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Beneficiary Lived Experiences of the Senior Citizens Grant (SCG) Programme in Kamuli District, Uganda

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RACHEAL BARBARA NAKAJIRI

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Members of the Examining Committee:

Dr Auma Okwany, supervisor
Dr Erhard Berner, Second reader

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Inquiries:

International Institute of Social Studies
P.O. Box 29776
2502 LT The Hague
The Netherlands

t: +31 70 426 0460
e: info@iss.nl
w: www.iss.nl
fb: <http://www.facebook.com/iss.nl>
twitter: [@issnl](https://twitter.com/issnl)

Location:

Kortenaerkade 12
2518 AX The Hague
The Netherlands

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List of Acronyms

CT-OVC	Cash Transfer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children
DRDIP	Development Responses to Displacement Impacts Project
ESP	Expanding Social Protection Programme
LC I	Local Council Chairman 1
LC V	Local Council Chairman 5
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development
MIS	Management Information System
MoFPED	Ministry of finance planning and economic development
MoH	Ministry of health
MoLG	Ministry of local government
NIRA	National Identification and Registration Authority
NSPP	National Social Protection Policy
NUSAf	Northern Uganda Social Action Fund
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
PBU	Post Bank Uganda
PPI	Programme Plan of Implementation
RTSU	Regional Technical Support Unit
SAGE	Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment
SCDO	Senior Community Development Officer
SCG	Senior citizens grant
SCTPP	Ethiopian Social Cash Transfer Pilot Programme
URBRA	Uganda Retirement benefits regulatory authority

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Abstract

Cash transfers for older persons have been the major social policy in the fight against inequality and poverty among old people in many African nations including Uganda. Despite the overwhelming accomplishment in alleviating poverty as evidence in literature, cash transfers have been criticized for failing to incorporate transformative aspects in the relational and subjective wellbeing lives of beneficiaries from their lived experiences. In light of this criticism, this research paper investigates the lived experiences of beneficiaries of Uganda's Senior Citizen Grant (SCG) in terms of social relations and subjective wellbeing. The implications of the SCG on social relations and subjective wellbeing has been scarcely studied by the various research studies that have investigated the impacts of the SCG. To fill in this research gap, this study explores the effect of SCG on subjective wellbeing and social relations of the beneficiaries from the beneficiaries' viewpoint. The research employed a qualitative research design, executed through online interviews. The respondents of the interview included 20 SCG beneficiaries and 4 Key informants involved in the implementation of the grant. A research assistant was involved in making initial contact with the respondents, getting their informed consent, and also obtaining key informants' phone contacts for interviewing later. The main question data gathered through the interviews was meant to answer was; What are the lived experiences of beneficiaries of the SCG programme in Uganda? The specific research questions that the study aimed to answer in order to fulfill this aim included: How have family and community relations been influenced by SCG?, How has the SCG influenced state-citizen relations? and What are the effects of the SCG on the subjective wellbeing of beneficiaries?. The findings of the study reveal that the SCG's implementation has several positive effects on the social relations and subjective wellbeing of beneficiaries despite some failures in positively impacting the social relations and subjective wellbeing of beneficiaries. The negative implications included gender conflicts in households, tensions in relationships between beneficiaries and other community members, limited accountability mechanisms and unawareness of the right to social protection among beneficiaries.

Relevance to Development Studies

In the recent decade, cash transfers have been progressively adopted as chief elements of development programmes that aim to reduce poverty in many developing nations including Uganda. The core theory of change of cash transfer programmes is that if these programmes are suitably designed and implemented, then they will result in the positive transformation of social relations that bolster vulnerability and poverty within households and communities. These social relations include family relations, community relations as well as state-citizen relations. However, the technocratic ways of alleviating poverty inherent in the manner in which cash transfers are designed and implemented seem to fail to incorporate transformative elements that lead to positive relational and subjective wellbeing changes in the lives of the beneficiaries. This transformative relational and subjective wellbeing changes in the lives of beneficiaries are assumed to further support the efforts made by the poor to get out of poverty. This research contributes to discussions about cash transfers by looking at lived experiences in terms of social relations and subjective wellbeing of beneficiaries of the Senior Citizens Grant programme in Uganda.

Keywords

Senior Citizens, Social protection, Cash Transfer, Social Relations, Social Pensions, Senior Citizen Grant.

Chapter 1: Introduction.

1.1 Background to the Study

Social protection arose as a rejoinder to the “safety nets” discourse advocated in the late 1980s and early 1990s by the World Bank in a bid to address several inter-related issues including food security, inequality and poverty. Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler (2004: 9) define social protection as “the set of all initiatives, both formal and informal, that provide: social assistance to extremely poor individuals and households; social services to groups who need special care or would otherwise be denied access to basic services; social insurance to protect people against the risks and consequences of livelihood shocks; and social equity to protect people against social risks such as discrimination or abuse”. The main aim of social protection is to lower the social and economic vulnerability of marginalized, vulnerable people. Many African states have made notable progress in prioritising and integrating social protection in policy and constitutional commitments to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which include goal 1 concerned with ending poverty for everyone. Types of social protection can include social insurance, social assistance, and interventions in labor markets (Dugarova, 2019). Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler (2004) categorized social protection programmes into four groups based on their functions including protective, preventive, promotive, and transformative measures. Protective measures such as social assistance and social services aim at providing relief from deprivation, while preventive measures aim to avert deprivation and directly address poverty alleviation, they encompass provision of social insurance for groups which are financially vulnerable. Promotive measures have the main goal of improving capabilities and real incomes of individuals and households and are attained through an array of livelihood-improving programmes like school feeding programmes and microfinance. Transformative measures are those that address issues of exclusion and social equity (Devereux & Sabates-Wheeler 2004: 10).

Cash transfers are one of the social transfer programmes which can be categorized as a preventive social protection initiatives. Cash transfer programmes have grown precipitously in developing nations across the world over the last decade. These programmes are often adopted as core elements of social protection systems and are usually targeted at the most vulnerable and poorest members in a society. The United Nations World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in 2016 called for growing the share of aid transmitted as cash while agencies such as World Vision and IRC have committed to higher targets for the shares of their aid that they will convey as cash (Tappis and Doocy 2018). Cash transfer for older persons is one of the types of preventive cash transfers and an example of such a cash transfer in Uganda is the Senior Citizens Grant (SCG) programme. Cash transfers for older persons have the main purpose of strengthening the capacities of senior citizens¹ and enhancing their livelihoods while reducing poverty (Lloyd-Sherlock et al. 2012). For instance, the SCG is intended to address poverty and vulnerability in old people through provision of a minimum income security level for senior citizens in Uganda (Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development, MGLSD 2016).

