



## Cash for Care: Researching the Linkages between Social Protection and Children's Care in South Africa

*Preliminary findings*

ISCI Conference  
Cape Town, September 2015



## Outline

---

- ❖ Background of the research project: Rwanda, Ghana, South Africa
- ❖ Presentation preliminary findings
- ❖ Next steps
- ❖ Any questions?



# Background



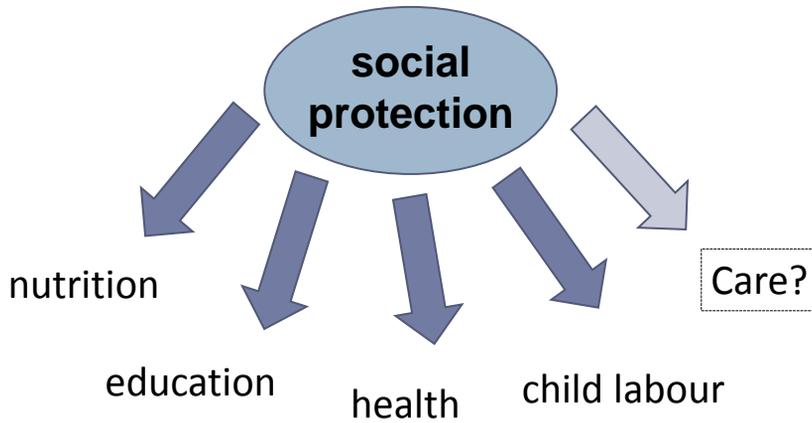
## Impacts of transfers on care?

Programme type and key features	Family Separation	Child labour	Child marriage	Birth registration	Schooling	Health	Total reports
Human capital accumulation	2	31	5	2	48	10	62
Adult labour		4			1		5
Extracurricular activities		1			1		1
Minimum school attendance	2	26	5	2	46	10	56
Integrated anti-poverty		2			2	3	4
Extracurricular activities		1			2	3	3
Minimum school attendance		1					1
Pure income transfers	1	3			8	6	13
No conditions	1	3			8	6	13
<b>Total outcomes</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>79</b>

Source: Barrientos et al. 2013



## Positive impacts of social protection



## Children without parental care

- ▶ 12-34% children in Sub-Saharan Africa live without their parents
- ▶ Poverty is one underlying cause of family separation
- ▶ Poverty may undermine carers' abilities to provide alternative family-based care (kinship or foster care)
- ▶ Children outside of parental care are at a higher risk of receiving lower quality care

>> **Role for social protection?**

## This research

---

- ▶ Three countries: Rwanda, Ghana and South Africa
- ▶ Qualitative study
- ▶ Includes perspectives from adults and children
- ▶ Collaboration with local research partners



## Research in South Africa

---

### Three research questions:

- 1) What is the role of the CSG/FCG in promoting wellbeing and quality of care for children in households receiving CSG/FCG?
- 2) What is the role of the CSG/FCG in incentivising kinship and foster care?
- 3) What are options to address the balance between social workers' administrative and social work responsibilities in FCG?



Figure 3 Comparison of Child Support Grant (CSG) and Foster Child Grant (FCG)<sup>11</sup>

## Child Support Grant and Foster Child Grant

### Child support grant v foster child grant: Key features

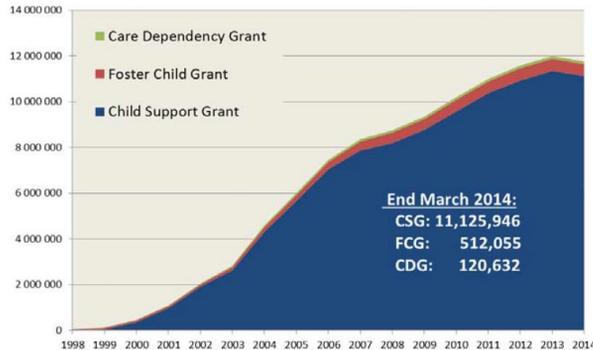
	CSG	FCG
Purpose	Poverty alleviation (applicant must pass a means test to show poverty)	Child protection / alternative care (no means test; applicant does not have to be poor)
Responsible institution/s	SASSA (South African Social Security Agency)	SASSA, Department of Social Development & Department of Justice & Constitutional Development
Administration	Once-off application, processed by administrative staff. Application is meant to be processed in three working days	Initial social worker investigation, report and court inquiry followed by an application to SASSA; court-ordered extension is required after every subsequent two years, requiring further social worker reports
Beneficiary	'primary care-giver' (not necessarily biological parent)	'primary care-giver' (definitely not biological parent)
Grant amount in 2011	R270 per month	R740 per month

Source: Hall & Proudlock 2011

<sup>11</sup> Note that transfer amounts no longer apply; correct amounts at time of writing are provided in the text in the sections above.

