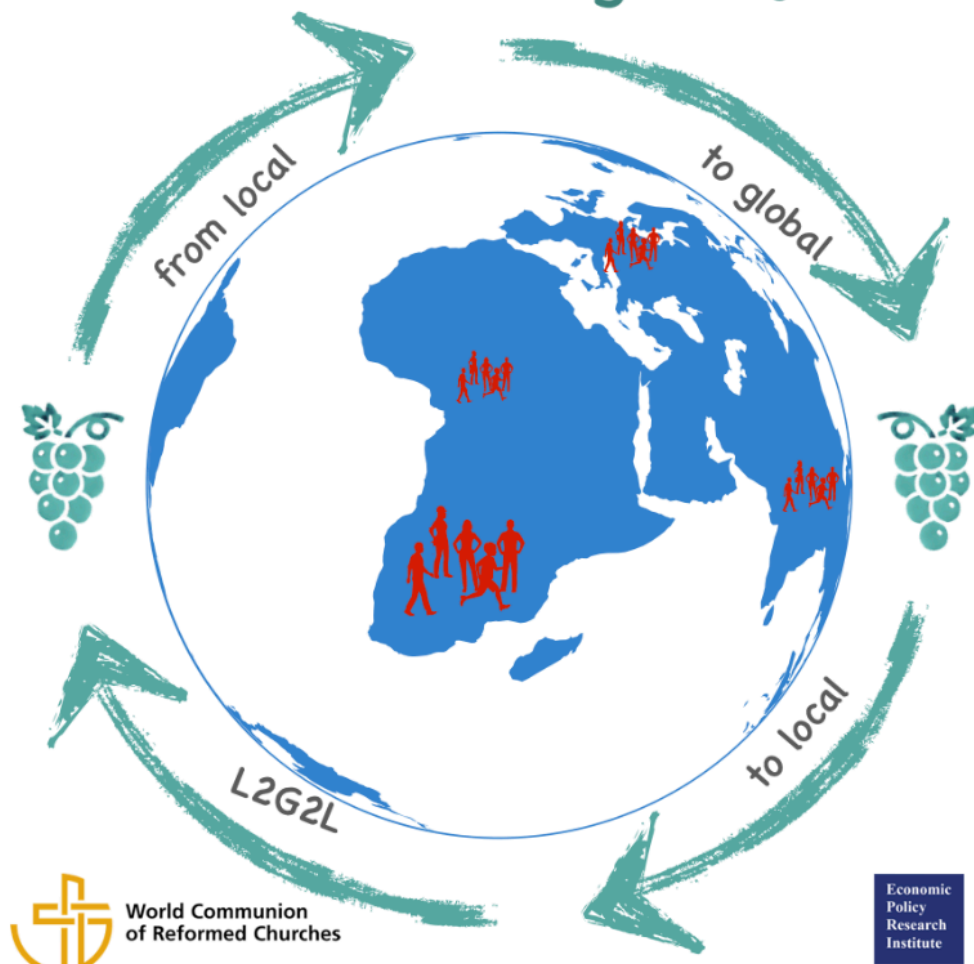

Universal Basic Income Grant Campaign Info Pack- age

Churches advocating for justice!



GRAPE

Global Reformed Advocacy Platforms for Engagement

Table of contents

Table of contents	2
Overview: GRAPE & UBIG	3
Theological and Ethical Foundations	3
Socio-Economic Context	3
Advocacy and Training	3
Church and Civil Society Collaboration	4
Action Points for the Church	4
Addressing Common Myths About UBIG	5
<i>Myth 1: UBIG Will Discourage People from Working</i>	5
<i>Myth 2: UBIG Is Financially Unsustainable for South Africa</i>	5
<i>Myth 3: UBIG Will Replace Existing Social Welfare Programs</i>	5
<i>Myth 4: UBIG Will Lead to Inflation</i>	5
<i>Myth 5: UBIG Is a Handout That Encourages Dependency</i>	6
Additional Resources	6

Overview: GRAPE & UBIG

GRAPE is an initiative by the WCRC aimed at empowering churches to engage in advocacy on pressing global issues, including economic justice and climate change. In South Africa, GRAPE has been instrumental in mobilising church support for the implementation of a Universal Basic Income Grant (UBIG).

UBIG proposes providing all those residing in South Africa aged 18–59 with a guaranteed monthly income, aligned with the food poverty line. This initiative seeks to address the country's persistent challenges of poverty, unemployment, and inequality.

Theological and Ethical Foundations

John 6 : 1-15

The WCRC's Accra Confession (2004) identifies systemic economic injustice as a root cause of human suffering. GRAPE embodies this confession by equipping churches to become proactive agents of change.

