

Social Grants and Poverty Reduction at the Household Level: Empirical Evidence from Ghana

Callistus Agbaam and Mulugeta F. Dinbabo

*Institute for Social Development, University of the Western Cape,
Cape Town, South Africa
E-mail: mdinbabo@uwc.ac.za*

KEYWORDS Cash Transfer. Empowerment. Livelihood. Social Exclusion. Poverty. Vulnerability

ABSTRACT This paper assesses the impact of the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) social grant programme in alleviating household poverty in rural Ghana. From a social justice perspective, the study unravels the contribution of the programme in improving the general welfare of beneficiary households in the case study area. Using data from structured household questionnaires, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews, the study establishes that the LEAP social grant has a significant positive impact on food consumption, frequency of utilization of healthcare facilities and the school enrolment rate for children aged 6-13 years in beneficiary households. However, although hypothesised, no significant impact is observed in relation to the incidence of child labour in the household. The study also uncovers that the insufficient nature of the cash transfer, irregular payment periods, lack of access to complimentary services and limited staff capacity pose serious challenges to the programme. It is therefore recommended that government increases the cash amount, pay transfers regularly, link beneficiaries to existing complimentary services in the district, recruit more staff and provide in-service training opportunities for them.