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Targeting the Hard-Core Poor: An Impact Assessment

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Targeting the Hard-Core Poor: An Impact Assessment

This study reports the results of a randomized impact evaluation of a program designed to reach the poorest of the poor and elevate them out of extreme poverty. The program, which includes the direct transfer of productive assets (e.g. livestock) and additional training, was initially developed in Bangladesh, where it has reached thousands of beneficiaries, and is being piloted and studied in over seven countries. The results of this study, based on a pilot in India, indicate that this intervention succeeds in elevating the economic situation of the

poorest. We find that the program results in a 15% increase in household consumption and has positive impacts on other measures of household wealth and welfare, such as assets and emotional well-being. Our results are consistent with the notion that the wealth transfer, in the form of asset distribution, directly increased consumption among beneficiary households through the liquidation of assets, but other sources of income, notably from small enterprises, appear to have contributed to the overall increase in consumption as well.

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