A quarter of Uganda’s population lives in absolute poverty with 43 percent of the non-poor populace vulnerable to slipping into poverty (MGLSD 2015:15 ; Bukuluki and Watson 2012:27 ; Namuddu et al. 2014: 2). Older adults aged 60 years and above form 4.7

¹ Senior citizens in this study refers to older persons aged 60 years and above

per cent (about 1.6 million people) of the Ugandan population and 64.5 per cent (about 903,000) are disabled while 10.7% (about 150,000) stay alone in single headed households (MGLSD 2015:4 ; Bukuluki and Watson 2012:29). Up to 17 per cent Ugandan households are headed by senior citizens with about 72 per cent of them shouldering the responsibilities of care for grandchildren and ill family members (MGLSD 2015:4). Furthermore, despite experiencing frailty due to ageing, senior citizens in Uganda are bound to continue working hard so as to meet their basic needs such as clothing, food, healthcare, shelter, and education for grandchildren under their care. 85 per cent of these active senior citizens are seen to engage in crop farming however this is characterised by low labour returns, price fluctuations and irregular incomes leading to increase in vulnerability (Eldis 2016: 3) and as their labour capacities deteriorate, they become more reliant on others for support given that about 93% have no saving forms, pensions or social security (Eldis 2016: 4). Other challenges that older persons in Uganda face include high risks of diseases, which is tied with high prices of drugs, the dignity of senior citizens is also threatened due to increased dependence and exclusion from community networks and kinship.

The current study is set with in a social justice approach, the concept of social justice is becoming increasingly linked to social protection policies in a move to improve the social justice-promotion capacity of social protection measures. Roelen et al. (2016) argue that social protection can substantially contribute to decreasing social injustice and inequality, particularly when it is devised and implemented in combination with complementary programmes such healthcare services. In the context of social protection, social justice measures improve participation, empower beneficiaries, promote equality, improve state-citizen relations, promote wellbeing, and improve relations in families and communities (Kabeer and Subramanian 1996 ; Miles 2016 ; Devereux et al. 2011). The effect of initiatives embroiling cash transfers are comparatively widely investigated and there is an expanding number of studies which explore most effective modalities delivering cash transfers. Few research studies, nevertheless, have investigated the broader social justice issues involved in the design and implementation of these cash transfers (Oduro 2015). These issues include the consequences of social protection interventions on family, community and state-citizen relations as well as the potential of this interventions to aggravate social divisions or to eliminate them. This is particularly important, given the fact that the manner in which social protection programmes are enacted affects the achievement of the programme's objectives, the beneficiary's view of the programme's value and the trust of the beneficiaries in the government. Plagerson et al. (2012) adds that how beneficiaries view and interact with the social protection institutions from which they are supposed to benefit is vital in nurturing state-citizen interactions.

In the Ugandan context, studies on the Uganda's senior citizen grant have identified the various benefits of the programme and some of the challenges faced in its implementation (Kidd 2016; Mubangizi 2018; Nalwanga and Lund 2018). However, these existing studies have not critically investigated the social relations and subjective wellbeing issues inherent in the design and implementation of the SCG. The present study explores the implications of Uganda's SCG for senior citizens by focusing on relations within the household and community, state-citizen relations, and subjective well-being. It investigates ways in which the implications of the SCG is experienced on the ground by examining the lived experiences of socially vulnerable senior citizens as programme beneficiaries.

1.2 Problem Statement

Devereux et al. (2011) note that social protection programmes are still inadequately focused on attaining social justice outcomes, in terms of improving social relations and subjective wellbeing. While many studies of cash transfer programmes focus on the influence of the programmes on the people in terms of reducing poverty, few studies investigate the implementation process of such programmes in terms of how they affect social relations and subjective wellbeing (Davis et al. 2016 ; Taylor et al. 2016 ; Brugh et al. 2018). For example, from the existing studies of SCG, there is growing evidence that the SCG is significantly improving the lives of senior citizens in Uganda through better health, better housing, education to grandchildren and reduced hunger in households of recipients (Kidd 2016 ; Mubangizi 2018 ; Nalwanga and Lund 2018). However, the effects of the SCG's implementation on social relations have not been adequately investigated by these studies that have examined its impact on the elderly hence creating a research gap. This study purposes to fill this research gap by examining how the SCG implementation has affected relations within beneficiaries' households, community and between the beneficiaries and the state.

Furthermore, lived experiences of the beneficiaries from social programmes are usually ignored despite evidence that they are crucial sources of insight into the efficiency of programme's delivery (Twersky et al. 2013). Similarly, Samuels et al. (2013) note that even though there is mounting proof that supports the assertion that cash transfers are contributing a noteworthy economic difference to the lives of poor people, there is minimal studies on how beneficiaries experience the social relations and subjective wellbeing effects of these programmes. The findings of these researchers emphasize the need to examine the views of beneficiaries regarding their experiences of the social relations and subjective wellbeing implications of the SCG's implementation.

The present study examines beneficiaries' lived experiences with a focus on social relations and subjective wellbeing implications of the SCG. I explored the social justice elements by examining beneficiaries' lived experiences of SCG's implementation in terms of social relations and subjective wellbeing. The goal of this study is particularly important in the case of Uganda's SCG, where Samuels et al. (2013) identify gaps in the adequate promotion of social justice through improvement of social relations and subjective wellbeing in the SCG's delivery.

1.3 Justification of the Study

Devereux and McGregor, (2014) note that many underlying causes of poverty are as much social and political as they are economic. Such political and social contributory factors of poverty include inequalities, marginalization, and discrimination of certain groups in the access to resources (Olsson et al., 2014). A preliminary search of literature on social cash transfer research shows that many studies have focused on assessing these programmes at the economic level rather than also looking at how these programmes operate at the societal level. For instance, studies done on SCG in Uganda have been focused on examining its impacts on the poverty of the elderly with more weight given to whether the predetermined programme outcomes have been met (Kidd 2016 ; Mubangizi 2018 ; Nalwanga and Lund 2018). These studies are based predominantly on impact assessment of the programme in relation to its predetermined objectives. A critical point that is missed in such studies are the implementation issues which entail social processes in which beneficiaries and programme implementers increasingly interact with one another (Groves 2015). Samuels et al. (2013) mentions that little is done regarding people's perceptions on the adoption of social cash transfer programmes as well as their experiences within the programme. Therefore, it is significant to highlight people's voice in services targeting them for instance, their views on issues such as how programme design and implementation influences their family and community relations, state-citizen relations, and subjective wellbeing. Furthermore, it is imperative that social relations and subjective wellbeing implications embroiled in cash transfer programme's implementation are investigated in understanding the overarching impacts of SCG (ibid). This study contributes to discussions regarding social relations and subjective wellbeing issues of social cash transfers from beneficiary's experiences of the SCG's implementation.

1.4 Research Objective and Questions

The objective of this study is to examine the lived experiences of senior citizens under the Senior Citizens Grant programme in Uganda. This will reveal how programme implementation affects beneficiaries in terms of their social relations and subjective wellbeing.