During the launch of the South African GRAPE platform in Cape Town on July 25, 2024, church leaders from various denominations, including the Uniting Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa and the Dutch Reformed Church, pledged support for UBIG. Archbishop Thabo Makgoba emphasised that a Universal Basic Income is essential for achieving equitable and sustainable development in South Africa.

Socio-Economic Context

South Africa faces a "triple challenge" of poverty, unemployment, and inequality. Approximately 25% of the population lives below the food poverty line. GRAPE advocates for UBIG as a means to provide essential income support, stimulate economic activity, and reduce inequality. They argue that the country possesses the resources necessary for sustainable financing of such a program.

Advocacy and Training

GRAPE offers an 18-month training program for individuals committed to social and economic justice. Participants engage in workshops and collaborative

projects, developing skills in advocacy, policy analysis, and community leadership. The program is fully sponsored by the WCRC.

Church and Civil Society Collaboration

GRAPE fosters collaboration between churches, ecumenical bodies, and civil society organisations. In South Africa, this includes partnerships with Black Sash, the IEJ, #PaytheGrant and the Economic Policy Research Institute (EPRI). These collaborations aim to build inclusive platforms for advocacy, ensuring that the voices of the marginalised are heard in policy discussions.

Action Points for the Church

1. **Endorse the UBIG Initiative:** Formally support the implementation of UBIG as a step towards economic justice.
2. **Participate in GRAPE Training:** Encourage members to apply for the GRAPE advocacy training program.
3. **Collaborate with Civil Society:** Engage with organisations like Black Sash and IEJ to align church advocacy with broader social movements.
4. **Educate Congregations:** Develop educational materials and programs to inform congregants about UBIG and its implications.
5. **GRAPE Platform meetings:** Members can attend and participate in the realisation of UBIG.

Addressing Common Myths About UBIG

As discussions around the Universal Basic Income Grant gain momentum in South Africa, several misconceptions persist. It's crucial to address these myths with factual information to foster informed dialogue within the church senate and broader community.

Myth 1: UBIG Will Discourage People from Working

Reality: Evidence from various studies indicates that basic income schemes do not lead to a significant decrease in labor market participation. Instead, they provide individuals with the financial stability to seek better employment opportunities, invest in education, or start small businesses. For instance, a pilot project in Namibia demonstrated that recipients of a basic income grant engaged more in income-generating activities, contradicting the notion that such grants promote laziness.

Myth 2: UBIG Is Financially Unsustainable for South Africa

Reality: Analyses suggest that a UBIG can be financed through progressive taxation and reallocation of existing resources. The Institute for Economic Justice (IEJ) argues that South Africa has the fiscal capacity to implement a UBIG without compromising other essential services. They propose measures such as increasing taxes on high-income earners and reducing tax evasion to fund the grant.

Myth 3: UBIG Will Replace Existing Social Welfare Programs

Reality: The UBIG is designed to complement, not replace, existing social welfare programs. It aims to fill the gaps in the current system by providing support to those who are not covered by other grants, particularly adults aged 18–59 who are unemployed or underemployed. This approach ensures a more comprehensive social safety net.

Myth 4: UBIG Will Lead to Inflation

Reality: While increased demand from additional income can exert some upward pressure on prices, studies have shown that the inflationary effects of basic income programs are generally modest. Moreover, the increased eco-

conomic activity and productivity resulting from a UBIG can offset potential inflation, leading to overall economic growth.

Myth 5: UBIG Is a Handout That Encourages Dependency

Reality: Framing UBIG as a handout overlooks its role in empowering individuals. By providing a financial foundation, UBIG enables people to make choices that improve their lives, such as pursuing education or starting a business. It shifts the narrative from dependency to empowerment and self-determination.

Additional Resources

- **WCRC Website:** <https://wcrc.eu/>
- **IEJ on UBIG:** [https://iej.org.za/universal-basic-income-guarantee/Institute For Economic Justice+1tamethemachine.com+1](https://iej.org.za/universal-basic-income-guarantee/Institute+For+Economic+Justice+1tamethemachine.com+1)
- **UBIC :** <https://www.blacksash.org.za/universal-basic-income-coalition/>
- **Info sheet on GRAPE:** <https://wcrc.eu/mission/grape/>
- **Pledge:** <https://grape-wcrc.org/SouthAfricaUBIGCampaign/UBIGCampaignPledge/>
- **GRAPE Sunday:** <https://www.grape-wcrc.org/SouthAfricaUBIGCampaign/GrapeSundaySA/>