show which debated cash transfers as a response to the food crisis; and newspaper articles explaining the rationale for the cash-based intervention.

2. ***Stakeholder engagement:*** Members of the Swaziland Food Security Consortium, NGOs and donors were invited to observe a cash distribution 'open day'. A briefing document was circulated to government ministries, and several meetings were held with government

officials. Lesson learning meetings to review and improve cash disbursement procedures were held between Save the Children, Standard Bank and the Swazi Post Office.

3. ***Community sensitisation:*** Communities were briefed about the introduction of the cash transfers, how they were calculated, how the cash transfers and food aid interacted with each other, and related issues. During the project period, communities were briefed about aspects such as the use of ATMs, with communication through local Relief Committees, teachers, information posters, and a weekly slot at constituency meetings to update the traditional structures and inner councils.

4. ***Targeting:*** Relief Committees in the project areas were trained in how to administer the targeting methodology (community wealth ranking) and how to select eligible households for inclusion in the EDR project.

5. ***Registration:*** Staff were trained to collect detailed and accurate demographic and other information about households registered for the EDR project, which was important because this determined the level of cash and/or food entitlements.

6. ***Documentation:*** Cash recipients received support from SC project staff in completing their ID application forms and their bank account application forms.

7. ***Cash collection:*** Save the Children 'point persons' assisted cash recipients in completing their 'cash request form' for withdrawing money from their accounts at the Post Office, and explained to ATM users how to use the keypad to withdraw money from the bank.

8. ***Financial management:*** 300 posters were printed and prominently displayed in public places, with messages about the importance of saving cash and food.

9. ***Bank accounts:*** Save the Children worked with Standard Bank to make their information pamphlets more user-friendly, including translating them from English into Siswati. Bank account-holders participated in a training course called *'Bank Accounts: Know your rights',* comprising lectures, Q&A and advice on how to access advice and support from the bank. Another training session on *'Legal Inheritance'* was led by Women in Law South Africa (WLSA), covering the procedure for claiming inheritance in Swaziland, including listing a bank account as an asset, and writing a will. Two leaflets were produced and distributed.

10. ***Child-headed households*** received special attention, including training in managing their finances and more general life skills.

11. ***Exit strategy:*** In April 2008, focal persons within communities were identified and trained to act as advisors to account-holders after the project ended. The 2-day training course covered financial literacy (bank rights and charges), inheritance rights (accessing money from a bank account when the account-holder dies), and child protection.

Box 2 elaborates on one training session that was delivered by Save the Children project staff, together with community volunteers. This highlights the different methodologies that were used, ranging from formal information dissemination to participatory role play dramas.

Box 2 EDR training sessions, February 2008

During this month 2/3 of households have received training in the community on investments and savings and the actual terms and conditions of their Puresave bank accounts, translating the information received from the bank below into memorable and understandable facts.

- Puresave requires the customer to maintain a E50 min balance in the account.
- There is 1 (one) free withdrawal per month (which can be made in the branch), any subsequent withdrawal in the month will attract a penalty charge at a rate of E1.12 per E100 withdrawn with a minimum charge of E35 per withdrawal.

The training took place at the food distribution points (FDP) prior to food distribution and lasted approximately 3 hours, with refreshments. The training involved participatory sessions on SC, Child rights and protection and the cash programme and the actual terms of the bank account.

This was followed by a structured 4-part role play in which various different 'spenders' were played, representing people who spend wisely and those who do not. The 'wasteful spender' who spent her money on fancy clothes and nights dancing with the boys, the old 'grandma' who can't understand the programme and just wants her money and the 'sensible couple' who make decisions together and for their children. Each part represented a different stage in the programme starting from the February transfer and finishing in October 2008 when households will likely find themselves in a similar situation as the start of the programme.

Through drama many issues highlighted in the findings of the January focus group discussions were addressed, such as confusion around options of withdrawal mechanisms and leaving money in the bank, and worries about the elderly receiving a 'secret number'. The role plays are acted with the involvement of volunteers from the community and in recent trainings by youth groups.

Mock-up ATMs were used at the trainings to train people on using the machines to withdraw their money. SC is advocating for information/ instructions to be given in Siswati on screen but at present the instructions come only in English, German and Chinese.

Two residential training courses for the children took place in February where 97 children collected at 2 training centres for a 2-day training. Children attending the session ranged in age from 12 to 19 years. The training focused on financial planning and budgeting, looking at financial terminology and practices as well as prioritising. Child rights and protection were also discussed at length. Sessions on problem solving at a household level and prioritising for family/ household needs were taken by the child protection team to look at specific issues that affect these households. Budgeting session helped children to identify the things they *'need'* versus things they *'want'* through agreeing lists as a group of essentials and then adding the prices. Once given the sum the groups were tasked with prioritising and making a plan for the remaining items. Pre- and post-training KAP tests were taken.

Source: Save the Children Alliance (February 2008: 4)

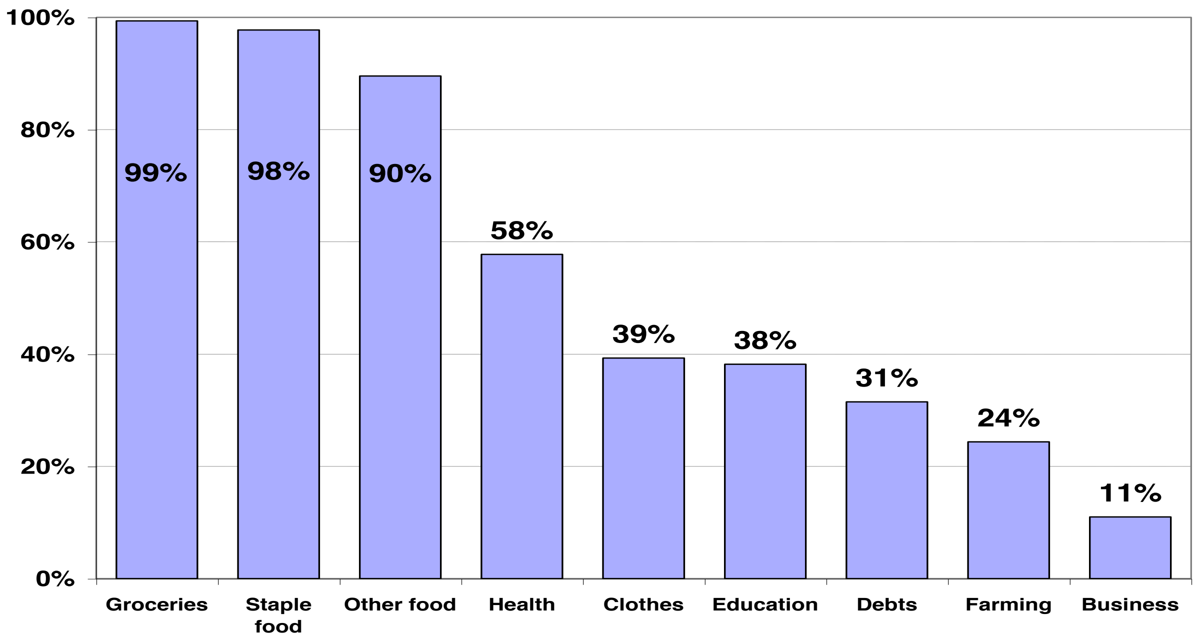
Chapter 3 Impact Evaluation

This chapter presents empirical evidence on impacts of the Emergency Drought Response (EDR) project, drawing mainly on data from the final evaluation survey but also using data collected in the monthly monitoring surveys. The chapter begins by summarising the ways that cash and food transfers were used and their contribution to household income and expenditure. This is followed by an analysis of impacts of transfers on several aspects of household and individual well-being: food security, non-food goods and services (education, health, etc.), coping strategies, assets and livelihoods, and access to banking. Next we examine project impacts on children, women and communities, and finally we consider impacts on markets.

3.1 Use of cash and food transfers

Households that received cash and food transfers used this cash for a variety of purposes. Virtually all recipients spent some or all of their cash on staple food (maize or maize-meal), other food items (vegetables, meat, other cereals) and groceries (soap, paraffin, etc.). More than half of these households spent some cash transfer income on health (58%), and more than one-third reported spending on clothing (39%) and on education (38%). One in three households used some cash transfers to pay off debts (31), one in four invested in their farms (24%) and one in ten invested in their business (11%) (Figure 8). Needless to say, households that received only food rations could not meet such a diverse range of needs with their transfers, except by selling their food – which they did not do: 96% of food recipients consumed all this food.

Figure 8 How cash plus food recipients used their cash transfers



Analysis of expenditure data during the project period reveals that households that received cash plus food transfers had substantially higher spending levels (averaging E 402 per month) than households that received only food transfers (averaging E 263 per month). Much of this E 139 (53%) difference in spending is directly attributable to the EDR cash transfers, which averaged E 186 per household per month (E 30/person x 6.2 persons/household). Figure 9 reveals that most of the higher spending by cash recipients went on food, which is understandable since these households received half food rations while 'food only' households received full rations.

Interestingly, the pre-project market feasibility study had predicted that: "Most recipients of cash transfers would spend a decent portion of funds received on food, with some expenditure on essential non-food items and other services" (de Matteis, 2007: 4). In fact, a survey conducted for the feasibility study found that if these 490 households were given cash they would spend 52-56% on buying food if they were not receiving food aid, and 43% on buying additional food if they were already receiving food aid (de Matteis, 2007: 19). This compares to 51% and 42% actually spent by households receiving 'cash plus food' and 'food only', respectively (Figure 9).

