

DETERMINANTS OF POVERTY IN THE KWABRE EAST DISTRICT OF THE ASHANTI REGION OF GHANA

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to estimate the socio-economic determinants of poverty in the Kwabre East District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Data was collected over the 2009/2010 farming season. A semi-structured questionnaire was administered to 208 randomly selected households. Household consumption per standard adult equivalence was used as the barometer to identify the poverty status of households. Weighted least squares multiple regression was used to estimate the determinants of poverty. The study revealed that, the number of children in household aged 6-12 and the distance of household dwelling to the nearest portable water source impact negatively on the welfare of households. Female headed households are also found to be predisposed to poverty. On the other hand, the number of household members in skilled jobs, value of home assets, and access to microcredit enhance the well-being of households. Any policy or programme that is geared towards eradicating poverty in the district must recognise the impact of these factors in order for it to succeed.

KEYWORDS: poverty, determinants, weighted least squares, household, per capita consumption.

BACKGROUND/PROBLEM STATEMENT

Poverty reduction has remained a crucial policy debate worldwide. For instance, the first black president of the United States of America, Barack Obama could not avoid talking about poverty in his inaugural speech. He espoused:

"To the people of poor nations, we pledge to work alongside you to make your farms flourish and let clean waters flow; to nourish starved bodies and feed hungry minds. And to those nations like ours that enjoy relative plenty, we say we can no longer afford indifference to the suffering outside our borders; nor can we consume the world's resources without regard to effect. For the world has changed, and we must change with it."

All over the world workshops, conventions and conferences are held by governments and other development organizations to deal with poverty. The issue of poverty has also attracted the attention of development economists the world over. Despite this, poverty continues to afflict the lives of many a people especially in the developing world. Governments in Africa and in Ghana in particular are re-elected or booted out of office based on their abilities to ensure that the policies they implement 'reflect in the pockets' of the citizenry. The term 'reflect in the pocket' has become a cliché among Ghanaian electorates. When politicians point to declining inflation, exchange rate stability and other fantastic macroeconomic statistics as their achievements, Ghanaian electorates will quickly reply: 'but it does not reflect in our pockets'. The phrase 'reflect in the pocket' connotes the availability of money and opportunities that ensure decent living. Some researchers, for example Okurut *et al.* (2002) have argued that the elaboration of policies for poverty reduction requires a thorough knowledge of the poverty phenomenon as well as an understanding of the efficiency of implemented programmes.

The issue of whether a household is poor is widely accepted as an important though a crude measure of the household's wellbeing (Oni and Yusuf, 2008). The global statistics on poverty is not so exciting. Based on statistics released by the World Bank, the number of people living below the international poverty line of \$1.25 per day fell from 1.8 billion to 1.4 billion between 1990 and 2005. The decline in poverty between 1981 and 2005 varied considerably across regions. Led by China, the East Asia and the Pacific Region made dramatic progress, with poverty incidence dropping from 78 percent to 17 percent, using the US\$1.25 a day poverty line

at 2005 prices. At the other extreme is Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) with a poverty rate of 51 percent in 2005—not much lower than in 1981. The poverty rate fell in South Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean and Middle East and North Africa during the same period, although the number of poor people has remained static.

Between 1981 and 2005, the share of the population in the developing world living below US\$1.25 a day was halved from 52 to 25 percent. This amounted to a trend decline of one percentage point per year in the aggregate poverty rate, reducing the number of poor by 500 million (from 1.9 billion to 1.4 billion) between 1981 and 2005. Considering the 2005 global poverty estimate and subsequent forecasts up to 2015, as of early 2010 the developing world as a whole appeared on track to attain the income poverty target of the first millennium development goal of halving poverty by 2015. However, the hunger target and the pace of poverty reduction are now at risk in the wake of the financial crisis. According to a 2010 baseline forecast by the World Bank, global extreme poverty is likely to drop to about 920 million (15 percent) by 2015. In a low growth scenario, it is estimated to drop to about 1.13 billion (18.5 percent). These projections are lower than the pre-crisis high growth trend forecast of 865 million (14 percent), but nevertheless below the MDG target rate of 21 percent.

The slow recovery in GDP growth expected in 2010 and beyond as a result of continuing effects of the crisis has thus slowed the pace of poverty reduction. By the end of 2010, an estimated 64 million more people are expected to be living in extreme poverty than would have been the case before the crisis.

