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EDUCATION AND AWARENESS AMONG BENEFICIARIES OF CASH TRANSFER IN GHANA NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

A recent Beneficiary Assessment of Ghana's Cash Transfer in Some Districts by the African Development Program in January, 2014 has revealed the urgent need for increased education and awareness among beneficiaries on their entitlements and program issues.

The study showed that **none** of the sampled beneficiaries (within the Amansie West and Ga East Municipalities) could tell how much was due them. When probed further, most responded to the effect that all they needed was their money reaching them. Consequently, respondents were asked whether they knew the number of times they were to receive the cash transfers within a year. In response, over 94% indicated they had no knowledge on the regularity of transfer disbursed with only 3% of respondents mentioning "every 3 months" and "4 times" as their answers.

What the above answers reveal is that very little is being done in the area of effective communication through beneficiary sensitizations. The opportunity of utilizing payment days as means of exchanging crucial information especially from duty bearers to enhance transpar-

ency and accountability in the delivery of cash is missed. As witnessed during the assessment, the primary activity undertaken during payment days was "handing out" of cash to beneficiaries after the exchange of pleasantries by the duty bearers.

cash to the LEAP beneficiaries in Ghana.

To this end ADP recommends that for effective accountability, recipients should be sensitized on the LEAP program. Through community town hall meetings, community members should know the criteria of selection and the

amount due each household. This will enable them (recipient of cash transfers and community members) to demand accountability and

transparency in the discharge of duties by duty bearers.



Figure 1 A Beneficiary Undergoing Identity Verification in Ghana (taken with kind permission)

Evidently, the key feature of regularity and reliability required of cash transfer delivery is weak within the districts studied. This picture is not so quite different from the rest of the country as between 2011 and 2013; several media reports have highlighted the persistent delays in giving

Special points of interest:

94% of sampled LEAP beneficiaries in Amansie West and Ga East do not know how often they are to receive cash grant in a year

Social Protection Sensitization for Media Organizations in June 2014

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Dissemination of Findings on FAO Reducing
Rural Poverty Initiative in Ghana

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The African Development Programme is an NGO that has been in existence since 1993. In collaboration with national and international partners, it has been actively engaged in Social Protection Issues with core specialization in Education, Health, Social Development, Vulnerable and Excluded Group and the Physically Challenged in Society. Governance and Gender Issues are cross-cutting programme areas.

Did the MDGs change social reality

The UN Systems own task team on the post 2015 Agenda concluded in a think piece (UN 2012) ... "It is not easy to weigh all MDG strengths and weaknesses to reach firm conclusions about their impact and added value. For one, we lack a counterfactual to determine the precise added value of the MDG agenda, that is, it is hard to say what progress would have been made without the internationally agreed agenda. Yet, arguably no previous agenda has resonated worldwide and provided a common cause to address poverty and put human progress at the forefront of the development agenda."

Friedman (2013) sought to trace the impact of the MDGs on social development by statistically determining the change point in the development curves of about 19 of the 48 MDG indicators and concluded in 2013 "...that about half of the MDG indicators exhibited no acceleration or deceleration during the time period from 1992 to 2008 and about one-third exhibited accelerations before 2001" and hence concluded that there was no MDG triggered change in real social development and that where change occurred that change (with one exception) occurred before the MDG were formulated. However, these findings may be perfectly in line with the usual process of a global policy consensus building. Before official objectives or commitments are formulated major policy shifts may have already occurred in some parts of the world. Evidence on policy effectiveness will then facilitate the formulation of international goals (as was the case with the establishment of the SPF concept). Inflection points in curves describing social outcomes might thus be observed before the respective policies are actually formulated.

In a new analysis, a group of young researchers of Maastricht University analysed the impact of the MDGs globally and in three countries (Brazil, Ghana and South Africa) and conclude (see Al Raee, M., et al 2014) : "On a global level sector-specific aid has been increasingly allocated towards health and population and other social sectors, thus in line with priorities set by MDGs and indicating donors' commitment to them. On a national level, we saw that MDGs have widely served as an accountability framework. All three countries studied have undertaken efforts to establish how national policies and programs contribute to goal attainment and regularly report on progress made. The MDGs have arguably become a global benchmark that can drive change and open up policy space for stakeholders in development processes who can refer to a set of clear and measurable targets. While the final attribution of development outcomes to MDGs is a thorny issue, one can still conclude that the MDGs have been an effective tool of Global Social Governance..."