Figure 9 Average monthly household spending, November 2007 to April 2008

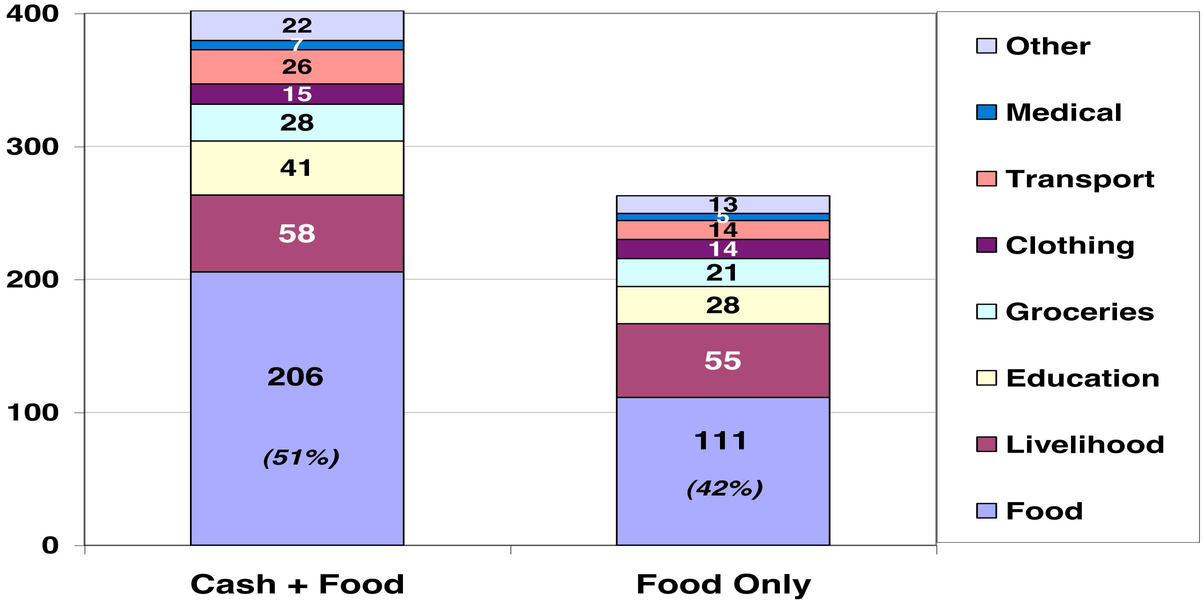
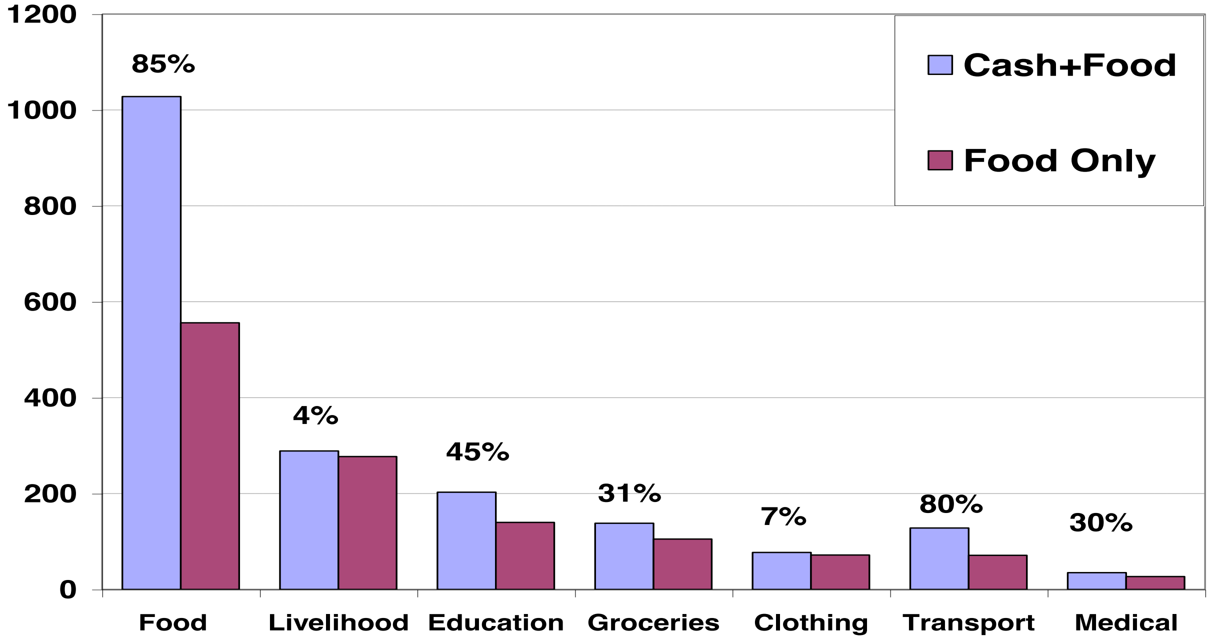


Figure 10 compares spending on different expenditure categories by cash and food recipients. This confirms the large disparity in spending on food, with 'cash plus food' recipients spending almost double (85% more) than 'food only' recipients. Figure 10 also reveals that spending by cash transfer recipients was higher than spending by 'food only' recipients in all other categories as well. Sometimes the disparity was high – 80% for transport, 45% for education – but in some categories the margin was narrow – 7% for clothing, 4% on livelihoods. This demonstrates that cash transfers give both higher purchasing power and greater flexibility than pure food transfers.

Figure 10 Spending differentials between 'cash plus food' and 'food only' recipients



3.2 Household food security

The monitoring and final evaluation surveys provide a lot of evidence on the food security impacts of the cash and food transfers that were distributed in Swaziland between November 2007 and April 2008. Three quantitative indicators will be discussed here: (1) use of food transfers; (2) use of cash transfers; (3) trends in self-reported hunger. A fourth indicator of the food security impacts of cash and food transfers is dietary diversity, which is examined later, under impacts on children.

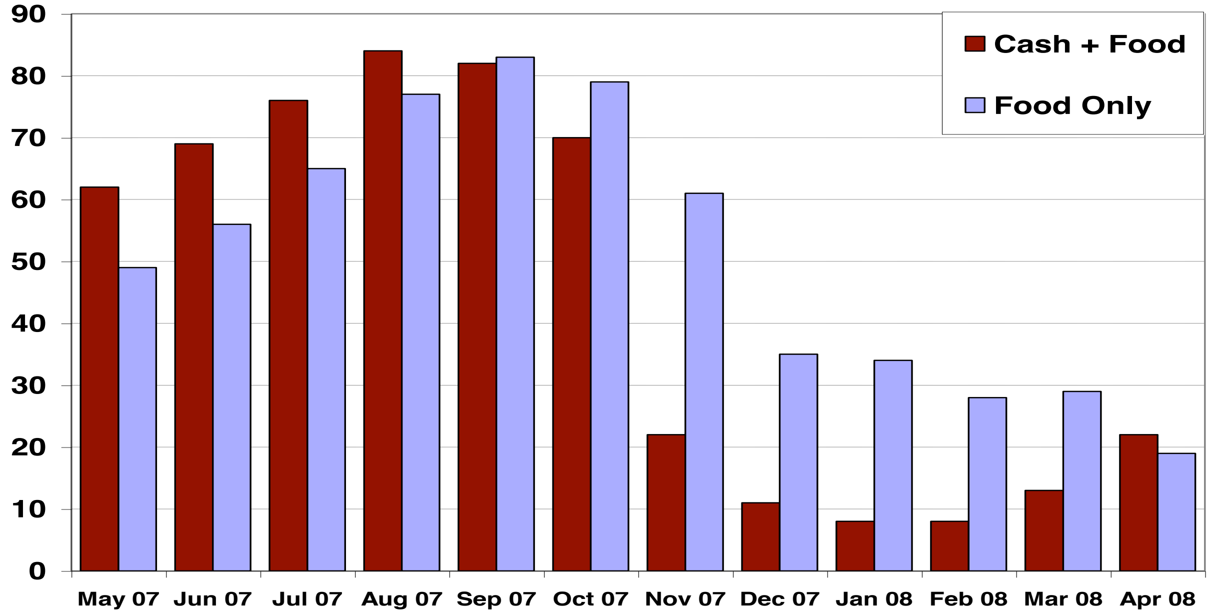
The primary purpose of the EDR project was to support the humanitarian relief programme, which aimed to protect food security in households facing food production deficits and/or loss of income. One way of supporting household food security is to provide free food, and all households in our survey received either a full ration or a half ration of food, comprising 6 kilograms of maize, 0.9 kilograms of beans and 375 ml of cooking oil. The full food ration was considered sufficient to meet the daily subsistence needs (for calories, protein and fat) of each household member.

The first quantitative evidence we have about food security impacts comes from data on how food transfers were used. Almost all respondents (96%) consumed all the food they were given at home, thereby reducing hunger and maintaining minimum food intake levels for themselves and their families. A small minority of respondents reported using some of their food allocations for other purposes; these included sharing some food aid with others (4.0%), feeding some food to their animals (1.3%), selling some or all of their food rations for cash (0.7%), or bartering it for other food items (0.4%) (see Annex Table 10). There were no significant differences in the use of food by respondents who received full rations and those who received half rations. Child-headed households were most inclined to consume all their food aid (98.5%). This evidence of almost complete use of food rations for household consumption suggests both that these interventions were well targeted at families that were in fact food insecure, and that food transfers made a positive contribution to reducing household food insecurity during a difficult year.

The second set of data on food security impacts of the Emergency Drought Relief project relates to the uses of cash transfers. EDR cash recipients received a half ration of food plus enough cash to buy the other half. But the cash transfers were unconditional and could be spent on anything. Nonetheless, all households receiving cash transfers did use some or all of this cash to buy food – either maize (98% of households) or other food items (90%). In terms of actual expenditure, across both ‘cash plus food’ and ‘food only’ recipients, almost half of total household spending was on food (46%). Households receiving full food rations spent E 111 each month on buying additional food (42% of total expenditure). Households receiving both cash and food spent E 206 per month on buying food (51% of total expenditure). ‘Cash plus food’ recipients spent almost double what ‘food only’ recipients spent on food, presumably because their rations were less. Food commodities purchased by frequency were dominated by staple cereals (1. Maize; 2. Maize–meal; 3. Rice), followed by meat (4. Poultry) and pulses (5. Beans).

The third and most powerful evidence we have on the food security impact of the ‘cash plus food’ and ‘food only’ transfers is recall data on self-reported hunger in respondents’ households. The final evaluation questionnaire asked households to report whether they had experienced hunger in each of the previous 12 months. Figure 11 provides convincing evidence for the positive effects of the humanitarian intervention in 2007/08, and particularly for the beneficial impacts of the EDT cash transfers on household food security. Following the failed harvest of April-May 2007, self-reported levels of hunger started rising rapidly among households in our survey, peaking at over 80% in August and September. These prevalence rates fell dramatically as soon as food and cash distributions started, but they fell much more sharply for households that received the EDR ‘cash plus food’ package than for those receiving ‘full food rations’ only. Only 22% of ‘cash plus food’ recipients reported hunger following the first distribution of emergency assistance in November 2007, down from 70% in October. The drop for ‘food only’ recipients was less pronounced: from 79% in October to 61% in November. These downward trends continued into early 2008, with ‘food only’ recipients reporting hunger down to 28% in February, when only 8% of ‘cash plus food’ recipients were still hungry.

Figure 11 Hunger reported by households receiving cash and/or food transfers, 2007/08



The 'cash plus food' transfers clearly protected almost all recipient families against the hunger and food insecurity they were experiencing before the EDR intervention. However, households receiving full food rations were only partially protected. As Table 6 reveals, one-third (34%) of 'food only' recipients continued to face hunger after the intervention started, compared to only one in seven (14%) 'cash plus food' recipients. Since 'cash plus food' recipients reported a higher initial prevalence of hunger, the effectiveness of the intervention can be quantified and compared: hunger dropped to less than one-fifth of pre-intervention levels (from 74% to 14%), while hunger among 'food only' recipients only halved (from 68% to 34%).