At the country level, Ghana is on track in achieving the first MDG of halving poverty by 2015. Figures released by the Ghana Statistical Service (2007) show that the incidence of poverty has been falling since 1991. The incidence of poverty declined from 51.7% in 1991/1992 through, 39.5% in 1998/1999 to 28.5% in 2005/2006. Those described as extremely poor fell from 26.8% to 18.2% over the same period. All regions apart from Greater Accra and Upper West experienced a decline in poverty. The above statistics do not mean that Ghana has won the battle against poverty. The extent of deprivation in which scores of people live all over the country from Accra to Wa is at best deplorable. Poverty alleviation therefore still remains the most important challenge facing the country.

According to the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy 1, the causes of poverty in Ghana include macroeconomic instability, inability to optimize benefits from the global economic system, low levels of consumption, limited use of technology, belief in superstition and myths, as well as powerlessness of the poor and women (Ghana Government/NDPC, 2003). Though the determinants or causes of poverty are generally known, the causes vary from country to country, from region to region, from district to district, from household to household and even from person to person. It will be wrong to do draft and implement policies on poverty reduction merely based on the general causes of poverty. For effective policy targeting, it will be imperative to at least identify district specific determinants of poverty. Strategies aimed at poverty reduction need to identify factors that are strongly correlated with poverty and that are amenable to modification by policy (Alemayehu *et al.*, 2005).

It is against this backdrop the this research aims at unravelling the correlates (determinants) of poverty in the Kwabre East District of the Ashanti Region to assist the district assembly design specific pro-poor policies to contain poverty in the district. The Ashanti region is one of the endowed regions in Ghana if not the most endowed. And Kumasi is often described as the garden city. It is almost a paradox to some that a study on poverty in Ghana will be done somewhere in the Ashanti Region. But according to the Medium Term Plan of the Kwabre District 2006-2009, though the district is very close (15km) to Kumasi, about 85% of the people is living in poverty. It then becomes imperative to unearth the factors that impinge on wellbeing in the district to provide the needed critical evidence on the basis of which relevant and implementable policies will be crafted to eradicate poverty in the district.

THE CONCEPT OF POVERTY

So far, there is no consensus on the definition of poverty. Various definitions of poverty abound in the literature. According to the World Bank (2003), poverty is the inability to achieve a minimum standard of living. The World Bank uses a poverty benchmark of \$1.25 per day and \$2 per day as measures of extreme and relative poverty respectively. Individuals who are incapable of affording \$1.25 and \$2 a day are described as extremely and relatively poor respectively.

For Chambers (1983), a household is classified as poor when it has few assets, its hut, house or shelter is small and made of wood, bamboo, mud grass, reeds, palm fronds or hides, its meagre furnishings include only mats or hides for sleeping and perhaps a bed, cooking pots, and a few tools, and there is no toilet. The household has no land or has land that does not assure or barely assures subsistence. It has no livestock or only has small stock. The household's stock and flow of food and cash are low, unreliable, seasonal and inadequate. It is either locked into dependence on a single patron for whom most work is done or continues a livelihood with a range of activities that reflect tenacious ingenuity in the face of narrow margins for survival. Returns to family labour are low and in the slack seasons very low if indeed there is any work at all. Poor households tend to have few buffers against emergencies; small needs are met by drawing on slender cash reserves, by reduced consumption, by barter or by loans from friends and relatives. These situations make the household so vulnerable that the family is especially prone to sicknesses and death.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In time past and even now many economists cling to the view that economic growth is the precursor to economic development. This belief is hinged on the trickle-down concept where economic growth is expected to 'trickle down from the rich to the poor thereby reducing poverty and inequality. Economic growth is expected to lead to job creation, and create more taxes for helping the poor to help themselves. Evidence points to the failure of the trickle-down theory. Since 1950, it was observed that instead of flowing downwards (in obedience to the trickle-down theory) the benefits of economic growth tended to flow upward making the top fifth of the world's population much richer and the bottom fifth poorer (Nelson, 1995).

