



Republic of Zambia

**MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE SOCIAL CASH TRANSFER TO BE  
DELIVERED BY THE HONORABLE MINISTER, DOREEN MWAMBA IN  
PARLIAMENT ON 4<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2022**

**Madam Speaker;**

Thank you very much for granting me this opportunity to give a Ministerial Statement on one of the major programmes that my Ministry is implementing in order to address poverty and vulnerability among our citizens which is the Social Cash Transfer.

The Social Cash Transfer (SCT) Programme is a key social protection intervention. The programme targets the vulnerable and incapacitated people in the Community in order to alleviate suffering and deprivation. This programme has over time grown in both size and scale and there are currently 973,323 beneficiary households which translates into Five Million, Sixty-One Thousand, Two Hundred and Eighty Thousand (5, 061, 280) Zambians on the programme in all 116 districts.

**Madam Speaker;**

I wish to inform this August House that in the recent past the Programme had faced a number of challenges which ranged from withdrawal of funding by the donors in 2018 to inadequate systems to meet the dictates of the changing times. I am however happy to report that today; the cooperating partners are currently supporting the implementation of the programme. The Government through my Ministry has taken a number of steps to strengthen the delivery systems of the programme in order to enhance accountability and transparency as well as cement support and beneficiary acceptability. It is expected that the systems put in place will enhance programme credibility and sustainability.

**Madam Speaker;**

In order to strengthen and streamline the management of the Social Cash Transfer, my Ministry is putting in place the following measures:

**1. Digitization of the payment process**

Since inception, the Social Cash Transfer programme has been making payments to beneficiaries using a manual system. This has been done through Pay Point Managers (PPMs). PPMs are government employees who have been given an extra responsibility to disburse funds to Social Cash Transfer Beneficiaries. With the advancement in technology, my Ministry is deploying a payment system that will see payments to beneficiaries made through two modalities. These are:

- urban payments; and
- rural payments.

Urban payments will be done through Payment Service Providers while rural payments will continue to be done through Pay Point Managers.

**(a) Payment Service Providers (PSPs)**

The Payment Service Provider approach is the disbursement of funds to beneficiaries by directly crediting the beneficiary's bank or mobile account.

**(b) Pay Point Managers (PPMs)**

The Pay Point Managers (PPMs) approach are payments made manually to beneficiaries that are unbanked and have no access to telephone communication. This process will progressively be

automated in consultation with ZICTA, Smart Zambia and other stakeholders.

The PPMs are linked to the Zambia Integrated Social Protection Information System (ZISPIS) and all transactions are automated using both online and offline mode applications of the system.

## **2. Targeting**

The selection and identification process of beneficiary households to be enrolled on the SCT programme has been improved to ensure programme credibility with the right people being on the programme as per the guidelines. To this effect, the programme engages the services of public service workers to undertake this important exercise instead of Community Welfare Assistance Committee (CWAC) members that were being used before. This represents a major shift in the targeting process towards that only deserving households are enlisted as beneficiaries.

## **3. Zambia Integrated Social Protection Information System (ZISPIS)**

In order to enhance transparency and accountability in the administration of the SCT programme, priority has been placed on the implementation of the ZISPIS. So far, all beneficiary data management functions of the ZISPIS have been completed and are being used. Consequently, all beneficiaries who were ineligible including those not meeting the set eligibility criteria have since been cleaned out and removed from the programme.

Additionally, the system is now capable of detecting duplicate beneficiary records including multiple registrations across districts and provinces. Inadequate tracking capabilities resulting into inability to detect duplicates and multiple registrations were noticeable weaknesses of the old SCT Management Information system (SCT-MIS). Smart Zambia has since given a technical clearance of the ZISPIS for piloting in Kitwe and Namwala districts. The Ministry now awaits approval by Secretary to the Treasury to commence piloting earmarked for January/ February, 2022.

#### **4. Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)**

My Ministry has put in place a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) as a platform to provide timely feedback to community members and stakeholders over any concerns or complaints that they may have relating to the SCT programme, this is of paramount importance. There are three channels for beneficiaries and other stakeholders to register their complaints. These are:

- a. Web-based platform – the online grievance form is accessible on the Ministerial website. Stakeholders have this option to lodge their complaints which once entered are immediately uploaded into the ZISPIS GRM module.
- b. Mobile application (smart phones) – under this channel, the GRM form is accessed on a smartphone application of District Social Welfare Officers (DSWOs) and Pay Point Managers within villages and communities. Grievances entered through this channel are immediately uploaded into the MIS GRM? module.

c. Community boxes – through this option paper grievance forms are made available at different places such as schools, health centers, chief’s palaces, churches and other public places within respective communities. Once a form is filled in, it is dropped into the community boxes which are letter transferred to the District Social Welfare Offices.

The grievances received through any of the above channels are responded to in a systematic manner. Provision of this platform is therefore imperative in making the SCT programme more responsive to the needs of the most poor and vulnerable citizens as well as other stakeholders and provides a medium for feedback and further programme improvement.

## **5. Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation**

My Ministry has embarked on strengthening the M&E functions of the SCT programme by developing an electronic web-based monitoring and evaluation system to track key performance indicators. This will enable Government to record changes that take place within the households at different intervals. These records will better inform programming including graduation and linkages of beneficiaries to other interventions.

## **6. Scaling Up of the Social Cash Transfer Programme**

As I have already informed this August House, the SCT programme has continued to grow in scope and coverage since its inception in Kalomo district in 2003. The programme to date, has been scaled up to almost 30% of the Zambian population and about 50% of the

extremely poor in the country. In 2021, the programme caseload was scaled up to 973,323 beneficiary households. By the end of 2022, the programme is targeting to reach 1,027,000 vulnerable and incapacitated households in all the 116 districts. 8.9% of the programme caseload are households with persons with disabilities.

In terms of the transfer value, households without members with disabilities receive K200 per month per household paid every two months at K400 while households with a member with severe disability receive K400 per month per household paid every two months at K800.

**Madam Speaker;**

As I conclude, I would like to submit that Social Cash Transfer is an important intervention and tool for reducing poverty and vulnerability. I therefore urge my fellow members of Parliament to take keen interest in this programme and sensitise their constituents on the availability, benefits and guidelines of the programme. The guidelines may be obtained from both Provincial and District Administration. Furthermore, these guidelines can be accessed online on the Ministerial Website and copies will be placed in the pigeon holes of individual Honourable Members of Parliament.

**I thank you and may the good Lord bless you**