

25% Allowance increase will cushion LEAP beneficiaries — Gender Minister

By Diana Mensah

THE Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGSCP) has started the disbursement of GH¢150 million cash grants to vulnerable households under the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) programme for the 97th payment cycle.

The fund, which was released last Monday, constituted a 25 per cent increase in the allowances over the 96th cycle.

Beneficiaries of the 97th payment cycle, which covers May and June this year, are to receive both the regular cash grant, including the 25 per cent increase, and the outstanding arrears from the previous cycle (96th).

The ministry is also using the 97th payment cycle to roll out a mobile money payment system for the beneficiaries as a pilot in 50

districts across the country.

The pilot will be implemented across mobile networks and will test the operational systems, identify challenges, and incorporate feedback towards a possible national rollout.

It also aims at modernising payment systems and improving the reliability and convenience of cash transfers to vulnerable households.

The Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Dr Agnes Naa Momo Lartey, announced this yesterday when she visited some selected centres at Osu, Accra, one of the participating areas in the Mobile Money Payment pilot.

Disbursements

One-member eligible household would receive GH¢320 for the 97th cycle, with an additional GH¢64 as top-up arrears, making a total of GH¢384.

Two-member households would receive GH¢380 with GH¢76 as top-up

arrears, bringing the total to GH¢456.

Three-member households would receive GH¢440 for the 97th cycle, with GH¢88 as top-up arrears, totalling GH 528.

Four or more-member households would be paid GH¢530 with an additional GH¢106 as top-up arrears, amounting to GH¢636.

The payments, which began last Monday, would benefit some 350,580 households, equivalent to 1,555,677 individuals, across all 260 metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies (MMDAs).

This is the third time the government has disbursed funds to LEAP beneficiaries this year.

The LEAP programme, which was launched in 2008, provides bi-monthly cash transfers to the poorest and most vulnerable households in the country.

Over the years, the programme has evolved to improve coverage and delivery.

The minister explained that “the current pilot is expected to identify operational challenges and gather feedback for a potential nationwide rollout”.

“We are not only modernising payment mechanisms, but also increasing accessibility, reliability and convenience for our beneficiaries, many of whom reside in hard-to-reach communities,” she said.

Dr Lartey said the transition from e-Zwich to mobile money aligned with the government’s broader commitment to creating a digital, inclusive, and transparent social protection delivery system.

She also announced the implementation of a nationwide LEAP Reassessment Exercise, in collaboration with the Ghana National Household Registry (GNHR).

This is to eliminate duplication, correct inclusion and exclusion errors, and also ensure that only eligible households remain on the programme.

Dr Lartey further said that the passage of the Ghana Social Protection Bill by Parliament on July 31, this year, was a landmark legislation that would provide a comprehensive legal framework to guide and coordinate social protection interventions across the country.

Appreciation

The Member of Parliament (MP) for Korle Klottey, Dr (Med) Zanetor Agyeman-Rawlings, on behalf of the beneficiaries, expressed appreciation to the government for its continuous support and commitment to strengthening the LEAP programme.

She urged the beneficiaries to be active ambassadors of the ongoing expansion initiative.



• Dr Agnes Naa Momo Lartey (head of table), Minister for Gender, Children and Social Protection, addressing the media