The trickle-down theory may have failed but many economists still have faith in economic growth as a key to sustainable livelihood. For instance, the World Bank (2005) in a cross-country study of fourteen countries established a strong correlation between economic growth and the pace of poverty reduction. The World Bank and other international institutions have strongly grounded their policies in economic growth paradigm. Some authors, for instance Apusigah (2002) argue that the development agenda of the World Bank and IMF defeat its agenda of improving the conditions of the poor. Apusigah (2005:3) explains further:

I argue that by working within a neo-liberal capitalist economic model, the World Bank shifts from its social responsibility to take on an economic growth agenda that counters its acclaimed intent of poverty reduction. This is so because the economic growth agenda does not pave way for addressing welfare needs. In the process, welfarism is portrayed as a burdensome and an unnecessary cost to economic growth, which is profit oriented rather than welfare-centered.

The above view buttresses a body of opinion held that rapid growth is bad for the poor, because they would be bypassed and sidelined by the structural changes of modern growth. The above critique notwithstanding, economic growth is necessary, though far from being sufficient for the reduction of poverty (Kanbur, 2001, McKay and Perge, 2009). Economic growth may have its associated problems, but it is impossible to ignore economic growth in the pursuit of poverty reduction. At least no country has succeeded in fighting poverty without economic growth. Economic growth and poverty reduction are not incompatible. The World Bank declared this in its 1990 report on poverty. It noted:

Discussions of policy toward the poor usually focus on the trade-off between growth and poverty. But the review of country experience suggests that this is not a critical trade-off. With appropriate policies, the poor can participate in growth and contribute to it, and when they do, rapid declines in poverty are consistent with sustained growth (World Bank, 1990: 51-52).

This assertion is supported by cross-country evidence from China, Vietnam and other countries. For instance, China over the past two decades has witnessed the highest growth rate in the world, and also the most impressive reductions in poverty (Todaro and Smith, 2003). They observed that the headcount of the poor fell from 303.4 million to 213.2 over the 1987-1998 period alone.

METHODOLOGY

The variation of poverty rates across regions is sometimes better accounted for by the differences in households' characteristics than by the specificities of each region. To sort out the correlates or determinants of poverty and the impact of various variables on the probability of being poor, regressions are thus needed. Also, when

estimating such regressions, it is better to rely on linear regressions for the determinants of consumption per equivalent adult than on categorical regressions for the determinants of poverty. This is because using probits or logits implies throwing away valuable information contained in the household consumption information and runs a higher risk of bias.

In order to gather the necessary data on the poverty profile of the Kwabre East District a household questionnaire was designed and administered to selected households. There are 86 settlements in the district. Out of this 21 settlements were randomly selected and interviewed using the semi-structured household questionnaire. In all 208 households were randomly selected for the interview. Ten households were selected from each settlement with the exception of one settlement where 8 households were selected.

CONCEPTUAL MODELS

WIEGHTED LEAST SQUARE REGRESION

The correlates of poverty can be estimated using several methods. While some researchers (eg. Coudouel *et al.*, 2002, Fofack, 2000) used linear regression analysis others (eg. Bigma *et al.*, 2000, Ravallion, 1996) used quantile choice models such as probit, tobit or logit. Linear regression models have often been criticized for their simplistic and deterministic nature. Quantile choice models are also criticised for their over sensitivity to specification errors.

Based on these shortcomings some economists have resorted to the use of the weighted least squares (WLS) method of regression. For instance, Hentschel *et al.* (2000) used the wieghted least square method to estimate the correlates of poverty in Ecuador. Ayimpusah and Opoku-Afriyie (2008) also employed the same method to identify the determinants of poverty in the Bolgatanga Municipality of the Upper East Region of Ghana. This study employs the weighted least squares technique.

Unlike linear and nonlinear least squares regression, weighted least squares regression is not associated with a particular type of function used to describe the relationship between the process variables. Instead, weighted least squares reflects the behaviour of the random errors in the model; and it can be used with functions that are either linear or nonlinear in the parameters. It works by including extra nonnegative constants, or weights, associated with each data point, into the fitting criterion. The size of the weight indicates the precision of the information contained in the associated observation. Optimizing the weighted fitting criterion to find the parameter estimates allows the weights to determine the contribution of each observation to the final parameter estimates. It is important to state that the weight for each observation is given relative to the weights of the other observations; so different sets of absolute weights can have identical effects.

