

## EFFECT OF THE NATIONAL CASH TRANSFER PROGRAMME FOR OLDER PERSONS ON ACCESS TO BASIC LIVELIHOODS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF BENEFICIARIES AND NON-BENEFICIARIES IN SIAYA COUNTY, KENYA

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### ABSTRACT

Cash transfer to poor and vulnerable members of society is an important aspect of social protection that is increasingly gaining recognition in developing countries as a vital tool for combating poverty, hunger and disease. In Kenya, the cash transfer programme for older persons was initiated in 2006, and has since been rolled out to cover the entire country. This study aimed at determining variations in access to basic livelihoods between programme beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. The static group comparison design was adopted to guide the research process, and primary data were sourced in mid-2016 from 177 participants, including 88 beneficiaries and 89 non-beneficiaries. Analysis techniques included one-way analysis of variance, cross-tabulations with chi square tests and binary logistic regression. The results show that programme beneficiaries had about 4.5 times the odds of accessing at least three meals in a day as their non-beneficiary counterparts (CI = 2.741-7.476,  $\rho$ -value = 0.000); beneficiaries were about 3.9 times as likely to score an average dietary diversity (4.0), as non-beneficiaries (CI = 2.160-7.084,  $\rho$ -value = 0.000); beneficiaries also had about 3.3 times the odds of establishing an income-generating activity to improve their income as non-beneficiaries (CI = 1.942-5.641,  $\rho$ -value = 0.000). The results suggest that the programme's effect was statistically significant for all the five indicators covered by the study. Thus, programme beneficiaries were significantly better-off in accessing basic livelihoods than their non-beneficiary counterparts. However, the programme's benefit remains seasonal and volatile for most beneficiaries. Strengthening the programme should involve shifting beneficiaries' focus from direct consumption to investment in productive ventures in order to improve and sustain their income, as well as make the programme more effective in resource-poor countries.

**Keywords:** Cash transfer, basic livelihoods, access, older persons, beneficiaries, non-beneficiaries.