Table 6 Hunger reported by households before and after receiving assistance, 2007/08

Period	'Cash + food' recipients	'Food only' recipients
Pre-intervention (May – October 2007)	73.8%	68.2%
During intervention: (November 2007 – April 2008)	14.0%	34.3%
Average prevalence of hunger (May 2007 – April 2008)	43.9%	51.3%

One factor that might confound our interpretation of these findings is the breaks that occurred in the food aid pipeline during early 2008, which meant that food transfers were less regular and less predictable than cash transfers. In January and February approximately 40% of food aid beneficiaries did not receive any oil or pulses, due to disrupted supplies that affected both the government (NDMA) and UN (WFP) food pipelines. 'Cash plus food' recipients were also affected, but not to the same extent. A more serious pipeline break occurred in March and April, when no food aid was distributed at all. (In May, beneficiaries received a double ration of food, but by then the peak of the food crisis had passed.) The EDR monthly monitoring reports noted that spending on food was more "irregular" among 'food only' recipients as a result of these disruptions in food deliveries. Conversely, "the reliability of the cash transfer allows households to plan and budget for their needs." (SC Swaziland, March 2008: 3). Failures of food aid delivery could well explain why food aid appears to have been less effective than cash transfers in protecting household food security during the 2007/08 food crisis in Swaziland, and why levels of self-reported hunger actually started rising among food aid households in March and April 2008.

3.3 Non–food goods and services

All families allocate their spending on a number of non-food goods and services, beyond meeting their subsistence food requirements. Poor families, by definition, spend a larger proportion of their limited budgets on food. Nonetheless, poor families also face an array of demands and needs, for which they require cash. Cash transfers enable recipients to meet these non-food priorities. As noted above, 'food only' recipients could not finance any of these important non–food costs – unless they sold some of their food rations, or their assets. On the other hand, receipt of full food rations does release household resources to spend on other non-food needs, and food recipients did spend significantly on a range of commodities and services, even if their levels of spending were lower than spending by 'cash plus food' recipients (Figure 10).

As seen above, spending of EDR cash transfers was dominated by staple cereals and other food commodities, but almost half (49%) of cash recipient budgets was allocated to various non-food items – from livelihoods to education and health, to groceries, clothing and transport (Figure 9).

1. Groceries: Almost all cash transfer recipients bought groceries (99%) – soap, paraffin, etc. – spending on average E 28 per month (7% of total spending).
2. Health: More than half spent some cash on medical expenses (58%), but spent only E 7 per month (2%). This discrepancy between the high proportion of households that spent money on health care and the small amount of money actually spent is explained by the low cost of public health care in Swaziland, which is heavily subsidised by the government.
3. Education: Two in five cash recipients spent some of this cash on education costs (38%), with an average monthly spend of E 41 (7% of total spending). Education ranked third on the list of spending categories, behind food and livelihoods but ahead of groceries, clothing, transport and health.
4. Clothing: Two in five recipients also bought clothes for themselves and their families (39%), including school uniforms, spending E 15 per month (3%) during the project period.
5. Debts: One–third of cash recipients paid off some of their debts (31%) using this windfall income. This is an important outcome because food crises are often associated with rising levels of indebtedness as poor households are forced to take loans at exploitative rates of interest – instead, the EDR project allowed cash recipients to reduce their indebtedness.
6. Transport: Cash transfer recipients spent E 26 per month (7%) on transport costs, much of this being to travel to cash disbursement points – the nearest post office, bank branch or ATM point. These costs were covered by a supplementary payment from the EDR project.

Cash transfers were disbursed to help poor rural families survive a 'covariate' shock (drought), but they also assisted some households to meet 'idiosyncratic' shocks, such as a death in the family. The rural poor in Swaziland have very limited access to funeral plans or burial societies. One woman whose son died in early 2008 had to buy a coffin for his burial, and allocated almost two months of cash transfers this unforeseen expense. Families with members who had a chronic illness found the cash transfers invaluable for meeting recurrent medical expenses. For example, one woman in a focus group discussion had a diabetic husband, and used most of the monthly cash transfer to pay for medication such as insulin.

An interesting feature that emerges from the monthly monitoring surveys is the concentration of certain categories of spending in particular months. Agricultural seasonality means that spending on inputs (seeds, fertiliser, tractor hire, labour) is concentrated in the early months of the farming season, and this explains why the highest proportion of household investments in 'livelihoods' occurred in November 2007, for both 'cash plus food' and 'food only' recipients – accounting for 33% of total spending in 'food only' households in this month (Figure 13).

Similarly, school fees are due in January (E412 per primary school child per year), and even the poorest families in Swaziland prioritise education as an investment in the future livelihoods of their children. Education costs (fees, uniforms, meals) were highest in January 2008 – averaging

20% and 31% of total spending by 'cash plus food' and 'food only' households, respectively. (Note that, although the proportions of spending on livelihoods and education were higher in 'food only' households, actual expenditures on these and other spending categories were all higher in households that received cash transfers.) The increased spending on education was largely financed by a reallocation within household budgets away from other spending categories, especially food, which fell from 63% to 42% in 'cash plus food' households but fell much more steeply in 'food only' households, from 66% to 24%, recovering to 40% in February (Figure 12 and Figure 13).

Figure 12 Monthly spending, cash transfer recipients, 2007/08

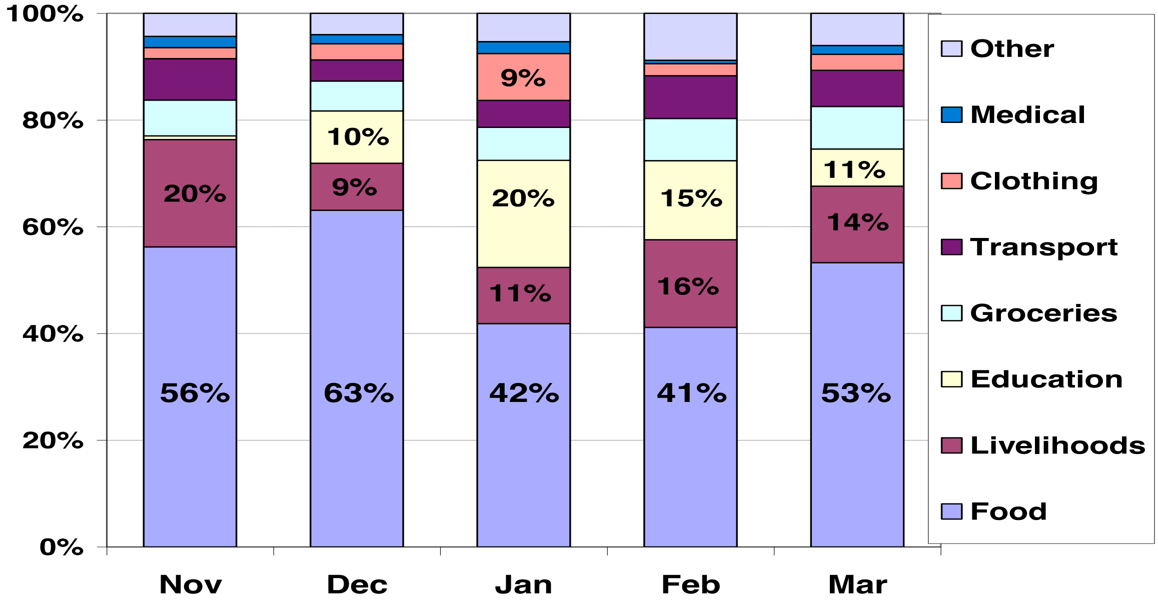
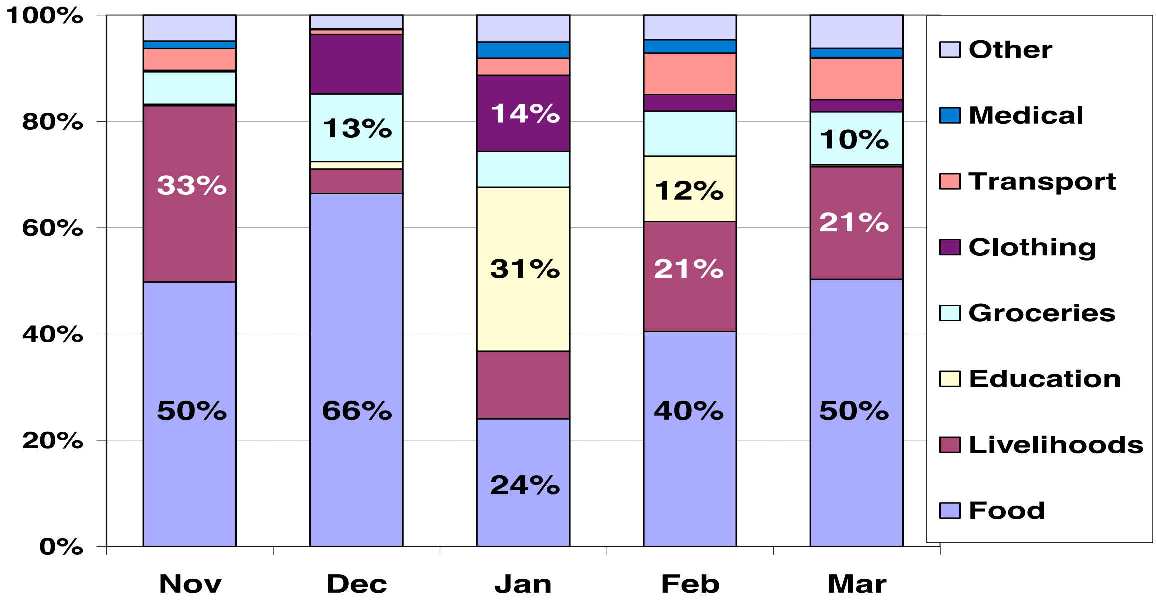


Figure 13 Monthly spending, 'food only' recipients, 2007/08



Monitoring data also revealed a decline in asset ownership among 'food only' recipients between December and January (SC Swaziland, February 2008: 3), quite possibly reflecting a 'forced decapitalisation' by these households to finance education costs through asset sales. The situation among 'cash plus food' recipients was more complex, but they appeared to be better able to protect or even increase their asset holdings, despite facing high school fees in January.

The monthly monitoring report for February commented on the higher instability of spending patterns among 'food only' recipients, who lacked the flexibility to smooth their spending as needs demanded, unlike cash transfer recipients.

> "Whilst there are some stable trends developing in the food and cash group there does not appear to be stability in the expenditure for the food only group. One priority is being sacrificed to meet another. Last month saw a steep decline in expenditure on food in the food only group to cope with the increase in demand for education related costs. Equally the two can be linked in this months' monitoring where food expenditure almost doubles as education needs decrease" (SC Swaziland, March 2008: 3).

