



Social Protection as a Means of Preventing Family Separation

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Presentation Outline

- Social protection in Ghana
- Social protection interventions that provide support to children
- LEAP
- JSDF
- In the absence of social protection support
- Benefits of Social Protection
- Positive and negative findings about Cash transfers (case studies)
- Conclusion

Social Protection Definition

Social protection in Ghana is defined as “a range of actions carried out by the state and other parties in response to vulnerability and poverty, which seek to guarantee relief for those sections of the population who for any reason are not able to provide for themselves”.

Social Protection that Provides Support to Children in Ghana

- **LEAP:** Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty
- **LIPW:** Labour Intensive Public Works
- **JSDF:** Japanese Social Development Fund
- **GSFP:** Ghana School Feeding Program
- **ECG:** Education Capitation Grants
- **FEB:** Free Exercise Books
- **FSU:** Free School Uniform

LEAP

The LEAP Programme

For families who are Poor and have orphans, elderly or disabled

LEAP is a cash transfer programme

Feed your children well, take them to the hospital for immunizations and weighing, and enroll them in school.

Families receive an amount every 2 months

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9
10	11	12

Japan Social Development Fund(JSDF)

This is a pilot support for rural income generation to target poor persons in the Upper East Region. **The objective of the JSDF Inclusion Pilot Project is to assist targeted poor persons, at least 50% whom should be women, to;**

- *Acquire technical and vocational skills.*
- *Acquire business management skills*
- *Access small grants to start or expand their livelihood activities*

In the absence of social protection support

When there is no support coming from anywhere for families who really need help, children begin to suffer because of:

- Overburdened parents
- Single parenting/divorced couples
- Quick tempered parents
- Embittered parents
- Frustrated parents
- Mean parents
- Careless and irresponsible parents

In the absence of social protection support

- Overburdened parents: Parents who feel overburdened by their responsibility may behave irresponsibly towards their wards.
- How?
 - Using corporal punishment
 - Denying them their basic needs
 - Forcing children into child labour
 - Introducing children into prostitution

Benefits of Social Protection

Preventing loss of parental care

“It can be prevented if there is enough money and more rooms for the children. It can also be prevented with enough help from the LEAP programme”. [adult male, Ghana]

Transfers provide much needed support in providing foster/kinship care for children

“It is a good thing. If a person loves a child and takes care of the child and then gets an incentive, it will help them to better care for the child.” [female adult, Ghana]

Benefits of Social Protection (comments from research)

- **Transfers improve carers' abilities to meet children's non-material needs**

“In fact, the LEAP programme has made us become better parents and the children are always happy with their life as well”. [female adult, Ghana]

“Children are now attending school regularly” [male adult, Ghana]

“My mother does not send me to sell foodstuffs during school hours anymore because I don't pay school fees anymore” [male child, Ghana]

Benefits of Social Protection

- **Transfers prevents carers' from being abusive**

“My 5 children are not so annoying anymore”

[single mother, Ghana]

“I don't have to beat my children when they complain of hunger because now I can provide them with 3 square meals”

[disabled parent, Ghana]

Negative Use of Social Protection

Transfers can serve as a positive and perverse incentive

“Provision of a cash transfer can be good and bad, good in the way that most of the children need help from the Government to achieve their aim, and it can be bad in that most of the parents will use the money to do their own thing. In most cases, parents use the money to buy expensive things for themselves and for their own children”. [male adult, Ghana]

Effects on quality of care differ between biological and non-biological children

“The money given to non-biological child is less than that given to the biological child.” [female child, Ghana]

Conclusion

- Social protection can help to prevent loss of parental care, support family-based alternative care and improve child care and wellbeing.
- Effects can be optimised when social protection provides meaningful support, is well implemented and goes beyond cash.
- Adverse effects need to be mitigated by supplementing beneficiaries with different projects concurrently to improve their income and livelihood.