Weighted least squares is an efficient method that makes good use of small data sets. It also shares the ability to provide different types of easily interpretable statistical intervals for estimation, prediction, calibration and optimization. In addition, the main advantage that weighted least squares has over other methods is the ability to handle regression situations in which the data points are of varying quality. If the standard deviation of the random errors in the data is not constant across all levels of the explanatory variables, using weighted least squares with weights that are inversely proportional to the variance at each level of the explanatory variables yields the most precise parameter estimates obtainable.

The weighted least squares method however has some shortcomings. The greatest disadvantage of weighted least squares is the fact that the theory behind this method is based on the assumption that the weights are known exactly. This is almost never the case in real applications; so, estimated weights must be used instead. The effect of using estimated weights is difficult to assess, but experience indicates that small variations in the weights due to estimation do not often affect a regression analysis or its interpretation. However, when the weights are estimated from small numbers of replicated observations, the results of an analysis can be very badly and unpredictably affected. This is especially likely to be the case when the weights for extreme values of the predictor or explanatory variables are estimated using only a few observations. It is important to remain aware of this potential problem, and to only use weighted least squares when the weights can be estimated precisely relative to one another.

Weighted least squares regression, like the other least squares methods, is also sensitive to the effects of outliers. If potential outliers are not investigated and dealt with appropriately, they will likely have a negative impact on

the parameter estimation and other aspects of a weighted least squares analysis. If a weighted least squares regression actually increases the influence of an outlier, the results of the analysis may be far inferior to an unweighted least squares analysis.

EMPERICAL MODEL

The empirical model used in this study is adapted from Ayimpusah and Opoku-Afriyie (2008). The dependent variable ($\ln g_h$) is expressed as a logarithm of per capita household consumption of household (k_h) divided by the upper poverty line (r). The model is specified as follows:

$$\ln g_h = \ln \left[\frac{k_h}{r} \right] \quad (1)$$

If $\ln g_h < 0$, then household h is poor.

If $\ln g_h \geq 0$, then household h is nonpoor.

$\ln g_h$ is related to a vector of observable household characteristics (X_h):

$$\ln g_h = E(\ln g_h \mid X_h) + u_h \quad (2)$$

By way of linear approximation the observed log per capita consumption for household h is given as:

$$\ln g_h = x_h^T \beta + u_h \quad (3)$$

Where β is a vector of parameters and u_h is a disturbance term satisfying, $E(u_h \mid X_h) = 0$, u_h is a random disturbance term initially assumed to be normally distributed. According to Langouw (2003) this allows for location effects and heteroscedasticity in the distribution of disturbances to be tested.

The determinants of poverty in the district are specified as

$$\ln g = f(X, \beta, u) \quad (4)$$

Where β is a vector of parameters, X is a matrix of observable characteristics, and u is a vector of disturbances. We estimate equation four by the Weighted Least Squares (WLS) method using the mean characteristics of household survey data. The corresponding \hat{u}' s are used as weights.

The dependent variable is the natural logarithm of adult equivalent consumption per capita normalized by the upper poverty line. The upper poverty line of GhC 370.89 for Ghana (GSS, 2007). is used in this study. Several researchers including Ayimpusah and Opoku-Afriyie (2008), Coudouel *et al.*, (2002) and Hentschel *et al.*, (2000) though consumption is an imperfect measure of welfare it is a better approximation of the standard of living than income.

The explanatory variables (X_h) in the model include the following observable household characteristics:

Household age composition: it comprises age 5 and below, ages 6-12, ages 13-17, ages 18-24, ages 25-59, and age 60 and above.

Educational background of household members: it consists of no formal education, basic, secondary/vocational, post secondary and tertiary education. A negative coefficient was expected for those with no formal education while positive coefficients were expected for the rest.

Household employment characteristics: in consists of skilled employment and unskilled employment. Positive coefficients were expected.

Distance of household dwelling to the nearest portable water and health centre. Negative coefficients were expected.

Vulnerability of household: two variables were used. The first is expected poverty defined as vulnerability to poverty. It is a dummy with 1 for households above the poverty line and zero otherwise. A positive coefficient

was expected. The second is sex of the household head. It is also a dummy with 1 for male headed households and zero otherwise. A positive coefficient was expected.

Access to credit facilities in the last four years: a positive coefficient was expected.

