

Transfer Project

Guidelines for Data Release, Analysis and Publication

Updated November 2018

I. Data Release

Data produced through the Transfer Project-supported impact evaluations of social protection programmes are intended to be a public good. In addition to their immediate value to national programmes, these data are also a rich source for further analysis, research and learning on social protection programmes and their impacts – for national, regional and international researchers, government partners, and the broader social protection field. In order to maximize the long-term benefits, wherever possible Transfer Project Partners will endeavor to make data publicly available within a reasonable timeframe.

- Data should be made publicly available:
 - After government approval and release of the impact evaluation report (endline); and
 - No sooner than one year following approval of the impact evaluation endline report in order to give Principal Investigators (PIs) and country research teams time to create an informed narrative of programme impacts, garner buy in and internalization of results by implementing partners and guide national policy decisions in a supportive environment. This will also allow research teams to develop and publish analysis on main program objectives without creating dual narratives.
- Impact evaluation data (baseline and follow-ups, as appropriate) will be made available through the Transfer Project [website](#). Resources to prepare data (codebooks, user guide, formatting and labelling of data) for public release will need to be allocated and planned for within evaluation funding requests.
- Requests to access the data will be made through email/submitting a form on the Transfer Project website. When researchers register (and request has been approved), they will receive a document outlining the terms for use of the data, which will include (among others) acknowledgement of funding sources, ethics review procedures, and the reconciliation of any findings with official evaluation results. The Transfer Project will maintain records of data use and aim to publicize working papers and journal articles developed with evaluation data on the Transfer Project website.

II. Data analysis before public release of the data

Prior to public release, data belongs to the partners laid out in the country contracts/agreements and its main purpose is to support the evaluation of the programme and production of analysis that is a priority of government partners in relation to policy and programme assessment, learning and advocacy.

- Topics for analysis and papers to be produced before public release must be agreed among partners owning the data, including government partners.
- Analysis should be done under the scope of existing agreements regarding the use of data (e.g.: baseline, follow-up or both). Any analysis using data outside of these parameters requires an agreement for its use (e.g. a Memorandum of understanding, MoU).

- Access to proprietary data to third parties (those not part of the immediate study team) is not permitted unless agreed to beforehand by study co-PIs and country office or commissioning organization
- Data cannot be used for private purposes (including individual research and publication) before public release. Exception: Ph.D. work which is within the causal framework of the impact evaluation may be pursued by those who are actively working in support of the impact evaluation and its analysis, and Ph.D. students should be under the supervision of the evaluations' PIs or data owners' team. However, the Ph.D. dissertation (or any related articles) may not be made publicly available before public release of the data unless permission has been granted by the partners that own the data. Eventual journal articles, stemming from dissertations, insofar as they are based on proprietary data (i.e. data that is not yet public access) will be subject to group authorship policy as stated below. The Transfer Project encourages and supports the training of national and international students within the evaluation process, and therefore prioritizes capacity building as one of the objectives of the overall evaluation.

In summary, unless hired/collaborating with PI/team leaders within the context of the agreed analysis and publications, no third party can develop analysis or publications before public release. This helps ensure the coordination, prioritization and objectives of creating an informed narrative of programme impacts in the short-term, while acknowledging the work of large evaluation teams.

III. Authorship before public release of the data

Authorship of any papers focusing on a specific country should comprise in the author line “on behalf of the Country X impact evaluation team” or “on behalf of the Programme X Evaluation Team.” Several examples are given below:

- The Kenya CT-OVC Evaluation Team (2012): The impact of the Kenya Cash Transfer Program for Orphans and Vulnerable Children on household spending, *Journal of Development Effectiveness*, 4:1, 9-37. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19439342.2011.653578>

The Kenya CT-OVC Evaluation Team is comprised of (in alphabetical order) Carlos Alviar (UNICEF–Ghana), Benjamin Davis (FAO–Rome), Sudhanshu Handa (University of North Carolina), Alex Hurrell (Oxford Policy Management), Ahmed Hussein (Ministry of Gender, Children & Social Development), Daniel Musembi (Ministry of Gender, Children & Social Development), Samuel Ochieng (Ministry of Gender, Children & Social Development), Tia Palermo (Graduate Program in Public Health, Stony Brook University), Roger Pearson (UNICEF–Ethiopia), Luca Pellerano (Oxford Policy Management), Aly Visram (Oxford Policy Management), and Patrick Ward (Oxford Policy Management). The corresponding author for this article is Tia Palermo.

- Handa, S., Natali, L., Seidenfeld, D., Tembo, G., Davis, B., on behalf of the Zambia Cash Transfer Evaluation Study Team. (2018). Can Unconditional Cash Transfers Raise Long-term Living Standards? Evidence from Zambia” Journal of Development Economics. 133: 42-65. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdeveco.2018.01.008>

A few additional points to consider:

- There is flexibility regarding the format of the Evaluation Team acknowledgement, including accommodation of journal policy for authorship—however increasingly project and team authorship acknowledgements are accommodated by journals, and thus this format should be followed unless a specific journal policy prohibits it.
- The corresponding author is responsible for emailing the Evaluation Team in advance of first submission to a peer-reviewed journal to circulate the manuscript and gain sign off from each team member for the submission. Each team member is allowed two weeks to review, provide comments or request that their name be removed from the team list (if any issues arise, including conflict of interest, among others)
- The corresponding author is responsible for alerting Evaluation Team members (as well as government partners, and country-level UNICEF and/or FAO focal points) of the final publication in a timely manner after its release and circulating a copy of the publication
- Transfer Project publications should always be made open access if possible and corresponding authors are responsible for allocating or requesting funds for open access – as well as verifying that funder’s guidelines regarding open access are fully met)
- Publications which do not involve new analysis, but rather synthesize or review existing publicly available information or findings are not subject to the team publication policy.
- If in doubt regarding membership of the Evaluation Team, please see the technical report for the last wave of data utilized in your analysis.
- All funders of the original evaluation should be acknowledged properly for their contribution to the study’s data collection. If in doubt regarding funders of the original evaluation, please see the technical report for the last wave of data utilized in your analysis.

IV. Work procedures in relation to data use agreement changes or exceptions

- In addition to the study PIs, the appropriate government counterpart, *UNICEF or FAO country office focal point* should be copied in **any** discussion of data use and analysis prior to public release.
- Correspondence regarding data use agreements, including revisions to existing agreements or MOUs, should also include the relevant UNICEF Regional Advisor and FAO HQ focal point.

Happy data crunching!