Main Research Question

The study will focus on the following research question;

- What are the lived experiences of beneficiaries of the Senior Citizens Grant programme in Uganda?

Sub Questions

- How have family and community relations been influenced by SCG?
- How has the SCG influenced state–citizen relations?
- What are the effects of the SCG on the subjective wellbeing of beneficiaries?

1.5 Methodology

1.5.1 Research Design

To answer the research question, I adopted a qualitative research design and made use of both primary and secondary data. The qualitative research design was appropriate for this study because the study sought to collect information about beneficiaries' lived experiences of the SCG programme (Creswell and Poth 2016), therefore the study privileges the voices of the beneficiaries and considers their views alongside those of the programme implementors.

Data was generated during a period of a lockdown due to the COVID-19 crisis and because of travel restrictions, I had to devise means to reach my study participants in a safe way while abiding with COVID 19 precautions such as; wearing a mask, sanitizing, and keeping social distance in Uganda. I therefore engaged a research assistant to help me connect with the study participants using online platforms of Zoom, WhatsApp and Phone calls. Salmons (2014:2) advised that conducting interviews online enables one connect to study participants anywhere at any time therefore it was a viable alternative as I could not travel to the field in person due to travel restrictions. I held two sessions to orient the research assistant with the platforms I used to collect data. The research assistant was facilitated; masks and hand sanitizers were provided to keep the study participants and research assistant safe.

1.5.2 Selection of Study Participants

The selection of study participants involved both purposive and convenience sampling. Purposive sampling involves selecting individuals who are proficient and knowledgeable about the phenomenon in question while convenience sampling involves selecting subjects due to their accessibility, geographical proximity or willingness to participate (Etikan et al. 2016). Twenty-four study participants were reached including 20 beneficiaries and 4 key informants.

Beneficiaries were purposively selected with the help of the local council chairperson who helped to identify beneficiaries who had spent three or more years on the SCG programme, while convenience sampling involved identifying beneficiaries who stayed within or close to Kamuli town. Geographical proximity was considered because since Kamuli district is already a rural area, doing the interviews within the town center or closer to it would facilitate for better internet connectivity as interviews were to be conducted online. The study was therefore conducted in two sub counties within Kamuli district that is Kamuli Town Council and Nabwigulu subcounty. Beneficiaries were selected on the basis that they fitted within the main study criteria of having been recipients of the cash transfer for three or more years as these would provide better insights of lived experiences in terms of social relations and subjective wellbeing as a result of receiving cash from the programme.

The key informants including one senior community development officer (SCDO), a programme coordinator from the regional technical support unit, a local council chairman 1 (LC I) and a local council chairman 5 (LC V) were purposively selected because of their knowledge and experience in implementing the Senior Citizens Grant programme and for triangulation of findings from beneficiaries.

1.5.3 Research site

The study was conducted in Kamuli District which is located in the Eastern Region of Uganda (Busoga sub-region) between July and August 2020. The region has the highest poverty rate in the country and has the highest number of people living in poverty (MGLSD 2019: 25). According to the Uganda National Population and Housing Census 2014, Kamuli district has a population of 486,319 people of which 13,799 (approximately 3 per cent) are 65 years and above (Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2017:20). About 15,389 (16.4 per cent) of households in Kamuli district are headed by old persons (aged 60 years and above) and 78.6 per cent of the population depends on subsistence farming as the main source of livelihood with most involved in crop growing or livestock farming (ibid 2017:27).

Households that receive the senior citizens grant in Kamuli district were the target of the study. The programme was introduced in the district during the Financial Year 2015/2016 when the Ugandan government announced the senior citizens grant phased national rollout. The district has 611 female and 549 male beneficiaries making a total of 1160 beneficiaries (MGLSD, 2018: 10). I selected the study area because it is among the first districts in which the programme was implemented, this is important since a key criteria for the study was beneficiaries who had been receiving the Senior citizens grant for three or more years. Looking at beneficiaries who have spent a long period on the programme would give in depth insights into their lived experiences within the programme. Additionally, familiarity with the predominantly spoken language in Kamuli District was another reason for doing the study in this region.

1.5.4 Methods of data collection

I generated primary data using semi structured interviews. Due to the nature of the research question and the nature of data I needed to generate from the study participants, I conducted semi structured interviews to extract data. Semi structured interviews “provide greater breadth and depth of information, the opportunity to discover the respondent’s experience and interpretation of reality, and access to people’s ideas, thoughts and memories in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher” (Blee & Taylor, 2002: 92)

I used online research methods of Zoom, WhatsApp and Phone calls to conduct the semi structured interviews with 20 beneficiaries and 4 key informants with the help of the research assistant who is a qualified researcher working at a research institute in Uganda and also a native speaker of the local language used in Kamuli district, the study area. Thirteen beneficiary interviews and one key informant interview were conducted via Zoom while seven beneficiaries interviews and three key informant interviews were conducted via Phone calls and WhatsApp calls. The interviews lasted between 40minutes and one hour and nine of the interviews were recorded following consent from study participants. Time spent on interviews relied upon the degree to which information collected responded to study purposes and the raising of unanticipated issues that turned out to be significant contributions to study findings also contributed to length of interviews (Arthur and Nazroo 2003).

For validation of the research instrument, I pretested the interview questions on five recipients of SCG, “piloting the questionnaire and asking respondents to comment on questions can easily help identify complex and ambiguous questions that could easily be misinterpreted” (Overton and van Diermen 2003:4). Utilizing an interview guide gave direction for interviews to remain in accordance with set research objectives while the semi structured approach allowed for opportunity to seek clarification and elaboration on issues under study and for asking of follow up questions depending on participants’ responses.

I generated secondary data by reviewing reports, empirical studies on cash transfers, academic literature on social protection and social pensions as well as journals. The study also made extensive use of documents relevant to SCG programme and social protection situation in Uganda for example the 2019 Social Protection Review Report, the 2016 Senior Citizen Grant Operational Manual, the 2015 National Social Protection Policy and the 2012 Report about Poverty, Vulnerability and Inequality in Uganda, all retrieved from reliable sources for example the Expanding Social Protection Programme website and the Uganda Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development website.

Table 0: Study participants and methods of data Collection

Sub counties	Data collection method	Study participants
Kamuli Town Council (KTC)	Online Semi structured interviews via Zoom	-8 beneficiaries. -1 local council chairman 1 (LC 1)
	Semi structured interviews via Voice calls	Key informants (2) -1 Senior Community Development Officer (SCDO). -1 programme coordinator from the Regional Technical Support Unit (RTSU).
Nabwigulu Sub County	Online Semi structured interviews via Zoom	-5 beneficiaries
	Semi structured interviews via Voice calls	-7 beneficiaries -1 local council chairman 5 (LC V)

Source; Researcher's construction

1.5.5 Ethical considerations

An introductory letter from ISS was emailed to the Expanding Social Protection Programme (ESP)² for acceptability to conduct research from the study area (O'Leary 2010:72), I explained the purpose and intended use of my research and presented the planned details of my fieldwork process, plans (dates, time and number of days) for the field work were communicated to programme officials at the district level and once permission was granted, data collection in the field commenced.