Remittances: a dummy variable with 1 for those who receive remittance and 0 otherwise. A positive coefficient was expected for those household which received remittances.

Value of home and farm assets: a positive coefficient was expected.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The result of the analysis is presented in Table 1. The R^2 is 65.6% which means the model explains about 65.6% of the variations in poverty level in the district as proxied by normalized consumption per capita. This is significant at 1%.

Determinants of Poverty

Age Characteristics

We had positive a priori expectation regarding all age variables apart from age 0-12. Apart from age 0-5 and age 6-12 all the age variables do not have the *a priori* signs and are not also statistically significant even at 10% level. Age 6-12 meets our expectation and is also significant at 10%. This means that children within the age group of 6-12 exert a negative influence on household consumption and hence household welfare. This is because children within this age group are dependents and do not contribute to household production though they are active consumers. Thus, the more children within age 6-12 a household has the more it is likely to be poor. This reinforces the need to manage family sizes to ensure that household resources are sufficient to satisfy the needs of every family member. These results contrasts with the findings of Ayimpusah and Opoku-Afriyie (2008) who found age 6-12 not to be significant correlates of poverty in their study of the incidence analysis of poverty in the Bolgatanga Municipality. They however found age 17 and above to be significant but with a negative sign which they attributed to the less productive nature of this age group in the Municipality.

Educational Variables

Apart from household members without formal education and those with basic education all the other variables have the right expected signs. However, none of the educational variables is a significant determinant of poverty. Thus, in the district, there is no significant difference in standard of living of those with formal education and those without formal education.

	Variable	Coefficients	Std. Error	t-statistic	p-value
	(Constant)	5.424	0.349	15.543	0.000
Household Age Characteristics	Aged 5 and below	-0.015	0.041	-0.359	0.720
	Aged 6-12	-0.082	0.046	-1.775	0.078
	Aged 13-17	-0.049	0.051	-0.971	0.333
	Aged 18-24	-0.044	0.038	-1.182	0.239
	Aged 25-59	-0.029	0.023	-1.248	0.214
	Aged 60 and above	0.032	0.057	0.557	0.579
Household Educational Characteristics	No. of household members never been to school	0.034	0.026	1.316	0.190
	Basic education	-0.016	0.022	-0.741	0.460
	Secondary/vocational education	0.029	0.043	0.669	0.505
	Post secondary education	0.033	0.056	0.593	0.554
	Tertiary education	0.062	0.070	0.891	0.374
Household Employment Characteristics	Skilled jobs	0.072	0.037	1.909	0.058
	Non-skilled jobs	0.009	0.020	0.472	0.638
Household Assets	Value of farm assets	5.731E-7	0.000	0.738	0.462
	Home assets	6.835E-7	0.000	5.692	0.000
Access of Household to Basic Facilities	Distance to nearest health centre	0.019	0.038	0.492	0.623
	Dist. to nearest portable water source	-0.331	0.166	-1.997	0.047
Household Vulnerability	Sex of household head	0.244	0.120	2.033	0.044
	Vulnerability	1.828	0.163	11.190	0.000
Location Dummy	Is community rural or urban?	0.003	0.171	0.019	0.985
Tenure System	tenure holdings for farmlands	0.013	0.052	0.248	0.805
Household Remittance	Does household receive remittance?	0.003	0.109	0.028	0.978
Household Access to Capital	Has household received microcredit in the last 4 years?	0.251	0.145	1.735	0.085

Table 2: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	0.810 ^a	0.656	0.603	13.70885	2.089

Table 3: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	60855.746	26	2340.606	12.455	0.000
	Residual	31948.521	170	187.932		
	Total	92804.267	196			

Household Employment Characteristics

The employment variables have the expected signs (they have positive influence on household consumption). However, it is only household members with skilled jobs that is statistically significant at 10%. Thus, households which have a number of their members engaged in formal and informal skilled employment are likely to be better off than households which have majority of their members in non-skilled employment. The

explanation is that, there is an increasing demand for skilled labour as the district moves from a rural status to a more urban-like status. Thus, if this trend continues, people with unskilled jobs will increasingly be priced out of the market.

