

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF IMPLEMENTING THE ORPHAN CARE  
GRANT PROGRAMME ON BENEFICIARY HOUSEHOLDS IN BUNGOMA COUNTY,  
KENYA

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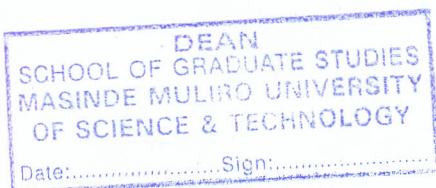
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## DECLARATION

This Master's thesis is my original work prepared with no other than the indicated sources and support and has not been presented elsewhere for a degree or any other award.

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## CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certify that they have read and hereby recommend for acceptance of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology a master's thesis entitled "Opportunities and Challenges of Implementing the Orphan Care Grant programme on beneficiary households in Bungoma County, Kenya"

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## ABSTRACT

International human rights instruments have long recognized social protection as a fundamental human right. Cash Transfer programmes have been widely lauded in developing countries in Asia and Africa as instruments of poverty alleviation stemming from benefits noted in Latin America. The OVC-CT programme targets orphaned children who live with their guardians and it is aimed at improving the children's nutrition, access to education, health, and improving the economic status of the guardians through investments and acquisition of assets. Though there are evaluation reports carried out on OVC-CT programmes in different counties in Kenya, especially Nairobi, academic studies on the nature, opportunities and challenges of the programme on beneficiary households in Bungoma is scanty. The upper region of Bungoma County thus Mt. Elgon has suffered as a battle ground for ethnic clashes since independence. Children have been greatest victims as they were orphaned and displaced from their families and many of them dropped out of school which increased child poverty hence the introduction of this programme in Bungoma in 2005. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the contribution of OVC-CT programme on the livelihoods of beneficiary households in Bungoma County of Kenya. The objective of the study was to analyze the nature and opportunities created by this cash transfer on the socio-economic status of beneficiary households in Bungoma County; evaluate the challenges posed by this cash transfer on the beneficiary households in Bungoma County and make recommendations that can be adopted to further enhance the programme. Critical review of relevant literature was carried out. The study was based on Robert Putman's Social Capital Theory that is centered on building and maintaining human relationships to enhance one's economic development economic growth theories. Based on Mulusa's recommendation of 30% of the total population being representative, the study involved a sample of 99 respondents selected from four locations. The data for the study was obtained by use of observation, questionnaires, interviews, Focus Group Discussions and Content Analysis, and analyzed using descriptive statistics. From the study, the findings are that though the orphan care grant programme has provided enormous opportunities for the beneficiary households in areas such as providing basic needs to the children and ensuring their human capital development through retention in school. There are challenges such as delay in the release of payments that cause some children to drop out of school prematurely to work, and sometimes the guardians are forced to sell the few assets acquired to sustain orphans in school and this negates the gains made. A recommendation is made to create awareness among the beneficiaries to uphold the rights of the orphans and to impress upon the implementing agency to make the necessary adjustments so as to make payments regular and predictable. In conclusion, the programme has good objectives and should be enhanced so as to assist even more households.