Furthermore, a consent form was also presented to study participants before proceeding with the interviews and as advised by O'Leary (2010:70), I availed detailed information about the research to the study participants, what the research was to be used for (that is; study purposes) and why their involvement in the study was crucial to ensure that participants give informed consent.

Taking into consideration that based on social and cultural contexts, there are always power differences between the researcher and study participants (Christensen and Prout 2002: 480), I needed to pay attention and acknowledge these power differences instead of

² ESP is the government body in charge of the SCG programme.

overlooking (Holland et al. 2010: 363), therefore to address these power differences and build rapport with study participants, I communicated to the study participants in their local language which gave them confidence to express themselves freely. I also encouraged participants to use a media they were more comfortable with for example a voice call or a video call. My positionality as a researcher who had previously worked in societies of the elderly and as someone trying to understand opportunities available for the elderly in Uganda because I grew up with my grandmother also helped me to easily engage with the study participants.

For study participants who wanted to remain anonymous, confidentiality and anonymity as encouraged by O'Leary (2010:70) was ensured by using platforms like WhatsApp with end to end encryption and Zoom with password protection. As the host to the Zoom meetings, I granted access to only the study participants and the lock down setting was activated to prevent other people from joining in case meeting IDs or access details were leaked. Consent to record interviews was also sought from the study participants.

As precautionary measures to ensure that no harm comes to the study participants as data was collected during the COVID 19 crisis, I provided masks and hand sanitizers to the study participants and during the interview process, the research assistant kept a social distance while I interviewed the study participants (O'Leary 2010:70). This also helped to ensure confidentiality. Furthermore, interviews were conducted between 8am and 4pm to protect the research assistant from harm on his way to the hotel he was residing and to abide with the curfew restriction of 7pm which had been enforced by the Government of Uganda. I kept in constant communication with the research assistant via Emails, phone calls and WhatsApp chats to ensure that safety precautions were being met and to constantly link with the study participants.

1.5.6 Study Limitations

Since communications between the ESP had begun a month before data collection, limited hardships were met during field work since plans for the field work had been organised and communicated to programme officials. A key challenge faced was the problem of poor internet connectivity in the areas where some beneficiaries stayed, conducting the interviews using online platforms required stable internet connection however slow internet connection was encountered making it impossible to conduct some of the interviews on platforms such as Zoom. As a solution, voice calls were made to conduct the interviews with some of the study participants.

Given the advanced age of the study participants, some of the elderly people were fragile and spoke softly. I endeavoured to give pauses so as to enable the beneficiaries take some breaks between the interviews. Interviews therefore took longer than anticipated.

1.5.7 Data Analysis and Interpretation

I transcribed the interviews by aligning participants' responses to the research questions and study objectives, data collected was read and re-read to familiarise myself with its subjects (Silverman 2016). I then coded the material into categories and themes after transcription and in order to generate valuable and meaningful results, I further analysed the data collected through relevant concepts (Attridge-Stirling 2001).

1.6 Organization of the paper

This paper is organized into five chapters. The first chapter above serves as an overview of the research topic. The second chapter explains the key concepts that have guided the data analysis of the lived experiences of the SCG beneficiaries. Chapter three provides an overview of social protection in Uganda and the senior citizens grant and the fourth chapter provides an analysis of the research findings. The final chapter summarises findings and concludes the paper

Chapter 2: Conceptual and Analytical Framework.

This chapter presents the conceptual and analytical framework for the study. It helps to create an understanding of the concepts to be used in the analysis of study findings.

2.1 Vulnerability among Senior Citizens

The word vulnerable is common in many areas of knowledge such as medicine, the management of risks associated with natural disasters, criminology, political science and psychology. Vulnerability is considered to be a state where people lack defence against adverse shocks, and it has the ability to inflict damage to a particular system or agent which could be a household, person, economy, climatic system, and financial system among others (Barbosa et al. 2017). As a result, a state of vulnerability may be categorized as the presence of a given weakness or the existence of internal conditions within the agent or system that determines their condition of lack of defence or by the existence of various possible external shocks that the system or agent cannot cope with (Andrew and Keefe 2014). Defining vulnerabilities for the elderly means the adapting to a framework for analysing vulnerabilities to this particular age group. Vulnerabilities in old age are divided into exogenous events such as floods and droughts that equally impacts other age groups and endogenous events such as health issues which commonly affect older adults (Jesus et al. 2018). Following the need to provide older adults with resources to help them deal with shocks and disasters that make them vulnerable, social protection for senior citizens are developed. Social protection for senior citizens are often implemented through cash transfers.

In Uganda, the elderly face environmental shocks because a huge proportion still rely on agriculture; approximately 40 per cent (MGLSD 2019: 18), lack physical strength to work and most of them also suffer from age-related disabilities given disability incidence significantly increases with age (Wylde 2012:17 ; MGLSD 2019:31). Some older people especially the frailest ones depend on other members of their families and for the older persons that are still able to work, the only source of employment comes from farming which is usually carried out in marginalized rural areas at a subsistence level and is adversely affected by climate change phenomenon of long drought seasons or flooding. As such, these older people need social protection services to address their vulnerabilities.

2.2 Conceptualizing Social Protection

Various scholars have documented the importance of social protection as a key component in poverty alleviation and a key strategy towards reducing risks and vulnerabilities (Devereux et al. 2011; Devereux and Sabates Wheeler 2004). Conceptually Devereux and Sabates Wheeler define social protection as “all public and private initiatives that provide income or consumption transfer to the poor, protect the vulnerable against livelihood risks, and enhance the social status and rights of the marginalised; with the overall objective of reducing the economic and social vulnerability of poor, vulnerable and marginalised groups” (Devereux and Sabates Wheeler 2004: 9).

The intended beneficiaries of the different categories of social protection include the chronically poor, economically vulnerable and the socially marginalized however it is important to note that due to vulnerability being composite in nature, these categories often overlap for example the socially marginalized are often economically vulnerable (ibid 2004:12). Table 2 below summarizes the different categories of vulnerability and proposed interventions. As seen in the table, senior citizens can be chronically poor, economically

vulnerable or fall under both categories and hence the need for social pensions (social insurance).

While social protection interventions address these different categories of vulnerabilities, it is important to note that there are unintended adverse outcomes that may result during the implementation of social protection programmes. These include; social tensions and exclusion, stigmatization of beneficiaries which may result from targeting mechanisms and power hierarchies (Devereux and Sabates Wheeler 2004; Ellis 2012).