Household Assets

Household assets such as home assets and farm assets are positively correlated with poverty. However, it is only home asset that is statistically significant at 1%. Home asset here refers to all assets of the household apart from those from agriculture. Some of these include automobiles, furniture, TV sets, mobile phone, provisions stores, land, sewing machines, houses and refrigerators. Farm asset refers to both crops and animals owned by the household. Thus, those households with more home assets than farm assets are likely to enjoy better living standards. This is so because, most farm assets are perishable and because they are mostly raw materials they command low prices. This calls for the need to boost the agric sector to ensure value addition to farm products and to improve the marketing system in the rural areas to save farmers from exploitative middlemen who purchase produce at ridiculously low prices at the farm gate level.

Access to Portable Water and Health Services

Access to basic health services represented in the model by the distance of household's dwelling to the nearest health care facility has a positive sign though not significant. Access to portable water depicted by the distance between the household's dwelling and the nearest portable water however has a negative sign and is significant at 5% level. Thus, access to portable water is an important determinant of poverty in the Kwabre East District. According to the Kwabre East District assembly, 60% of the population depend on borehole for their water supply whereas 40% depend on well water, stream or river. Pipe borne water is extremely in accessible in the district. The wells, streams and rivers dry up during the dry season depriving about 40% of the populace in the district of their right to drinking water.

Sex of Household Head and Vulnerability

Since majority of the poor in Ghana are women it was expected that female headed households are likely to be poorer than male headed households. The positive sign confirms this. The variable is significant at 5% level. Female headed households are vulnerable to poverty due to a number of reasons. First, cases of female household headship are as a result of the death of a male spouse or divorce. When this happens, the support which should have come from the husband who is regarded as the head of the household is cut off. Also, in some instances, external family members plunder the resources of the deceased leaving the immediate family almost penniless making it difficult for the widow or divorcee to start any business. In addition, women are disadvantaged in terms of access to and control over productive resources such as land. The death of a husband is generally regarded as the loss of the head of household whose traditional role is to take care of the physical as well as the spiritual needs of the wife and children (Apusigah, 2005).

Vulnerability (Expected Poverty)

Vulnerability in this study is defined as expected poverty. That is, the probability that a household which is poor today will continue to be poor or will pull out of poverty; or the probability that a household which is non-poor today will be poor tomorrow or remain non-poor. The variable is significant at 1% and has a positive sign. This shows that there is little hope for the poor in the district if the *status quo* remains. The poor are likely to have their plight worsening in the near future.

Access to Microfinance

A positive sign was expected since it is expected that households with access to microfinance will have more financial muscle to invest in more lucrative sectors to improve their well-being. The *a priori* sign was achieved. It is also significant at 10% level. This shows how crucial credit facilities are to the wellbeing of households both rural and urban.

CONCLUSION

The above results show that seven factors influence poverty in the Kwabre East District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Thus, the conclusion can be made that in order to tackle poverty in the district efforts must be focused on household-specific characteristics as well as household head-specific characteristics. The factors that reduce per capita consumption in the district are number of children in household aged 6-12 and the distance of household dwelling to the nearest portable water source. Female headed households are also predisposed to

poverty. On the other hand, the factors that enhance the per capita consumption of households include number of household members in skilled jobs, value of home assets, and access to microcredit. Any policy or programme that is geared towards eradicating poverty in the district must recognise the impact of these factors in order for it to succeed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The results show that female headed households are vulnerable to poverty. The obvious recommendation is that such households must be the target of government (or district assembly) policy and the interventions of NGOs and philanthropists.

It is often said that water is life. What is also clear from the results is that access to portable water remains a dream for about 40% of the population in the district. The district assembly and NGOs should channel more resources towards the sinking of boreholes and the provision of pipe-borne water in particular.

Capital is a fundamental factor of production. From the results, access to microfinance is crucial in boosting the welfare of households. Thus, banks and other microfinance institutions should lend on friendly terms; and extend the coverage of their loans to as many households as practicable to help households increase their investments towards the eradication of poverty.

Finally, since number of household members in skilled employment correlates with poverty entrepreneurship and skills development training programmes must be organized by the district assembly and other actors to sharpen the skills of the labour force in the district. This will increase productivity as value addition becomes eminent. Most especially the youth who have dropped out of school should specifically be the target of such training programmes. This will provide a better alternative to the youth and thus help curb crime.

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