3.4 Coping strategies

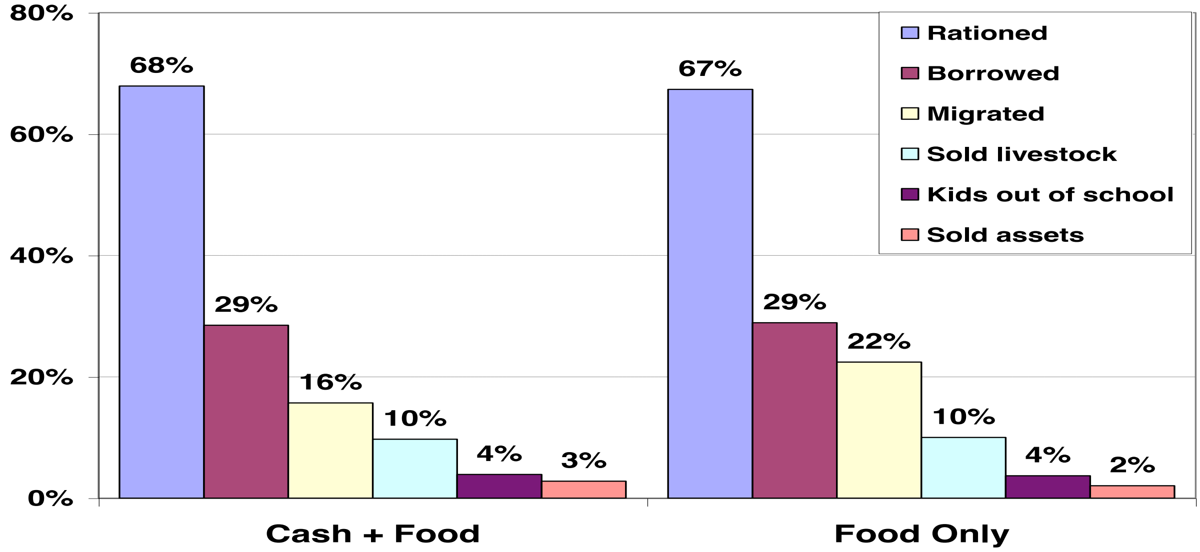
One objective of the EDR project was to enable drought-affected to avoid adopting damaging 'coping strategies'. Empirical studies of seasonality, food crises and famines in Africa concluded that rural African households respond to food stress in similar ways across different countries and contexts. These behavioural adjustments or 'coping strategies' tend to follow a predictable sequence, based on the fundamental strategic objective of minimising nutritional, economic and social costs of food deficits to the household. The immediate and almost universal response to food stress is to ration food consumption (to protect household assets). Households then try to raise cash to finance food purchases (to protect minimum food consumption levels), which they do firstly by drawing on their normal sources of income – agricultural labour, micro-enterprises, selling off-take livestock – and then by resorting to less preferred sources of cash – such as borrowing, migrating in search of work, and selling household assets. Household spending patterns also change, as priorities are adjusted – in particular, non-food spending tends to be reduced (to save money to buy food).

Not all these responses have detrimental consequences, but some are very damaging and can compromise the future viability of household livelihoods. For instance, if reduced spending means cutting back on cigarettes this has no obviously negative implications for household well-being, but if it means withdrawing children from school then the long-term consequences (not least in terms of reduced future earnings potential) are incalculable. Humanitarian interventions generally aim to protect not only lives but also livelihoods, which means ensuring that damaging coping strategies are avoided – for instance, that food or cash transfers are timely and sufficient so that households do not need to sell their productive assets for food.

The evaluation survey asked about a range of coping strategies adopted during the past twelve months (since the 2007 harvest, before and during the intervention period), and found that rates of adoption were high, and followed the sequence predicted by the literature – rationing first, selling assets and withdrawing children from school last (Figure 14). What is striking about this figure is not just the sequencing but also the similarity in adoption rates between 'cash plus food' and 'food only' recipients. Two-thirds of households interviewed (67-68%) rationed their food consumption (they ate smaller portions, or fewer meals per day). Many households also pursued a number of strategies for raising cash to buy food, including: borrowing (29%); migrating for work (19%); selling livestock (10%); and selling other assets (3%). Finally, most households cut their non-food spending, and a small minority did so by withdrawing their children from school (4%).

The high proportion of households that adopted one or more of these coping strategies implies that the receipt of cash and/or food transfers did not fully protect these households against the consequences of the drought and forest fires that devastated harvests and reduced incomes in rural Swaziland in 2007. One possible explanation is that the relief intervention came too late to prevent the adoption of coping strategies that were not needed subsequently – as seen above, levels of hunger were extremely high in the period July to October 2007 (Figure 11), so it is also possible that respondents were reporting on coping strategies adopted before they started receiving cash and/or food transfers.

Figure 14 Coping strategies adopted by drought-affected households, 2007/08



Since none of the differences in coping strategy adoption rates between 'cash plus food' and 'food only' households is statistically significant, it appears that the type of intervention made no difference to this indicator – cash transfers were neither better nor worse than food aid in terms of protecting households against the need to adopt damaging coping strategies to survive this food crisis. This might be explained by recalling that the 'cash plus food' package enabled recipients to access an equivalent amount of food as the full food ration given to 'food only' recipients, so the two transfer packages provided the same level of protection against hunger. Also, both sets of households received food aid and were exposed to the same pipeline break that saw no food deliveries at all in March and April (with no compensating increase in cash payments). Finally, these data only tell us about the rate of adoption of different strategies, not how intensively they were adopted. Other indicators (such as asset depletion, as mentioned above) suggest that 'food only' recipients might have been forced to pursue damaging responses to food insecurity to a more severe degree than did recipients of cash transfers.

3.5 Livelihoods, assets and savings

Many project beneficiaries invested some of the cash they received in their family farms (24%) or their businesses (11%). Spending on livelihoods was second only to food, amounting to 16% of total household spending. On average, all households surveyed invested E57 each month on their livelihood activities (or a total of E342 over the six months), out of a total monthly budget of E362. This figure was almost identical between both categories of beneficiaries, but was higher as a proportion of total spending in 'food only' (21%) than in 'cash plus food' households (14%). For farming households this spending contributed substantially towards the costs of fertiliser (E120-150 in 2007) and tractor hire (E120/hour) (FAO/WFP, 2007: 9-10).

Many cash recipients invested some of this money in micro-enterprises that multiplied this income and generated additional income (see Box 3).

Box 3 Woman trader, Siphofaneni

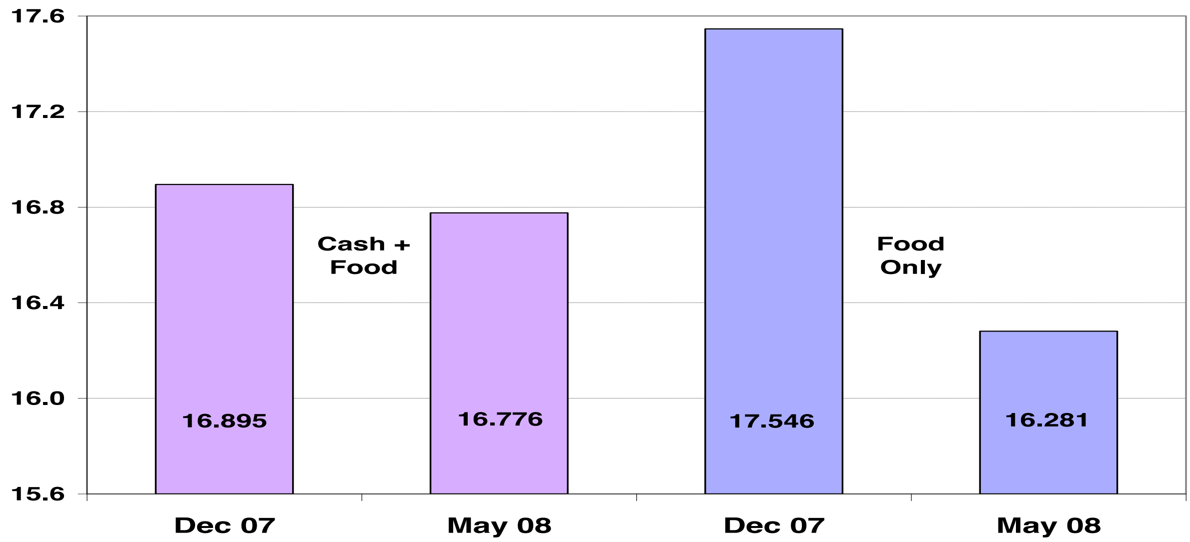
One woman who was a 'cash plus food' beneficiary of the EDR project sells snack foods for a living. Before the EDR project she estimates that she spent E 30 on ingredients and sold snacks for E 60 on an average working day, making a profit of E 30. When the EDR project started she started selling raw peanuts and cooked jugo beans to people queuing for their cash outside Siphofaneni Post Office. On an average pay-day she spent E 60 on peanuts and jugo beans and sold these for E 120, making a profit of E 60 – double her normal profit.

As noted above, one objective of any humanitarian response to food crisis is to protect the assets of affected families against 'decapitalisation' (selling or exchanging assets for food). A more ambitious secondary objective of cash transfers (though not of food aid) is to facilitate asset accumulation that will strengthen the household's asset base and support post-crisis recovery. Data from the final evaluation survey confirms that both these objectives were achieved by the EDR cash transfers. Not only were cash recipient households better able to conserve their assets during the project intervention period, these cash transfers also contributed significantly to asset accumulation by many beneficiary households.

In terms of the proportion of households that owned different assets, there are no significant differences between households that received 'cash plus food' and those that received 'food only' transfers. For instance, 23% of 'cash plus food' and 22% of 'food only' households owned cattle, 82% and 81% (respectively) owned chickens, 17% and 18% owned a plough, and 57% of both groups owned radios (see Annex Table 12). This suggests that the two groups of beneficiary households were at similar wealth levels.

In terms of numbers of assets owned, however, 'food only' recipients had slightly higher asset holdings when the intervention started in late 2007. But a simple count of assets reveals that food recipients suffered a 7.2% decline in their asset holdings during the intervention period, whereas cash recipients managed to protect their assets, losing only (a statistically non-significant) 0.7% of their assets during this period (Figure 15). (Of course, this 'asset counting' method does not convey the real value of these assets – further analysis incorporating asset prices is needed to quantify these changes.) We can therefore conclude that the cash transfers distributed by the EDR project served the purpose of asset protection in beneficiary households, and did this more effectively than food transfers did.