Table 2: A framework for Social Protection

Vulnerability Categories	Examples of Affected Groups	Category of Interventions	Types of Programmes
Chronically poor	Severely disabled Terminally ill Ethnic minorities Urban unemployed Pastoralists Subsistence smallholders	Social Assistance	Disability benefit Single-parent allowances Social pensions Food aid Food-for-work
Economically at risk	Cash crop farmers Internally displaced persons Orphans Informal sector workers Widows The elderly	Social Insurance	Formalised pensions Unemployment benefits Health insurance Maternity benefits Buxial societies
Socially Vulnerable	Ethnic minorities Abducted children People living with AIDS Victims of domestic abuse People with disabilities Street children Female headed households	Transformative Action	Changes to regulatory framework to protect vulnerable groups. Operationalizing economic, social and cultural rights Sensitization campaigns
		Social Services	Community based care Orphanages Refugee/IDP camps Crèches/pre-schools

Source: Devereux et al. (2002) cited in Devereux and Sabates Wheeler (2004: 13)

2.3 Social Relations, State-Citizen Relations and Subjective Wellbeing in Cash Transfers

Cash transfer programmes being widely implemented across the world seem to define the poor only in terms of what they do not have and providing inputs to offset the things they lack (Devereux and McGregor 2014). According to Molyneux et al. (2016), cash transfers are some of the social protection mechanisms that have been criticized for this narrow view of defining and alleviating poverty status. The dominance of the conception of poverty based on income, in addition to the use of income-based indicators when evaluating a programme's success, has resulted in poverty alleviation policies such as cash transfer programmes emphasizing efforts to pull people out of poverty by raising the beneficiary's purchasing power. The implicit assumption that an increased beneficiaries' income automatically translates to greater subjective wellbeing has been questioned by Rojas (2009). Rawls (2009) explains that there is a robust synergy between social protection and social justice and that this often underline political philosophies on matters such as just distribution of social resources and the value of fairness. Consideration of the link between social justice theories

and social protection specifically underlines the concern of what quality of life is facilitated by social protection programmes (Devereux and McGregor 2014). This relationship demonstrates individuals' social relations which are essential for their subjective wellbeing and are moulded by their conceptions of what is just, fair, and appropriate. To this extent, there is much discussion concerning the degree to which the design and implementation of cash transfers boosts social inclusion, enhances knowledge of rights or strengthens clientelism, as well as how they impact on social relations (Browne 2013). Furthermore, the discussions about the need to transform social protection to support poor and vulnerable groups in efforts to improve their lives have brought the conversation of the integration of positive implications for social relations and subjective wellbeing in social protection. Hence, the significant elements to assess the extent to which cash transfer's implementation is ensuring and promoting social justice for this study include well-being and social relations (Devereux and McGregor 2014 ; Samuels et al. 2013).

2.3.1 Social Relations Approach

The Social Relations Approach is intended as an approach for analyzing the inequalities present in the distribution of responsibilities, resources, and power, and also to help in the design of programmes and policies that would ensure all groups of people to be agents of their own development (Miles 2016). The main elements of the social relations approach are the concept of social relations, the goal of development of human wellbeing, and institutional analysis. As is explained by Kabeer (1994), the term 'social relations' is used to refer to the structural relationships that establish and produce systemic differences in the positioning of diverse groups of individuals. These types of relations determine who individuals are, their claims, their rights and extent of control of their lives and those of others as well as their responsibilities and roles in communities. Social relationships also determine cross-cutting inequalities that ascribe each person a position on the hierarchy present in different societies (Kabeer & Subrahmanian, 1996). According to Hillenbrand et al. (2014), poverty is a consequence of the unequal social relations between people and which establishes unequal access to responsibilities, claims, and resources. Therefore, social protection programmes, including cash transfers should focus on supporting relationships which establish reciprocity and solidarity, and which promotes autonomy, instead of reducing it in order to improve their effectiveness in poverty eradication (Kabeer & Subrahmanian, 1996).

This paper uses the social relations approach to discuss the effect of SCG's implementation on social relations in terms of how SCG's implementation has influenced the relations of beneficiaries within their families, communities, and the state.

2.3.2 State-Citizen relations

The relationship between the state and its citizens is regularly conceptualised as social contract or state-society relations. DFID defines state-society relations as "interactions between state institutions and societal groups to negotiate how public authority is exercised and how it can be influenced by people" (DFID 2010:15). These relations define the mutual rights and responsibilities of society and state, negotiate the allocation of public resources and establish the various approaches of accountability and representation. Likewise, Osofisan defines state-citizen relations as "a form of social contract that gives the state its legitimacy provided it serves the will of its citizens. In practical terms, it involves the ability of citizens to demand services and hold state actors to account; and the extent of the state's responsiveness to their demands and needs. It also includes citizens' rights and responsibilities towards the state and the level of trust they have in the state." (Osofisan 2011:2). He further notes that social protection systems and therefore cash transfers have the ability to

build strong state-citizen relations and consequently lead to state legitimacy by raising standards of living of vulnerable people, protecting human rights and delivering functions for example public goods and services.

Legitimacy is “people’s acceptance of a particular form of rule, political order, institution or actor as being legitimate” (OECD 2010 as cited in Babajanian 2012: 14). The state and society do not act in isolation, it is state interactions with citizens that bring about legitimacy and these interactions also define citizenship. Citizens’ negative experiences with the state may result into mistrust and to state institutions being rejected and hence undermining state legitimacy. Social protection can reinforce citizenship rights by integrating programme designs with institutional mechanisms which strengthen citizens voice and accountability. Measures such as these set up citizenship foundations in institutions and fortify the state’s function in guaranteeing entitlements of citizens which subsequently lead to empowerment of citizens and strong state-citizen relations. (Babajanian 2012:26)

In this study, the element of state-citizen relations is investigated through the participation of the beneficiaries in the design and implementation of the programme, programme accountability and promotion of beneficiaries’ rights and citizenship. Therefore, the relations between the state and the citizens will be used to analyze the implementation of the SCG programme in terms of its role in enhancing the relations between the beneficiaries and the government.

2.3.4 Community Relations

According to Hillenbrand et al. (2014), poverty is a consequence of the unequal social relations between people and which establishes unequal access to responsibilities, claims, and resources. Devereux & McGregor (2014) propose that a change in relationships which bring about poverty is the only way to sustainably reduce poverty. Hickey (2008) similarly argues that the relevance and effectiveness of social protection relies upon the degree to which relationships which replicate wellbeing failure and impoverishment are addressed. Therefore, investigating cash transfers for their transformative contribution in the society would involve considering how the beneficiaries perceive their relations with others being affected by the programme. In this study, the community element is investigated through the sense of the dignity of the beneficiaries and the implications of the SCG on the beneficiaries’ relations with other community members, particularly whether it has improved or deteriorated these relations.