## Child Support Grant and Foster Child Grant

- ▶ In 2003 the FCG became more accessible to children in kinship care. By March 2014, approx. 500,000 children received FCG. A further est. 1 million children eligible for FCG were not yet receiving it in 2014 (*Children's Institute, 2014*)
- ▶ CSG is the most widely accessed social grant – 51% of maternal orphans and 74% of



Sources: 1998-2007: National Treasury Intergovernmental Fiscal Review  
2008-2014: South African Social Security Agency SOCPEL monthly reports  
Compiled by Katharine Hall, Children's Institute, UCT

## Research design

---

Fieldwork sites in KwaZulu-Natal:

1. uThukela district (surroundings Ladysmith)
2. uMgungundlovu district (surroundings Pietermaritzburg)

Qualitative study including perspectives from:

- ▶ 18 participatory interviews and 34 participatory group discussions with children and caregivers
- ▶ 8 interviews with CSG/FCG program staff
- ▶ Focus on children and caregivers providing kinship care and foster care and receiving CSG or FCG

Sampling was purposive with child and adult participants stratified according to characteristics

---



---

# *Preliminary* Research Findings

---



## Research question 1

---

What is the role of the CSG/FCG in **promoting wellbeing and quality of care** for children in households receiving the grants?

---



## Background - wellbeing and quality of care

---

<u>Livelihoods and living conditions</u>	PMB	LDY
Rural and poor area	✓	✓
High unemployment	✓	✓
Large dependency on social grants (CSG/FCG/ old person grant)	✓	✓
High rural-urban migration of one or both parents, leaving children in care of others	✓	✓
High rate of social problems		✓
Limited infrastructure and access to services		✓
Large variation in living conditions and access to services	✓	



## Background - wellbeing and quality of care

Care arrangements	PMB	LDY
Common for children not to live with biological parents	✓	✓
Grandparents, aunts and unrelated adults act as carers for children in kinship or foster care	✓	✓
Small numbers of child-headed households	✓	✓
Reasons for separation include death, migration, early pregnancy, abandonment, abuse and neglect	✓	✓



## Background - wellbeing and quality of care

- ▶ *“Very, very common [for children not to live with their biological parents]. In fact very rarely do you find a child that is living with both their mother and father. Most have mothers who are alive, not necessarily caring for them, but maybe with work somewhere else like Durban or Pretoria and then they would come back in the holidays to see their children. That is very common. The children often live with their grandparents. There is still a very small percentage of children who live on their own, not many but enough to be concerned about.”*

[Key informant interview, SW, Pietermaritzburg]

- ▶ *“Yes it is normal [for children not to live with their biological parents]. Usually they have step fathers, maybe as a mother you have lost the father of your child and you now live with another man, but now he does not treat your children right, [...] it gets difficult to single parents who live alone and do not have partners who are the father of their children”.*

[Female adult, CSG, in a household with children living in kinship care Ladysmith]



## Background – application process

<u>Application for of grants</u>	CSG	FCG
Adults and children have basic knowledge about programme and who can apply	✓	✓
There is confusion about exact rules of application and receipt	✓	✓
Applicants experience difficulties obtaining correct information and support with applications	✓	✓
Applicants experience long delays in applying for the grant		✓
Grant applicants and recipients receive support from social workers		✓



## Background - wellbeing and quality of care

<u>Elements of child wellbeing</u>	Adults	Children
Material Needs: Healthy and nutritious food, clothing, easy access to clean water, shelter and good housing, education and going to school and being in good health	✓	✓
Non-Material Needs: Love and affection, good communication between children and caregivers, playing with friends and living in a safe, happy and healthy environment	✓	✓
Having or being part of a family		✓
Personal hygiene, discipline and good behaviour of children, being treated equally to other children in the household and self-confidence and aspirations	✓	



## Grant impact on wellbeing and quality of care

Impact on child wellbeing and care	CSG	FCG
The grant helps to secure basic material needs	✓	✓
The grant helps to save		✓
Grant support in providing for basic needs helps reduce stress and child-carer relationships	✓	✓
Resources are generally pooled across children and vulnerable household members	✓	✓
Most children in the household benefit equally from the grant, but sometimes boys and older children or children for whom the grant is received are prioritised	✓	✓
Interactions with social workers support parenting and quality of care		✓



## Research question 2

What is the role of the CSG/FCG in **motivating kinship and foster care**?