Figure 15 Changes in asset ownership, December 2007 to May 2008



Not only did cash transfers allow assets to be protected against 'distress sales' for food, EDR cash was also used to accumulate assets. Of 1,225 households surveyed that received cash transfers, 107 (8.7%) bought chickens with this cash, 62 (5.1%) bought hoes, 35 (2.9%) bought goats, 26 (2.1%) bought radios, 25 (2.0%) bought pigs and smaller numbers bought axes, beds, wardrobes, even cattle and, in one case, a plough (Table 7). Although the percentages of households that acquired assets are quite small, extrapolating from our sample to all households that received cash transfers suggests that substantial numbers of households accumulated useful assets through the EDR project. Estimated total households that acquired livestock are as follows: chickens (655 households), goats (214), pigs (153), cattle (18). Estimated households that acquired farm implements are: hoes (378), axes (98), ploughs (6). Estimated households that acquired household goods are: radio (159), bed (37), wardrobe (12).

Table 7 Reasons for changes in asset ownership

Asset	Sold/exchanged for food		Sold for other reasons		Bought using cash transfers
	Cash + Food	Food only	Cash + Food	Food only	
Livestock					
Cattle	10 (8.2%)	2 (0.4%)	17 (1.4%)	2 (0.4%)	3 (0.2%)
Donkey	1 (0.1%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Pig	5 (0.4%)	8 (1.6%)	3 (0.2%)	0 (0.0%)	25 (2.0%)
Goat	16 (1.3%)	6 (1.2%)	21 (1.7%)	9 (1.8%)	35 (2.9%)
Chicken	48 (3.9%)	35 (7.1%)	20 (1.6%)	4 (0.8%)	107 (8.7%)
Farm implements					
Tractor	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Plough	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.1%)
Ox-cart	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Hoe	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	62 (5.1%)
Axe	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	16 (1.3%)
Household goods					
Car	1 (0.1%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.2%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Bicycle	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Radio	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	26 (2.1%)
Wardrobe	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.4%)
Bed	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (0.5%)
Total households	1,225	491	1,225	491	1,225

Apart from physical assets (livestock, farm tools, furniture), another asset is financial – savings. Traditionally, savings in rural Swaziland are held in the form of livestock – *"animals breed, but cash does not!"* Many people are members of savings clubs, because they provide access to a form of informal insurance (lump-sums can be withdrawn when a member faces an unforeseen shock or major expense). In our survey, 14% of 'cash plus food' recipients were members of savings clubs before the EDR project started, and a further 13.8% joined a savings club after the project started. So the cash transfer caused membership of savings clubs to double. Some 16.5% of cash recipients deposited an average of E117 of this cash into their savings club.

Unlike cash held at home, cash saved in banks does 'breed' – it earns interest – and one reason for opening bank accounts for project participants was to give them access to financial services, including deposit facilities. People who are running small businesses can derive great value from saving some of their profits, or leaving money as working capital in the bank. One-third of cash transfer recipients (32.4%) left some of this money in their bank accounts for savings purposes. On average, E205 was saved by the end of the EDR project. One woman who raises chickens and pigs for income said: *"I deposit E50 at Score Supermarket every time I receive the cash. I do this so that I could buy food amounting to the savings at the end of the year".*

3.6 Impacts on children

The Emergency Drought Response project reached large numbers of children. On average, beneficiary households included 1.1 children under five years old and 2.5 children aged 6-15, equally divided between boys and girls. Extrapolating from our survey to the 7,650 households reached by the EDR, this means that more than 8,300 under-fives and 19,000 6-15 year-olds, or 27,000 children under 15 years old in total, were directly supported by this intervention (Table 8).

Table 8 Children and orphans who benefited from the EDR intervention

Children surveyed	M	F	Total	per hh	Total EDR
Children 0-5	951	986	1,937	1.1	8,306
Children 6-15	2,275	2,177	4,452	2.5	19,091
Total	**3,226**	**3,163**	**6,389**	**3.6**	**27,397**
Children per household	1.8	1.8	3.6		
Single–parent orphans	983	904	1,887	1.1	8,092
Double–parent orphans	318	308	626	0.4	2,684
Total	**1,301**	**1,212**	**2,513**	**1.4**	**10,776**
Orphans per household	0.7	0.7	1.4		

The EDR intervention had a particular concern with supporting vulnerable children. Our survey finds that there were 1.4 single- or double-parent orphans living in each beneficiary household, or a total of 10,776 orphans in the 7,650 EDR households – close to 8,100 single-parent and 2,700 double-parent (Table 8).

In focus group discussions, children commented on the EDR project, identifying several economic and social impacts in addition to those discussed above. Economic benefits of the cash included: *"We always have enough food now"; "People are no longer starving"; "I have new clothes and shoes", "My parents have paid my school fees"; "The money pays my bus fare to school".* A few children reported misuse of cash transfers: *"My brother said he will go to South Africa to buy a cell phone"; "Men don't return home on pay-days; some have found other women to spend the money with".* A positive social impact was mentioned by one teenager: *"The crime rate has decreased, the youth in the community are now behaving well."* Some adults reported that young girls were no longer engaging in transactional sex for cash or food, since the project provided them with enough cash to meet their basic needs. One negative social impact was noted in child-headed households where cash transfers were controlled by carers on the child's behalf: *"Children disrespect their grandmothers, and claim that the money belongs to them."* Overall, most communities reported that the impacts of the project on children were entirely positive, and there were no unintended negative effects.

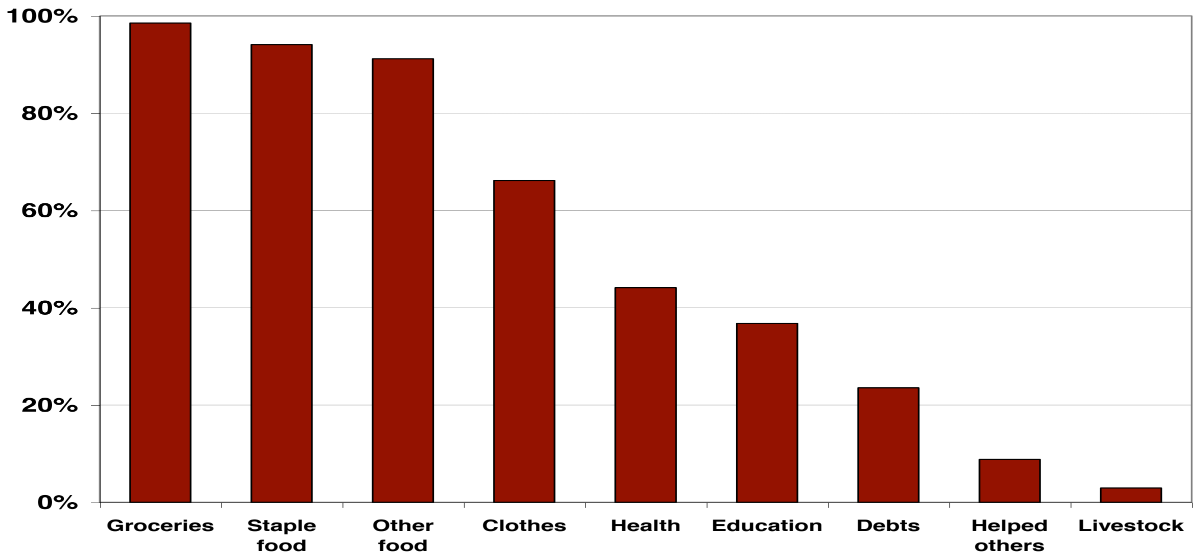
Child-headed households were also singled out as a priority beneficiary group, and several impacts of the project on children and specifically on child-headed households were monitored separately. Below we examine two quantitative indicators of the project's impact on children: spending of cash transfers, and food intake ('dietary diversity').

3.6.1 Cash spending by and on children

Child–headed households in Swaziland are poorer and more vulnerable than adult-headed households. Expenditure data from our final evaluation survey found that the average monthly spending of child-headed households was E257. This was 21% less than female–headed households (E311), and 39% less than spending by male–headed households (E356).

Child–headed households spent their cash transfers very responsibly, prioritising basic needs (food, groceries, clothing), followed by health and education (Figure 16). Some also used cash transfers to pay off debts, and a smaller number shared their windfall income with others. This pattern of spending priorities mirrors the allocation of cash transfers by adult-headed households very closely (Figure 8), except that child-headed households did not report investing in farming or business, presumably because most are too young to farm or run a business. It should also be noted that much of the spending of cash transfers by adult-headed households was directed to children – not only for food and other basic needs (one parent stated: *"We are able to feed our* *children without them going to steal"*), but also to support children's education (school fees, uniforms), which absorbed a heavy proportion of total spending in January.

Figure 16 Spending of cash transfers by child-headed households



Lower spending implies not only higher levels of poverty but also higher levels of vulnerability. Evidence for this comes from data on coping strategies adopted by child-headed households. 90% of child–headed households rationed food during 2008, compared to 68% of adult–headed households. This suggests that the food insecurity of child-headed households was higher, and that they need targeted attention in terms of social protection even in non-crisis years.

3.6.2 Child nutrition

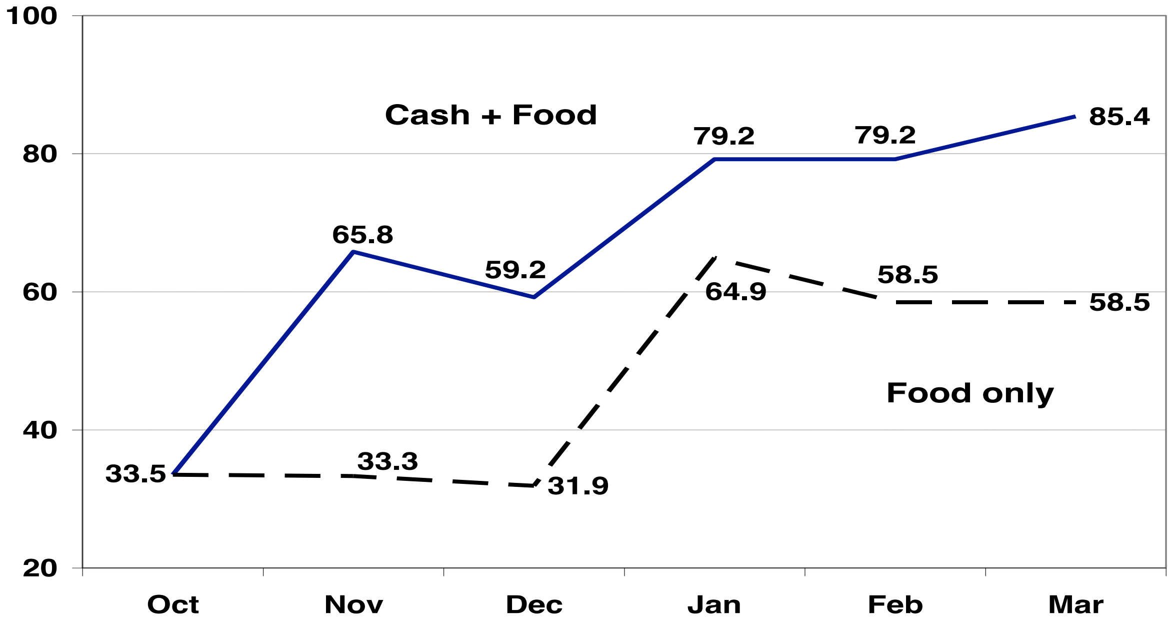
Monitoring data provides striking evidence of the beneficial impacts of EDR cash transfers on children's nutrition and food security status. One indicator that was monitored monthly was 'dietary diversity' in beneficiary households, defined as the number of food groups consumed by household members. ('Food groups' included cereals, milk, meat, vegetables, fruit, legumes, and oil or fat). Summarising the results reveals a strong upward trend in dietary diversity among children during the project period, for both groups of beneficiaries. However, a higher proportion of children achieved an adequate dietary diversity[5] in 'cash plus food' households than in 'food only' households. At the time of the baseline survey in October 2007, only one-third of children (33%) were recorded an appropriately diverse diet. This figure remained constant in November for children of 'food only' beneficiaries, but doubled to two-thirds (66%) in households that received cash. By March this proportion was well above 80%, and had also risen in 'food only' households, to slightly below 60% (Figure 17).