2.3.5 Subjective Well being

Wellbeing in this study is understood as the subjective dimension of wellbeing described by Devereux & McGregor (2014). This dimension of wellbeing involves what a person thinks about his or her life satisfaction as a whole. Cash transfers have mostly been assessed basing on objective indicators like attendance in school, anthropometric measures, poverty rate, and labour market indicators. While objective measures help in evaluating aspects in relation to living and working conditions, subjective wellbeing indicators can assess beneficiaries’ own perceptions with regards to their social environment (Martínez and Maia 2018). Subjective wellbeing deems that there is a close relationship between poverty and its consequences, focusing on analyzing perceptions about people’s reality rather than intrinsic material characteristics (Grable et al. 2013). Diener et al. (2003) mentions that subjective wellbeing is measured by respondents evaluating their lives positively including fulfilment, life satisfaction and pleasant feelings and these often make people feel confident and empowered. In this study, well-being embroils an assessment of the extent to which the programme beneficiaries perceive the consequences of the SCG on their own living conditions

in terms of meeting their own basic social and economic needs. The social needs are in terms of self-esteem, safety in terms of health and resources.

Chapter 3: Social Protection in Uganda and the SCG

This chapter discusses social protection in Uganda and the SCG. The chapter begins with a general overview of social protection in Uganda which is followed by an examination of various aspects of the senior citizens grants programme (programme roll-out, targeting and eligibility, identification and verification, payment amount and process, management and implementation structure, monitoring and evaluation, grievances and complaints) and finally, the challenges encountered in implementing the SCG.

3.1 Overview of Social Protection in Uganda

The Ministry of Labour Gender and Social Development, Uganda defines social protection as “public and private interventions to address risks and vulnerabilities that expose individuals to income insecurity and social deprivation, leading to undignified lives. It is a basic service and a human right that ensures dignity of people” (MGLSD 2015:1). Uganda has stepped up its efforts of adopting social protection in recent times. The approach taken by the country is based on enhancing human capital and ensuring there is national economic growth and development. Studies focusing on Uganda have shown that the growth that results from investments in social protection is similar to growth achieved from investment in infrastructure (MGLSD 2019:3). Moreover, investment in social protection also complements investment in other sectors including education and health. This is achieved by addressing demand-side hindrances to accessing services offered by these sectors. The logic behind the massive investment in social protection in Uganda is the belief that developing human capital will enable people to take advantage of the opportunities present in their communities.

The country’s efforts to establish a social protection system started in the year 2015 with the launch of the National Social Protection Policy (NSPP) (ibid 2019: iii). The main aim of this policy was to establish a comprehensive social protection system to help combat risks and vulnerabilities faced by the populace. At the same time, a Programme Plan of Implementation (PPI) was established to offer guidelines on the implementation of the NSPP. The NSPP defines social protection as strategies that promote the welfare of the vulnerable and those with income shocks for example the disabled, the ill, the unemployed, old aged and those who are disaster struck. These strategies include 1. Social care and support services and 2. Social security which entails direct income support and social insurance (ibid 2019:44). Social protection programmes in Uganda include the Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (SAGE), Public Works Programme, National Social Security Fund(NSSF), Public Service Pension Scheme(PSPS), Community Based Rehabilitation Programme for disabled people, the Vulnerable Children Programme and NUSAID and these are delivered by different ministries for example the MGLSD, the MoFPED, URBRA, OPM, MoH, Ministry of public service and the MoLG (MGLSD 2015 ; MGLSD 2019).

Even with these efforts, the social protection performance in the country has been hindered by fiscal, administrative challenges as well as governance and institutional challenges. If not addressed, these challenges could compel implementation and limit the transformation of set ambitions into long term outcomes.

3.2 The Senior Citizens Grant Programme

In recent times, there has been an increased prevalence of inequality and poverty among old people in Uganda. The prevalence of poverty in the country has intensified recently after years of a steady decline and as such any plans for ensuring the future economic growth of the country have to incorporate efforts towards poverty reduction (MGLSD, 2019:22). Most of the old people in Uganda survive on low incomes and have poor job securities. It should be noted that rural areas for example the Eastern and Northern parts of Uganda are the regions with the most prevalence of poverty and this geographical discrepancy highlights the need for national social protection for senior citizens. (MGLSD 2019: 25; Wylde et al. 2012:9).

Recognizing the vulnerability of older adults and their poverty status, Uganda's Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) established the Expanding Social Protection (ESP) programme in 2010. The ESP launched a pilot social cash transfer programme titled Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (SAGE) which is characterized by two components, the Senior Citizen Grant (SCG) and the Vulnerable Families Grant (VFG). (MGLSD 2015; Aggrey 2013).

The SCG which was established in 2011 is a noncontributory social pension programme intended to address old-age poverty by offering senior citizens with a least possible level of income. The main goal of the SCG is to ensure that the welfare of the older persons in Uganda is taken care of and this reflects the people's culture of supporting the elderly. The programme does not simply focus on reducing poverty among the elderly or their families but also helps build social cohesion and includes other groups for example orphans and people living with disabilities (MGLSD 2016). Since its establishment, the SCG has gained popularity and acceptance because of the visible results it is achieving in helping people, the programme currently reaches 157,442 beneficiaries in 50 out of 112 districts in the country (MGLSD 2018: 10) with Kamuli district included.

3.2.1 Programme Roll-out

The SCG programme was first piloted in 15 districts (MGLSD 2016: 29), beneficiaries were entitled to receive UGX 23,000 per month (MGLSD 2019:144 ; Bukuluki and Watson 2012:31) and the amount was to be adjusted annually so as to account for inflation and to sustain the purchasing power of the cash transfer (Aggrey 2013 ; Bukuluki and Watson 2012). Therefore from 2012, beneficiaries were entitled to UGX 24,000 (Bukuluki and Watson 2012:31) and at the time I conducted this research (July-August 2020), beneficiaries were receiving UGX 25,000. From 2016 up to date, the SCG has been rolled out in 40 other districts. This rolling out has been done in phases where in the financial year 2015/2016, twenty new districts were added, and five new districts have been added every year after that (MGLSD 2016:29). The programme is currently implemented in 50 districts (MGLSD 2018:10). In order to enhance the impact of the SCG in regions that are excessively affected by climate change, conflict, and poverty, enrolment within these areas has been accelerated by 100 people per year.

