Cash for care? Researching the links between social protection and children’s care

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Authors: Camilla Jones, Keetie Roelen and Emily Delap
Presenter: Camilla Jones: Family for Every Child
Research Methodology

Methodology
Qualitative research with over 350 adult and 250 child participants

• Key informant interview
• Focus group discussions and individual ‘case study’ interviews with children and adults receiving the transfers / grants

Questions:
1. What are the linkages between social protection and the quality of children’s care?
2. What is the link between social protection and the loss of parental care or family separation?
3. How does social protection influence decisions about foster or kinship care?
Context

All Countries
• Increasing numbers of children living outside the care of their usual primary caregiver, with poverty and deprivation key drivers.
• HIV/AIDS affects children’s care.

Ghana
• Significant progress on poverty reduction, reaching MDG 1.
• Poverty remains endemic in some parts of the country.

Rwanda
• National extreme poverty fell from 40% (2000/01) to 24% (2010/11).
• Remaining extreme poverty is still a concern.
• Long-term impact of genocide still felt, impacting family dynamics.

South Africa
• Nearly two thirds of children lived below poverty line in 2011.
• 29.5% of pregnant women HIV positive in 2011.
• Many people are caring for children of relatives (kinship care).
Economic Strengthening Intervention

Rwanda’s Vision Umurenge Prorgamme (VUP)
Aim: to accelerate reduction of extreme poverty and ‘graduate’ households out of poverty through:
1) Direct Support: Unconditional monthly cash transfers
2) Public works: Paid employment on community asset building
3) Financial services: Access to savings, credit and institutions
4) Training and sensitisation

Ghana’s Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP)
• Aim: to reduce extreme poverty.
• Monthly conditional cash transfers.
• Awarded to household
• Amount depends on number of eligible beneficiaries per household.
• Beneficiaries enrolled in health insurance.
Economic Strengthening Intervention

South Africa’s Child Support Grant (CSG)
- Introduced in 1998.
- Aims to reduce poverty.
- Monthly cash transfer.
- Means-tested based on primary caregiver’s income threshold.
- Up to 6 children per household.

South Africa’s Foster Child Grant (FCG)
- Introduced in 1992 to compensate families financially for fostering.
- Not means tested: Social work assessment and court order are required before application.
Impact of ES Interventions

Rwanda’s Vision Umurenge Prorgamme (VUP)
• *Success:* *On track* to achieve desired impact on extreme poverty.
• PW may compromise carers’ ability to provide *high quality care,* *reinforce inequalities* in care between children and in extreme cases *induce family separation.*
• Most adults in PW are women, but PW is physical and demanding *disadvantaging women,* particularly pregnant and lactating women.

Ghana’s Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP)
• *Positive impact* on poverty and school enrolment - *limited by low transfer amounts.*
• *Implementation is inconsistent* - payment gaps and inconsistencies.
• Challenges need to be addressed for potential positive impacts to be achieved.
Impact of ES Intervention

South Africa’s Child Support Grant (CSG)

• Reduces poverty, but transfer *too small to address* child labour, including sexual exploitation, as a driver of *family separation*.
• People are still *late to apply after a child is born*.
• *Improvements have been made* to address late application and other previous *access and uptake challenges*.

South Africa’s Foster Child Grant (FCG)

Extension to kinship carers:

- Changed *focus*.
- *Overburdened* system in human and financial terms.
Lessons for Prevention and Reintegration

1. *Potential positive impact* of SP on prevention of separation and reintegration.

2. *Implementation challenges* reduce the impact of SP on poverty reduction, thereby *reducing potential positive side effects for children’s care*.

3. *Child care should be integrated into PW programmes* to prevent adverse effects on children’s care and any short or longer-term family separation.
Lessons for Prevention and Reintegration

4. Effective links between SP and CP systems are needed to support prevention of family separation and family reunification and reintegration.

5. Effective links between SP and CP systems may prevent unnecessary separation due to the ‘commodification’ of children.

6. Effective links between SP and CP systems are needed to ensure that opportunities for reintegration can be pursued.
Adaptation, Replication and Scaling

CP and SP systems need strong and effective linkages to:

- *Monitor wellbeing* children in households receiving the grants, including separated children.
- *Capitalise on opportunities* for family reunification and reintegration offered by the grants.
- *Prevent separation* caused by any perverse incentives of the grant.

Emerging findings from South Africa:

- There is *no one model* to link systems that will work in all contexts.
- Models need to be designed with *understanding and appreciation* of:
  - The context for CP and care
  - Factors driving poverty
  - The way the SP scheme functions
  - Resources and capacities of formal and informal CP actors
- Building linkages *should not place excessive burden* on either system so they can’t perform functions they were designed for.