So 'cash plus food' households not only enjoyed an immediate and sustained improvement in their diets, as measured by dietary diversity – which has been proven to be a robust proxy for food security (Hoddinott and Yisehac Yohannes, 2002) – they also consumed consistently more diverse diets than 'food only' households throughout the project period. As Save the Children noted in successive monthly monitoring reports, the logical explanation is that cash transfers provided access to an unlimited range of foods through market purchase, while food aid recipients were limited to the maize, beans and oil they were given.

[5] Age-specific scores were used to ascertain whether dietary diversity was adequate or not: for children 6-9 months old, the diet was adequate if the child had consumed at least 2 different food groups; for children 9-12 months the diet was adequate if the child had consumed at least 3 different food groups; and for children 12-36 months, the diet was adequate if the child had consumed at least 4 different food groups.

> "Though an increase in diversity of diet is observed for the food only, it is not as significant as that seen for the food and cash intervention. This may due to the fact that households with cash are able to buy a more diverse diet than those without, thus the increase" (SC Swaziland, February 2008: 5).

Figure 17 Children with adequate dietary diversity (% of households)



3.7 Impacts on women

Save the Children Swaziland took a decision to ensure that women were the direct recipients of cash and food transfers wherever possible. The reasoning for this is that women are generally considered to be poorer and more vulnerable than men, and because women are the primary carers for children, who were an important target group for support from this project. Disbursing cash in particular to women was intended to ensure that the benefits would accrue to children, and was also intended to empower women. The majority (90%) of the registered beneficiaries and account-holders were women. Not surprisingly, female-headed households comprised a significant proportion of the beneficiaries (43% of the 'cash plus food' group), because they generally fall into the poorest wealth groups within rural communities.

Although the cash transfers were intended to benefit the entire household, women who collected the cash usually took primary responsibility for deciding on how to spend the cash and how to use the food within the family, even in male–headed households. Women in one focus group told us that when they received the cash they spent most of it immediately on food and groceries, leaving very little for their husbands. Interestingly, although there were concerns before the project that nominating women as cash recipients and account-holders could cause intra-household conflict between men and women, men tended to agree with giving the cash to women. *"We just give all the money to our wives because they know what to buy."* One man in another focus group discussion dissented from the dominant view. *"I am the one who decides what to buy, I never give the money to the woman. Even before the programme I was the one who knew what and what not to by as a provider in the household."* In other households husbands and wives decided jointly on how the cash transfers should be spent, but this was apparently a minority of cases.

A surprising finding was that when a conflict over the use of cash did occur, it was more usually between adults and children than between husbands and wives. Especially in female-headed households, children sometimes confronted their parents or carers and demanded their 'share' of the cash transfer. This might have been an unintended consequence of the way the calculation of the cash payment level was explained to recipients: individuals representing family members stood up and each was allocated E30. Of course this did not mean that each household member should be given E30, but that this amount covered the costs of each person's half-ration of food. Older carers such as grandmothers were particularly susceptible to pressures to divide up the cash, from their grandchildren or orphans in their care.

One anecdote inverted the popular prejudice that men given cash transfers will waste it on drink. A woman who received cash transfers allegedly always returned home drunk on pay-days and spent very little of the cash on the family's needs. One of her children complained: *"She only knows to buy herself new clothes and drink."*

Many more reports confirmed that women tended to spend their cash transfers very 'responsibly' (from an observer's perspective) on meeting their family's needs for food, groceries, education, transport, clothing, health, and other necessities. The evaluation survey also showed that 14% of female-headed households used some of the cash for starting or investing in business ventures, which can be interpreted as a positive indicator of economic empowerment for these poor and vulnerable women. Common business activities included petty retailing – buying and re-selling second-hand clothes or cloths, vegetables, fruit, meat and other commodities for small profits – and cooking food for sale (groundnuts, bread, mealie-meal and relish, and so on).

3.8 Markets

The success of cash transfer programmes depends to a considerable extent on the response of markets, and during food crises there are always concerns that scarcity of food will simply fuel price inflation, making cash transfers an inappropriate response. On the other hand, boosting purchasing power can stimulate markets and encourage more competitive trade. Evidence for both these negative and positive effects of the EDR cash transfers is considered here.

A market feasibility study conducted before the EDR intervention started reached the following conclusions about the responsiveness of food markets to cash transfers (de Matteis, 2007: 4):

- "The market will respond fairly well to an injection of cash and supply should increase. Inflationary pressures linked to the cash injection will need monitoring.
- Traders are confident with their ability to access additional commodities and financial resources to meet an increase in demand.
- Food price inflation induced by a cash transfer intervention is anticipated at a relatively low level."

Specifically, the market feasibility study predicted that transferring a combination of cash transfers equivalent to 944 kcal plus a half-ration of food aid to 5,000 households would push up food prices in Lubombo and Shiselweni by 5-7%. "It is recommended to adjust the size of the transfer to the reported price increase" (de Matteis, 2007: 4). In fact, as discussed earlier in this report, price monitoring data revealed that food prices rose sharply in Lubombo and Shiselweni during the project period, by much more than 5-7%. The estimated cost of a half food ration in January 2008 was E 41.3, fully 37% higher than the baseline costing exercise in October 2007 which fixed the monthly cash payment at E 30 per capita (see Figure 3). But Save the Children decided not to peg cash transfers to food price fluctuations, for reasons also discussed above.

Did the cash transfer cause food price inflation? There is no definitive way of answering this key question without comparing price trends in project areas with prices outside project areas, but prices were monitored only at markets within the project areas. In their monthly monitoring reports, Save the Children acknowledged that price inflation was occurring but argued that the reasons were independent of the EDR intervention, being supply- rather than demand-driven.

> “The price tracking shows that imported goods, including oil, have risen in price but locally produced goods have not increased significantly. The price of maize has remained fairly constant throughout the project period despite globally increasing substantially. It is possible it was purchased early using forward contracts. Inflation in country is being driven by supply rather than demand. ... In Gege our trader commented that he is not able to increase the price since he knows that people will not buy the maize. He is currently making zero profit on maize but says that his only business comes in around the week of the cash transfer when he is able to sell other products as well” (SC Swaziland, April 2008: 6).

Our qualitative evidence from focus group discussions and key informant interviews presents a mixed picture. According to community leaders and Relief Committee members, cash transfers had no impact on food prices – they were already increasing before the intervention came to their communities. Local traders did however respond to the increased purchasing power that cash transfers conveyed. Shops increased their stocks of food and grocery commodities, including mealie–meal, bread, sugar, cooking oil, candles and soap. Some focus groups of cash recipients claimed that shop owners raised the prices of basic commodities on cash collection days, taking advantage of the ‘windfall income’ that caused recipients to be less price conscious than usual. Similarly, some communities mentioned that the cost of milling maize increased, partly due to rising electricity costs but partly because of perceptions by millers that people were given cash to pay for milling their food rations.

We therefore conclude that the EDR project probably had no aggregate impact on prices of basic food commodities in Swaziland, especially for maize and mealie-meal, because the incremental purchasing power generated by the cash transfers was tiny in relation to total demand. (At the national level, import volumes are driven primarily by demand from large permanent markets such as Swaziland’s urban centres.) At the local level, however, traders, shop-keepers and millers did display opportunistic behaviour, such as raising prices on cash transfer pay-days, but this effect was neither significant nor sustained.

On the positive side, supplies of food and other basic commodities in local shops and markets definitely responded positively to signals of increased demand, as reflected in rising stocks following the disbursement of cash transfers. Local traders reported positive changes in their business during the cash transfer period – increased demand and higher sales, leading to higher turnover and profits. Traders in local markets prepared for pay-days by getting extra supplies in advance to sell to beneficiaries. There was a noticeable increase in trade activities that were directly attributable to the cash disbursement. Traders came to Post Offices and ATMs on pay-days from near and far, and established temporary markets to take advantage of the surge in purchasing power created by the cash transfers. In Siphofaneni, a Traders Committee responded by actively discouraging traders from outside the area, to protect local business and, according to one local trader, to *“protect our poor people against exploitation by traders from other areas who take their money and then disappear”.*

People who collected their cash immediately purchased maize and other food items, clothes, cooking utensils, farm tools and a range of consumer goods. Some project participants also took advantage of the ‘economic boom’ by selling cooked or raw food, sweets and iced water to other people queuing outside the Post Office (as seen in Box 3 above). Although the magnitude of this ‘multiplier effect’ cannot be quantified from the available data, it is clear that the cash transfers contributed to a stimulation of the local economy that generated significant income gains, not only for cash recipients but also for people who sold goods and services to them.

This effect was most obvious from observation of economic activity around pay-points on cash pay-days, but it extended far beyond the pay-points and persisted longer than the pay-day itself. Qualitative data from case studies and focus group discussions with cash recipients revealed a wide range of livelihood activities that were part-financed with cash transfers. Apart from farming for income (growing cotton or vegetables for sale), these included a number of non-agricultural small businesses, such as handicrafts, baking bread or brewing beer, retailing vegetables, cooking snack foods, and raising chickens or pigs for sale. Interestingly, some cash recipients joined forces with others to invest in joint activities. One group formed to buy watering pipes, pooling their cash to install an irrigation system for their gardens. Another group of farmers used their cash transfers to service a generator which was used for irrigating their vegetables.