Table 3 SCG Roll out

Year	District coverage
2011 (Pilot districts)	15
2015/16	35
2016/17	40
2017/18	45
2018/19	50
2019/20	55

Source: Researcher's construction based on data from MGLSD (2016: 30)

3.2.2 Targeting and Eligibility

The target group of the SCG are all Ugandan nationals who are 65 years and above, however, the age limit for Karamoja region is 60 years and above due to lower life expectancy in this region (Oxford Policy Management 2013). Another criterion for selecting beneficiaries is that the individuals have to be living in the selected districts for at least one year and should not be entitled to get benefits under the Public Service Pension Scheme (MGLSD 2016:29). The targeting is therefore categorical and Geographical in nature, Coady et al. (2004:14) define categorical targeting as one which “involves defining eligibility in terms of individual or household characteristics that are considered easy to observe, hard to falsely manipulate, and correlated with poverty” for example geographical location, age, gender and ethnicity. Geographical targeting utilises data on characteristics of regions to rate them by their relative poverty or wealth (Aguila et al. 2014:3), this approach assumes that households in the same neighbourhood have similar welfare attributes and therefore easy identification of poor neighbourhoods to benefit from social programmes (ibid).

The specific targeting procedure involves the selection of the 100 oldest persons in each sub county for the first year of implementation and more beneficiaries are added subsequently depending on availability of funds (MGLSD 2016). The categorical³ nature of targeting was appreciated by the beneficiaries as they felt they deserved to receive this income given their inability to engage in active work and the focus of previous programmes on women and youths. The beneficiaries also mentioned that the targeting process was fair and transparent as it was hard for one to lie about their age

Nevertheless, previous studies have presented reservations about the targeting criteria deeming the eligibility age as too high giving reasons like early ageing in poor older people and, hence excluding many poor vulnerable adults. Additionally, adult women are more vulnerable than men and further face care responsibilities, therefore setting the eligibility criteria for women at a lower age would be advantageous to female senior citizens. (Aggrey 2013; Bukuluki & Watson 2012)

3.2.3 Identification and Verification

In helping the elderly in Uganda, there is a need to ensure that the correct people get assistance. In doing this, the relevant authorities have to verify the ages, identities, status, and places of residency of the individuals. The verification is conducted at the parish level and the main identification document is the national identity card. Other identification

³ Meeting the specified geographical and demographic criteria.

documents may also be used if they help verify the age and identity and these include voters' card, Passport, birth certificate, marriage certificate, baptism certificate, and driver's permit (MGLSD 2016:7). The programme utilizes two methods to identify and verify individuals: a provisional list (individuals older than 60 years) acquired from data from the National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA); and a supplementary register for individuals not registered by NIRA (those without national identification cards). The older persons executive committee also helps in verification of age for those without national identity cards however they have no say in decisions concerning eligibility.

During verification meetings at the parish, community members are briefed about the eligibility criteria for selection based on provisional list showing people's identity, residency (using the national ID or through the older persons committee) and status (alive, dead or imprisoned) on the provisional lists are verified, a supplementary register is made for those not on the provisional list which is then processed in the Management Information System (MIS) for purposes of having a complete older persons database. Home visits are done to those who are absent at the meetings and those nominated for inclusion in the supplementary register. (ibid)

After verification meetings and home visits, provisional lists and supplementary registers are forwarded to the Regional Technical Support Unit (RTSU) for review and data entry into the MIS. Final review after data entry is done by the Operations Coordinator (OC) and after approval, beneficiary lists are printed out for distribution. Radio spot messages and meetings with parish chiefs are also conducted to notify beneficiaries that lists are out and thereafter beneficiaries are officially enrolled into the programme (MGLSD 2016).

3.2.5 Payment Amount and Process

The social pension programme currently provides an unconditional transfer amount of 25,000 Ugandan shillings per month and the amount is paid once every two months (MGLSD 2016: 23 ; Merttens et al. 2016: 3 ; MGLSD 2019: 56) however, at the time of my research in July-August 2020, beneficiaries in Kamuli district were receiving UGX 75,000 every after three months.

Postbank Uganda (PBU) is the programme's current payment service provider and uses mobile banking vans (bank on wheels) to deliver the grant to communities. The beneficiaries receive money from the local council office where the mobile banking vans go every first week of the second month. Study participants informed me that they find this delivery mechanism convenient and are very happy with it. Towards pay day, they receive reminders from their local council leaders and parish priests. As noted by Osofisan (2011:6), beneficiaries' experiences with the transfer delivery mechanisms influence their perception about the state and hence affects state citizen relations, therefore from these findings, we can deduce that this delivery mechanism is building positive relations between SCG beneficiaries and the state.

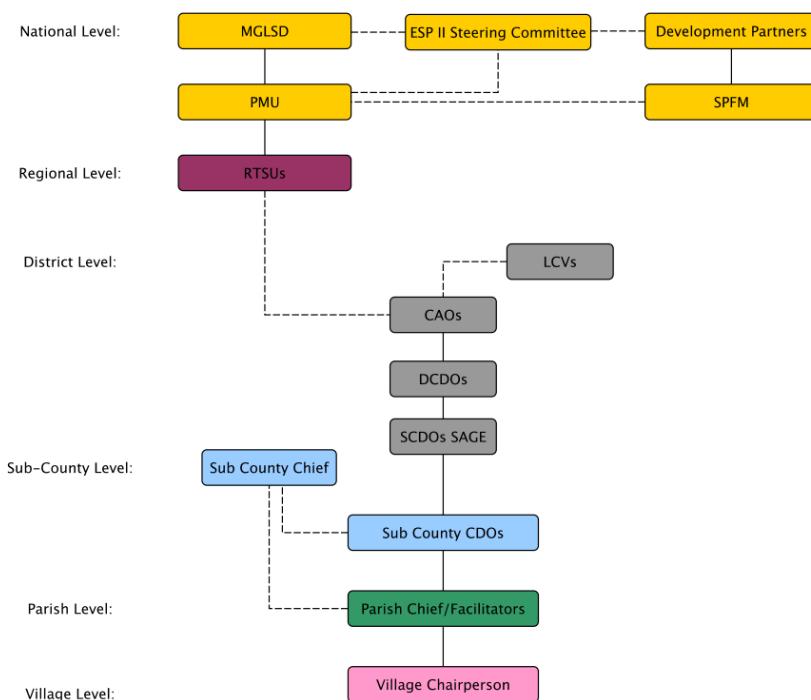
3.2.5 Management and Implementation structure

SCG is managed by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) through the ESP Programme Management unit (PMU). The PMU is responsible for communications, advocacy and giving technical expertise and includes staff in charge of the MIS, operations, M&E, administration and finance (MGLSD 2016: 3). Implementation of the programme is done at regional, district and subcounty levels through the local government and community development offices. The programme is funded by DFID, Irish Aid, UNICEF and the Government of Uganda. Contributions from development partners are managed by the Social Protection Fund Manager (SPFM). The SAGE Regional

Technical Support Units (RTSUs) embedded within the PMU support and oversee the implementation of activities at the district level, the programme has seven RTSUs spread out through the four regions of the country with each serving at least four districts (ibid 2016:57).