## Background – motivating kinship and foster care

<u>Reasons for separation</u>	Adults	Children
Poverty, migration and lack of resources	✓	✓
Neglect, abandonment, substance misuse	✓	✓
Death and ill health, early pregnancy	✓	



## Background – motivating kinship and foster care

*“Some parents work very far and they have to live at work or near their work place, so they leave their children with others”.*

[Female adult, CSG, in a household with children in kinship care, Ladysmith]

*“Firstly it’s because their parents don’t look after them, when they get money they throw parties and drink and forget to look after a child and then social workers visit that family, when they get there they learn that children are starving, maybe they have not anything to eat from Monday, then then take the kids to a place where they will receive the things they were deprived of”.* [Boy, FCG, in a household with foster children, Ladysmith]

*“In most of our foster care cases we could find that both parents are alive but the issue is neglect and the contribution of that is sometimes it is alcohol and drugs but it is an issue*

## Background – motivating kinship and foster care

---

<u>Reasons for providing care</u>	Adults	Children
Kind-heartedness, infertility, family ties (love and feelings of obligation)	✓	✓
Ubuntu (traditional practice)	✓	



## Background – motivating kinship and foster care

---

<u>Impact of the grants on providing care</u>	CSG	FCG
The grant provides much-needed financial support in providing basic needs	✓	✓
Community level monitoring leads to positive and negative pressure to spend the grant	✓	✓
The grant may lead to perverse incentives		✓
The involvement of social workers and magistrates increases accountability		✓



## Research question 3

---

What are options to **address the balance between social workers' administrative and social work responsibilities** in FCG?

---



## Policy considerations – FCG versus kinship grant

---

### **Is the foster care system working?**

- 1.5 million orphans in the care of relatives who qualify in terms of the law for the Foster Child Grant (FCG)
- Currently just under 500 000 recipients (gap of 1 million) which it has taken 10 years to reach
- DSD reports +-300 000 case back log in cases (renewals)
- Applicants report long delays (2 year +) in the processing of applications
- Question around whether all the children in this system in need of child protection services (has the system moved from child protection to poverty alleviation)
- Are other children being excluded from receiving child protection services because of the administrative burden of social workers
- ▶ • Can the system cope with the monitoring requirements moving forward (is it coping now?)

## Policy options

	Amount	Application	Social Worker Assessment	Court Order	Means Tested
Option 1 - as FCG	830	Through DSD, DOJ and SASSA	Before application approved	Yes	No
Option 2	830	Through DSD and SASSA	Before application approved	No	No
Option 3 - CSG+	600	Through SASSA	After application approved	No	No
Option 4	600	Through SASSA	No – just monitoring	No	Yes
Option 5	400	Through SASSA	No – just monitoring	No	No



## Policy options

### Preference for current FCG: (more frequent in PMB)

- ▶ Some prefer to receive a higher amount despite lengthy process involved
- ▶ Some prefer full process due to feeling backed-up by courts and social workers (children are better protected)

### Preference for FCG without court order:

- ▶ Some feel courts cause delays and are unclear on the value they add

### Preference for extended CSG: (more frequent in Ladysmith)

- ▶ Some would accept a lower amount if there was a simplified process and the money came more quickly

### In general:

- ▶ Most respondents prefer the grant not to be means-tested

## Conclusions and recommendations

---

- ❖ **The CSG and FCG play a positive role in improving child wellbeing and care**
  - ❖ **The impact of the FCG on child wellbeing and care is undermined by implementation challenges**
  - ❖ **Clarification is needed around the blurred boundaries between the social protection and child protection system and their associated grants, including the amounts of the cash transfer provided**
  - ❖ **Social protection and child protection systems should be linked through strong referral mechanisms**
- 



---

Thank you  
Any Questions?

---