Cash transfers provided vital working capital for all these micro-enterprises, and it is likely that the income of several households will shift to a higher level, possibly even contributing to sustainable poverty reduction. However, the evaluation survey was conducted too close to the end of the EDR project to assess the magnitude and sustainability of these wider economic impacts.

Chapter 4 Conclusions, Lessons Learned and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

Save the Children Swaziland printed a T-shirt for EDR project staff to wear, bearing the slogan: ***"Cash for Choice Dignity Empowerment"***. Did the project achieve these ambitions? One way of assessing this is to judge whether the nine hypotheses that were tested by the cash transfers should be accepted (successfully achieved) or rejected (not achieved, or insufficient information). But first we should also assess whether the primary objective – the humanitarian response – was successfully enhanced by the EDR cash and food transfers.

Humanitarian intervention:

- ✓ *Cash transfers contribute effectively to national emergency response.*

  There is no doubt that cash recipients suffered less hunger and food insecurity during the food crisis than they would have done without this assistance. There is also compelling evidence that cash recipients were better protected than food recipients during this period, because cash met a larger range of food and non-food needs and because cash transfers were not subject to the pipeline breaks that disrupted food deliveries.

Cash piloting – hypothesis testing:

- ✓ *Cash improves nutrition, measured by more diverse diets*
- ✓ *Cash allows purchase of essential non-food items*
- ✓ *Cash is invested in assets and livelihood activities that increase incomes*
- ? *Local markets are strengthened by cash injections, and inflation does not rise as a result*
- ✗ *Harmful coping strategies are avoided*
- ? *Caring practices for children improve*
- ✓ *Women are empowered by receiving cash*
- ✓ *Cash delivery systems are appropriate, timely, safe, well targeted and could be scaled up*
- ✓ *Beneficiaries are more sympathetic to cash transfers than before the intervention.*

Seven of the ten hypotheses are assessed favourably, for two hypotheses the evidence is inconclusive, and one hypothesis is rejected. The evidence on market impacts (inflation and multiplier effects) is mixed, though generally positive, and post-project monitoring is needed to assess sustainability of multiplier effects. The evidence on child care practices is too limited to draw definitive conclusions about whether cash transfers made a difference. The data on coping strategies found that two-thirds of cash recipients and two-thirds of food recipients rationed their food consumption during the six months before and/or six months during the EDR intervention, suggesting either that the assistance was delivered too late or that food aid pipeline disruptions affected 'cash plus food' as well as 'food only' recipients.

Overall, the flexibility of cash transfers, diligent attention by Save the Children to 'customer care' aspects, and the decision to target women and child-headed households combined to ensure that the EDR cash transfers did indeed deliver *"choice, dignity and empowerment".*

4.2 Lessons learned

1. Cash transfers were an appropriate and effective response to the food crisis in Swaziland, because food markets are well functioning and rural household food security derives largely from a combination of food production and market purchase.

2. The effectiveness of cash disbursement was strengthened by heavy investment of project resources at the design and implementation stages in community mobilisation, targeting and verification, training of cash recipients in various relevant issues, and an array of monitoring and evaluation activities.

3. The accuracy and level of detail required for delivering cash transfers (including securing ID documents and opening bank accounts) was more rigorous than for registering people for food aid. More time and training were needed to complete the documentation correctly, but it also ensured a more comprehensive and accurate database, which in turn ensured improved targeting and more precise calibration of entitlements.

4. The switch from manual distribution of food aid to technological distribution of cash transfers was readily accepted by beneficiaries, who adopted the technology (with Save the Children's assistance) with little difficulty. But multiple technologies were involved – automated teller machines (ATMs), point-of-sale (POS) devices, ATM cards and a computerised database – which created some technical problems that delayed the migration from Post Office to bank.

5. Food transfers were more cost-effective overall than cash transfers, but mainly because of differences in wholesale costs of importing food *versus* retail costs of buying food locally; in terms of delivery and management expenses, delivering cash was significantly cheaper.

6. Cash transfers provided more flexibility than food transfers in household budgeting, allowing recipients to smooth food consumption and to meet a range of non–food spending priorities, especially education expenses and investment in farming and non-farm livelihood activities.

7. Combining cash with food transfers provided added advantage and benefits to beneficiaries (e.g. when the food aid pipeline was disrupted, cash recipients were better cushioned), and the combination of 'half cash, half food' was preferred by over 90% of survey respondents.

8. Children benefited from the programme, both by having cash transfers spent by their parents on addressing children's needs (food, education, health, clothing, etc) and by child-headed households receiving cash directly, which they generally managed very responsibly.

4.3 Recommendations for future cash programming

1. Starting up cash transfer activities takes time to do properly, but since time is limited during emergencies, cash transfer procedures must be mainstreamed into disaster preparedness, in Swaziland and elsewhere.

2. A manual for delivering cash transfers should be produced, drawing on the procedures developed and lessons learned from the Emergency Drought Response project, for use in future social protection programming, in Swaziland and other countries.

3. Since the requirement for formal ID documents is a barrier to accessing financial services for poor people with no documentation, a national registration drive should be implemented, or locally adapted beneficiary identification systems should be considered in future interventions.

4. To improve the accessibility of cash to physically vulnerable people, mobile banking services should be considered, to deliver cash closer to recipients' homes (as is done with food aid).

5. Financial literacy is crucial for migrating from manual ('pull') to technological ('push') cash disbursement systems, so adequate time and support for financial literacy (understanding bank accounts, using ATMs, managing cash) must be built into future cash programming.

6. If maintaining constant household access to food is the primary objective of an emergency cash transfer intervention, prices must be monitored closely and cash payment levels should be adjusted every disbursement, to track food price fluctuations.

7. Business enterprises that were financed with EDR cash transfers should be monitored for several months after the project ends, to determine their commercial profitability and the sustainability of the beneficial livelihood impacts of the intervention.

8. The use of bank accounts and ATM facilities should be monitored after the project ends, to establish whether participants derived sustainable access to financial services.

9. Close attention should always be paid to the social impacts of cash transfers – both positive (reduced crime and transactional sex) and negative (resentment between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, 'misuse' of cash, intra-family conflicts between genders and generations).

10. All available evidence confirms that child–headed households are especially vulnerable, so they need specifically targeted social protection measures, even in non-emergency contexts.

References

Beswick, Claire (June 2008) **Distributing cash through bank accounts: Save the Children's drought response in Swaziland**. Marshalltown, South Africa: FinMark Trust

de Matteis, Alessandro (August 2007) **Feasibility Study for Cash Transfers in Swaziland: An Analysis of Market Functioning**. Mbabane: Save the Children Swaziland

Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) (2007) 'New National Survey Finds 19 Percent of the Swazi Population Aged Two and Older Has HIV', **Press Release**. http://www.measuredhs.com/ aboutdhs/pressroom/Release_archives/070628.cfm. Accessed 22/06/2008

Devereux, S. (2008). **Innovations in the Design and Delivery of Social Transfers: Lessons Learned from Malawi**. London: Concern Worldwide

FAO/WFP (May 2007) **Special Report: FAO/WFP Crop And Food Supply Assessment Mission to Swaziland**. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization, World Food Programme

Hoddinott, J. and Yisehac Yohannes (2002) 'Dietary Diversity as a Food Security Indicator', **FCND Discussion Paper No.136**. Washington DC: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)

Save the Children Swaziland and World Food Programme (November 2007) **Emergency Drought Response (Cash & Food Transfers): Baseline, Monitoring and Evaluation Plan**. Mbabane: Save the Children Swaziland

Save the Children Alliance (February 2008) **Emergency Drought Response Swaziland: Situation Report #10, February 2008**. Mbabane: Save the Children Swaziland

Save the Children Swaziland (December 2007) **Emergency Drought Response: 1st Monthly Monitoring Report**. Mbabane: Save the Children Swaziland

Save the Children Swaziland (January 2008) **Emergency Drought Response Project (Cash Transfers): Baseline Report**. Mbabane: Save the Children Swaziland

Save the Children Swaziland (February 2008) **Emergency Drought Response: 3rd Monthly Monitoring Report**. Mbabane: Save the Children Swaziland

Save the Children Swaziland (March 2008) **Emergency Drought Response: 4th Monthly Monitoring Report**. Mbabane: Save the Children Swaziland

Save the Children Swaziland (April 2008) **Emergency Drought Response: 5th Monthly Monitoring Report**. Mbabane: Save the Children Swaziland

Swaziland Vulnerability Assessment Committee (VAC) (2006) **Swaziland Vulnerability Assessment Report**. Mbabane: Swazi VAC

Swaziland Vulnerability Assessment Committee (VAC) (April 2007) **Swaziland Livelihood Vulnerability Analysis: A Rapid Assessment Report**. Mbabane: Swazi VAC

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2005) **Human Development Report 2005**. New York: UNDP

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2008) **Human Development Report 2007/2008: Country Fact Sheets – Swaziland**. http://hdrstats.undp.org/countries/ country_fact_sheets/cty_fs_SWZ.html. Accessed 22/06/2008.

Annex Tables

Table 9 Detailed breakdown of food and cash distribution costs (E/ household/month)

Costs	Food	Cash	Explanation
Direct Costs			
Bank charges		20.00	Bank charge per transfer
	0.04	0.04	Monthly charges / beneficiaries
Delivery charges	8.64		E95 per tonne = enough food for 11 families (6.5 people per household)
Food Costs			
Maize	182.00		Prices quoted from NDMA 28 * 6.5
Pulses	104.00		Prices quoted from NDMA 16 * 6.5
Oil	58.50		Prices quoted from NDMA 9 * 6.5
Cash Payment		468.37	Based on latest prices *6.5
Support Costs			
Vehicle costs			
Car Hire	5.00		2 x vehicles hired purely for food distribution
Fuel & R&M	7.50	0.88	Food based on actual project costs Cash based on assumption of 1,400 Km per month (7 days * 200Km) + 1,250Km M&E
HR Costs			
Field Staff			
Field Co-ordinator	2.25		Based on Jabulani and Bongani salaries
Field Officers	7.00	2.33	Under cash – assumption that 4 Field Officers could perform work
Drivers	1.49	0.50	Assumed that only 2 drivers required under cash only programme
Support Staff			
Finance staff	0.00	0.38	Based on 25% of time spent on cash distribution work
Logistics staff	1.91		Based on monthly salary / 6,000
Warehouse officers	0.28		Musa's salary / 6,000
Loaders	2.17		10 loaders at Sipho + 4 at Nhlangano @ E 50 per day
Security Guards	1.09		6 guards at 1,091 pm
Administration Costs			
Printing costs			
Ration cards	0.14		0.82 each divided by life of the project
Waybills etc	0.90		42 books for the programme cost E 5,380
Communications	0.92	0.23	Assume 75% drop in comms bill due to less staff
One-off costs			
Registration costs		0.61	Based on extra 15 mins per household over the project life to give a monthly cost. Ben # * 0.25 Hrs / 8 Hrs per day / 30 days pm * salary pm / Ben # / 6 months.
Training costs		4.58	GBP 11K * 15 / 6,000 / 6

