

# World Bank approves \$145m budget support for Ghana

The World Bank has approved three credits totalling \$145 million to support Ghana's budget under the multi-donor budget support (MDBS) framework.

The amount includes an extra funding of \$20 million, half of which is earmarked to support the mitigation measures announced by government to address the rising cost of living and to scale up government social welfare programmes aimed at protecting the consumption level of the poor.

The remaining \$10 million will be used to support the provision of essential inputs, such as seeds, fertilisers to farmers to boost production, said Ishac Diwan, the World Bank Country Director for Ghana.

Announcing this recently, he said the World Bank decided to add the additional 20 million USD in support of government programmes to ensure that the poor did not sink into abject poverty.

He said under the social protection measures, the government's Livelihood Empowerment against Poverty (LEAP) would receive a boost to reach an additional 1,818 households and ensure that children remained in school and were vaccinated.

There would also be the broadening of the essential community action package in the poorest regions and providing funds to exempt poor, pregnant women from paying the premium for the National Health Insurance, he said.

Under the agricultural support programme, he said, farmers would be supplied with subsidised fertiliser to increase the rates of fertiliser use among small farmers to increase food production and also initiate a public works programme to increase employment opportunities during the lean season.

Diwan said these operations were focusing on accelerating the kind of growth that benefited the poor, improving environmental sustainability for the benefit of future generations, supporting the delivery of basic services, especially water to the citizens across the country, and continuing to work towards better and more inclusive governance.

The MDBS is a harmonised partnership framework in which the government and a number of its development partners have committed to provide direct funding for the implementation of the Ghana Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy through the annual budget.

Since its inception in 2003, a total of \$1.7 billion have been disbursed under the framework, with more than \$700 million coming from the World Bank alone, through six Poverty Reduction Support Credits.

The credits consist of the Poverty Reduction Support Credit, which received an amount of \$100 million, Natural Resources

and Environmental Governance \$20 million and Agriculture Development Policy Operation \$25 million.

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