

COCCARE MATERNAL SUPPORT STUDY

GROW
GREAT

The optimal physical and brain development of the unborn baby depends on the mother's intake of safe, diverse, and healthy foods that provide vital macro and micronutrients. However, for many women in South Africa, meeting basic nutritional requirements to ensure a healthy pregnancy is a challenge.



584

pregnant women in the Western Cape participated in the baseline telephonic survey, and received R300 digital food vouchers every two weeks between Nov 2020 and April 2021

206

(34%) of these women completed an endline study between October and November 2021

The CoCare Maternal Support Study, conducted by Grow Great and partners in the Western Cape during 2020/21, found that pregnant women who received digital food vouchers reported improvements in maternal hunger, mental health and dietary diversity between baseline and endline. CoCare vouchers were redeemed largely to purchase items such as food, electricity and baby items, negating popular myths that vulnerable women use grants irresponsibly.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL INDICATORS IMPROVED¹..... EXCEPT FOR EMPLOYMENT



REPORTED MATERNAL HUNGER **39% → 25%**
at baseline at endline



RECEIVING CHILD SUPPORT GRANT **53% → 73%**
at baseline at endline



REPORTED CHILD HUNGER **22% → 13%**
at baseline at endline



EMPLOYED **29% → 21%**
at baseline at endline



REPORTED MATERNAL DEPRESSION **33% → 24%**
at baseline at endline



RETURNING TO PAID JOB IN THE COMING MONTH **10% → 19%**
at baseline at endline

(Maternal depression is linked to compromised socio-emotional and cognitive development for children)

Over 25% of children aged under five years suffer from stunting in South Africa². Prevalence of low birth weight amongst study participants was almost one-third the prevalence of 15% reported at national level. Low birth weight puts children at risk of stunted growth and development with long-term detrimental consequences for children's health, education and economic prospects across the life course. **The findings of the endline CoCare Maternal Support Study suggest that providing pregnant women with a fortnightly digital food voucher at about the level of the food poverty line (R624)³ improves food security and mental health.**

1. Telephone survey participants
2. Demographic and Health Survey, 2016
3. Statistics South Africa, April 2021

In partnership with



THE MATERNAL SUPPORT GRANT IS VITAL

GROW GREAT

HERE ARE **10** REASONS WHY...

1 *It improves*
GENDER EQUITY



2 *It reduces*
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



3 *It improves*
MATERNAL NUTRITION



4 *It increases*
ANTENATAL CLINIC ATTENDANCE



5 *It reduces*
MATERNAL MORTALITY



6 *It reduces*
PRE-MATURE & STILLBIRTHS



7 *It improves*
INFANT HEALTH, NUTRITION AND GROWTH OUTCOMES



8 *It reduces*
MATERNAL DEPRESSION AND ITS HARMFUL EFFECTS ON UNBORN BABIES



9 *It reduces*
FINANCIAL PRESSURE ON HOUSEHOLDS



10 *It's an*
EFFECTIVE DETERRENT AGAINST STUNTING



Go to <https://act.amandla.mobi/campaigns/maternity-grant> or scan the QR code to sign the petition to extend the Child Support Grant into pregnancy as a Maternal Support Grant.