Table 10 Use of food transfers

Use of Food	Cash + Food		Food Only		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Ate all the food	1,176	96.0%	478	97.4%	1,721	96.5%
Gave some food away, ate the rest	48	3.9%	23	4.7%	71	4.0%
Gave some food to livestock as feed	17	1.4%	6	1.2%	24	1.3%
Bartered some food for other food	11	0.9%	1	0.2%	12	0.7%
Bartered some food for other things	4	0.3%	2	0.4%	6	0.3%
Gave some food as payment, ate rest	5	0.4%	0	0.0%	5	0.3%
Sold all food for cash	3	0.2%	1	0.2%	4	0.2%
Sold some food to buy other food	3	0.2%	1	0.2%	4	0.2%
Sold some food and ate the rest	3	0.2%	1	0.2%	4	0.2%
Bartered all the food for other food	3	0.2%	1	0.2%	4	0.2%
Bartered all the food for other things	2	0.2%	1	0.2%	3	0.2%
Gave all the food away to others	2	0.2%	1	0.2%	3	0.2%
Gave all food to others as payment	2	0.2%	0	0.0%	2	0.1%
Other	3	0.2%	0	0.0%	3	0.2%
Total	1,225	100%	491	100%	1,784	100%

Table 11 Coping strategies

LIvelihood zone	Intervention group	Ate less food	Reduced number of meals per day	Sold livestock to buy food	Sold other assets to buy food	Family members migrated for work	Borrowed food or cash to buy food	Took children out of school
Lowveld Maize & Cattle	Cash & food	61.9%	58.1%	14.0%	3.0%	19.0%	35.0%	4.3%
	Food only	55.1%	46.2%	15.3%	2.0%	25.6%	32.9%	4.0%
	CHH	88.5%	76.9%	7.7%	0.0%	26.9%	46.2%	0.0%
	Total	60.7%	55.2%	14.2%	2.6%	21.0%	34.7%	4.1%
Timber Highlands	Cash & food	77.2%	75.3%	3.1%	2.5%	10.6%	18.5%	3.3%
	Food only	86.8%	72.6%	1.6%	2.1%	17.4%	22.6%	3.2%
	CHH	90.5%	81.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.1%	28.6%	2.4%
	Total	80.5%	74.9%	2.5%	2.2%	12.2%	20.2%	3.2%

Table 12 Asset ownership (households owning, by transfers received)

Assets	Cash + Food	Food only	Total [-CHH]
Cattle	287 (23.4%)	108 (22.0%)	395 (23.0%)
Donkey	17 (1.4%)	7 (1.4%)	24 (1.4%)
Pig	129 (10.5%)	31 (6.3%)	160 (9.3%)
Chickens	1,007 (82.2%)	397 (80.9%)	1,404 (81.8%)
Goats	397 (32.4%)	144 (29.3%)	541 (31.5%)
Car	19 (1.6%)	6 (1.2%)	25 (1.5%)
Bicycle	40 (3.3%)	13 (2.6%)	53 (3.1%)
Radio	696 (56.8%)	280 (57.0%)	976 (56.9%)
Wardrobe	598 (48.8%)	248 (50.5%)	846 (49.3%)
Bed	1,002 (81.8%)	425 (86.6%)	1,427 (83.2%)
Plough	206 (16.8%)	90 (18.3%)	296 (17.2%)
Hoe	1,089 (88.9%)	445 (90.6%)	1,534 (89.4%)
Axe	788 (64.3%)	340 (69.2%)	1,128 (66.7%)
Ox-cart	60 (4.9%)	16 (3.3%)	76 (4.4%)
Tractor	20 (1.6%)	0 (0.0%)	20 (1.2%)
Total	**1,225 (100%)**	**491 (100%)**	**1,716 (100%)**

Table 13 Asset ownership (households owning, by household headship)

Assets	MHH	FHH	CHH	Total
Cattle	254 (25.7%)	141 (19.4%)	11 (16.2%)	406 (22.8%)
Donkey	20 (2.0%)	4 (0.1%)	0 (0.0%)	24 (1.3%)
Pig	95 (9.6%)	65 (8.9%)	2 (2.9%)	162 (9.1%)
Chickens	841 (85.1%)	563 (77.3%)	34 (50.0%)	1,438 (80.6%)
Goats	377 (38.2%)	164 (22.5%)	10 (14.7%)	551 (30.9%)
Car	16 (1.6%)	9 (1.2%)	0 (0.0%)	25 (1.4%)
Bicycle	38 (3.8%)	15 (2.1%)	1 (1.5%)	54 (3.0%)
Radio	602 (60.9%)	374 (51.4%)	33 (48.5%)	1,009 (56.6%)
Wardrobe	502 (50.8%)	344 (47.3%)	32 (47.1%)	878 (49.2%)
Bed	841 (85.1%)	586 (80.5%)	58 (85.3%)	1,485 (83.2%)
Plough	188 (19.0%)	108 (14.8%)	5 (7.4%)	301 (16.9%)
Hoe	895 (90.6%)	639 (87.8%)	46 (67.6%)	1,580 (88.6%)
Axe	677 (68.5%)	451 (62.0%)	31 (45.6%)	1,159 (65.0%)
Ox-cart	55 (5.6%)	21 (2.9%)	1 (1.5%)	77 (4.3%)
Tractor	13 (1.3%)	7 (1.0%)	0 (0.0%)	20 (1.1%)
Total	**988 (100%)**	**728 (100%)**	**68 (100%)**	**1,784 (100%)**

Table 14 Changes in asset ownership: Livestock

Asset	Number owned today	Number owned 6 months ago	Change
Cattle			
Cash + Food	1,604	1,601	+3
Food only	695	698	-3
MHH	1,519	1,500	+19
FHH	780	799	-19
CHH	73	71	+2
Donkey			
Cash + Food	115	108	+7
Food only	31	31	0
MHH	135	126	+9
FHH	11	13	-2
CHH	0	0	0
Pig			
Cash + Food	306	241	+65
Food only	59	64	-5
MHH	212	174	+38
FHH	153	131	+22
CHH	3	3	0
Chickens			
Cash + Food	8,788	9,227	-439
Food only	3,265	3,894	-629
MHH	7,599	8,047	-448
FHH	4,454	5,074	-620
CHH	294	243	-51
Goats			
Cash + Food	2,451	2,409	+42
Food only	905	894	+11
MHH	2,420	2,415	+5
FHH	936	888	+48
CHH	60	63	-3

Table 15 Changes in asset ownership: Household goods

Asset	Number owned today	Number owned 6 months ago	Change
Car			
Cash + Food	22	24	-2
Food only	6	7	-1
MHH	19	21	-2
FHH	9	10	-1
CHH	0	0	0
Bicycle			
Cash + Food	39	39	0
Food only	13	13	0
MHH	37	39	-2
FHH	15	13	+2
CHH	1	1	0
Radio			
Cash + Food	722	700	+22
Food only	290	291	-1
MHH	623	618	+5
FHH	389	373	+16
CHH	34	33	+1
Wardrobe			
Cash + Food	663	664	-1
Food only	289	290	-1
MHH	554	555	-1
FHH	398	399	-1
CHH	40	40	0
Bed			
Cash + Food	1,496	1,477	+19
Food only	655	655	0
MHH	1,200	1,194	+6
FHH	951	938	+13
CHH	113	111	+2

Table 16 Changes in asset ownership: Farm implements

Asset	Number owned today	Number owned 6 months ago	Change
Plough			
Cash + Food	234	235	-1
Food only	95	95	0
MHH	206	210	-4
FHH	123	120	+3
CHH	4	5	-1
Hoe			
Cash + Food	3,073	2,942	+131
Food only	1,296	1,289	+7
MHH	2,638	2,568	+70
FHH	1,731	1,663	+68
CHH	105	106	-1
Axe			
Cash + Food	953	939	+14
Food only	379	378	+1
MHH	806	797	+9
FHH	526	520	+6
CHH	33	33	0
Ox-cart			
Cash + Food	66	65	+1
Food only	16	16	0
MHH	60	59	+1
FHH	22	22	0
CHH	1	1	0
Tractor			
Cash + Food	18	20	-2
Food only	0	0	0
MHH	12	13	-1
FHH	6	7	-1
CHH	0	0	0

Table 17 Changes in asset ownership, December 2007 to May 2008

Asset	Cash + Food recipients		Food only recipients	
	Number owned per household	Number owned 6 months ago	Number owned per household	Number owned 6 months ago
Livestock				
Cattle	1.309	1.307	1.415	1.422
Donkey	0.094	0.088	0.063	0.063
Pig	0.250	0.200	0.120	0.130
Chicken	7.174	7.532	6.650	7.931
Goat	2.001	1.967	1.843	1.821
Household goods				
Car	0.018	0.020	0.012	0.014
Bicycle	0.032	0.032	0.026	0.026
Radio	0.589	0.571	0.591	0.593
Wardrobe	0.541	0.542	0.589	0.591
Bed	1.221	1.206	1.334	1.334
Farm implements				
Plough	0.191	0.192	0.193	0.193
Hoe	2.509	2.402	2.640	2.625
Axe	0.778	0.767	0.772	0.770
Ox-cart	0.054	0.053	0.033	0.033
Tractor	0.015	0.016	0.000	0.000
Total	16.776	16.895	16.281	17.546

Table 18 Children with appropriate dietary diversity (% of households)

Month	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	Average
Cash plus food						
6.0 – 8.11 months	65.2	78.6	100.0	87.5	100.0	86.3
9.0 – 11.11 months	73.9	72.0	87.0	83.3	92.9	81.8
12.0 – 36 months	60.6	50.0	75.0	77.0	82.5	69.0
All ‘cash plus food’	65.8	59.2	79.2	79.2	85.4	73.8
Food only						
6.0 – 8.11 months	100.0	50.0	66.7	66.7	50.0	66.7
9.0 – 11.11 months	n/a	33.3	66.7	87.5	100.0	71.9
12.0 – 36 months	n/a	25.0	63.6	48.1	54.8	47.9
All ‘food only’	33.3	31.9	64.9	58.5	58.5	49.4
All children						
6.0 – 8.11 months	81.0	66.7	84.6	78.6	80.0	78.2
9.0 – 11.11 months	69.6	61.8	81.3	84.4	94.4	78.3
12.0 – 36 months	50.0	42.4	72.4	69.3	74.8	61.8
All children	62.5	50.7	75.5	73.5	77.8	68.0