Communications at the different levels for example; village, parish, sub county and district level are managed by the Senior Programme Officer (SPO) and the communications adviser found within the PMU. These ensure that information for example programme objectives, eligibility criteria, registration process, complaint mechanisms, rights and responsibilities of the different SCG staff is well disseminated to beneficiaries and stakeholders. Communication channels include MGLSD letters, Radio broadcasts, Meetings, Orientation trainings, Religious institutions and Local Councils (ibid). Ensuring that both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries know about the programme creates confidence in the cash transfer programme while keeping stakeholders informed also allows for accountability in programmes (Grosh et al. 2008). Study findings reveal that these communication strategies indeed exist in Kamuli district.

Figure 0.1
SCG Management and Implementation Structure



Source: MGLSD (2016: 35)

Coordination of SCG at the District and Subcounty level is managed by the Senior Community Development Officer (SCDO) and Subcounty Community Development Officer (CDO) respectively. The SCDO serves as a point of contact between the RTSU and the district and supports the coordination of programme activities at Subcounty level. The CDO works with parish chiefs to foresee programme activities at the Subcounty level. (MGLSD 2016:41)

3.2.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation by relevant officials is done by recording lessons learned and issues that are encountered to act as case studies to enhance project performance (MGLSD 2016:34). The findings of the monitoring and evaluation process are shared with key stakeholders and the public at national level workshops. The study found that M&E strategies in the study area were weak as officials' involvement was on voluntary basis and very few were willing to do so.

3.2.7 Grievances and complaints

SCG acknowledges the significance of grievance and complaints systems in programme implementation. Besides improving programme effectiveness, helping to identify and rectify errors and helping to integrate beneficiaries' suggestions and recommendations in programme implementation, grievance and complaint systems also regulate fraudulent behaviours for example corruption, fraud, abuse and theft (MGLSD 2016).

Complaint measures in the SCG programme are implemented by the RTSU with support from Local Government staff. Supervision of these measures is done by the SPO Grievance and complaints and the initial points of contact when submitting complaints are parish chiefs and sub county CDOs who then submit the complaint forms to the RTSU (*ibid*). This study found that complaint forms were not being used as complaint mechanisms in Kamuli district, the available mechanisms that study participants mentioned were the regular meetings held with local leaders such as local council chairpersons and parish priests through whom they passed on their complaints.

3.3 Challenges in the Implementation of the SCG

The implementation of the SCG in Uganda has not been without challenges. Several issues emerged from the study which affected the implementation process and thus compromised its usefulness to the beneficiaries. The study was designed to engage with senior citizens on the challenges they experience in the SCG programme. The responses given by the senior citizens indicated that they are not comfortable with certain factors which they thought would better be solved. They identified the lack of competency among staff charged with the implementation of the SCG, the weak implementation of the grievance mechanisms and the lack of effective monitoring and mechanisms for evaluation. The findings of the study had support from studies such as Samuels et al (2013) who identified concerns where the staff of SCG were not competent in dealing with the vulnerabilities faced by the older adults in an effective and sensitive way. Furthermore, the authors also identified issues around staff mandate where there was a lack of clarity about the roles of staff or the pressure to move away from social work tasks in order to cope with the monitoring and data collection demands of the programme. Concerning spaces for exchanging information and interaction of beneficiaries, the findings of Mubiru (2014) indicate that programme implementers were making efforts to engage with the village elders who then deliver information to the beneficiaries during community meetings as a result of the limited formal spaces for interaction between the beneficiaries and programme implementers.

Even though the SCG has grievance mechanisms, its implementation is weak. Because the SCG is viewed by the beneficiaries as a gift from the government or political leaders, the beneficiaries felt that they have no right to complain about how it was being administered (Merttens et al. 2016). Other areas of concern identified are the need for efficient monitoring and evaluation mechanisms as the current ones are weak and ill functional

(MGLSD 2015; Aggrey 2013) and the need to automatically index the cash transfer to inflation as a 5 per cent annual increment may not match the annual inflation rate (Aggrey 2013: 228). The mainstream studies and evaluations on the effects of the SCG tend to rely on quantitative research techniques and to focus on the effects of programme participation on economic deprivation and vulnerability both at the individual and household level. What is largely lacking in such studies according to Samuels et al. (2013) is the participatory and qualitative research approaches that offer comprehensive insights into the implications of the SCG to intra-community dynamics including social cohesion and capital formation as well as intra-household power relations, state-citizen relations and individual-level psychosocial vulnerabilities.

Chapter 4: Beneficiary Lived Experiences of SCG.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section looks at the demographic information of the study participants specifically the beneficiaries for example age distribution, gender, marital status, household size, level of education and occupation. The second section presents an analysis of the lived experiences of beneficiaries' in terms of their relations with family and community, the third section analyses beneficiaries' relations with the state and the final section presents an analysis of the subjective wellbeing.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Study Participants

4.1.1 Number of years spent on the programme;

Out of the 20 study participants, 11 had spent 4years on the programme, 6 study participants had spent 3 years on the programme while 3 had spent 5 years on the programme. This was a key criteria in the study as more years spent on the programme would provide in depth insight of lived experiences. The Interviews revealed that some senior citizens delayed registering for the programme because of lack of documents to prove their age and hence had to first access these documents in order to start the registration process for example majority attested to lacking National Identification Cards at the time the programme first enrolled beneficiaries.

4.1.2 Age distribution of study participants;

7 out of twenty interviewed pensioners were aged between 83 and 88 and only one study participant was above 88years. Younger senior citizen participants in the age group of 71 and 76 were also few (3) whereas those between 65 and 70 were relatively many (5).

4.1.3 Gender distribution of study participants;

Male pensioners were more than female pensioners. I managed to interview twelve male beneficiaries and eight female beneficiaries of SCG who had spent three or more years receiving the grant. On asking the SCDO why I could access only a few female beneficiaries, he attributed it to the study sample criteria of beneficiaries who had spent three or more years on the programme and the fact that I had only visited two Sub Counties. His argument is supported by previous studies about the programme such as Kidd (2016:1), MGLSD (2017:4), MGLSD (n.d : 2) which indicated that there were more females about 65 per cent, 52.2 per cent and 64 per cent female beneficiaries than male beneficiaries on the programme respectively.

Of the 20 pensioners interviewed, all twelve of the male participants were household heads while in 6 of the 8 female study participants' households, elder sons were heading the households.

4.1.4 Dependents in senior citizens' households;

Households of pensioners were large and study participants revealed that majority of the household members were orphaned grandchildren who had lost either one parent or both parents. The smallest family had 2 dependent children, the rest of the families had more

than 4 dependent children with majority having between 8 and 11 dependent children. Dependents were all 15 years and below. The pensioners confirmed that they were the main care takers of the children. Household members that were not dependents were of working age and would help with the care of the children sometimes. The care for grandchildren is attested to by Barrientos and Sherlock (2002) who posit that in most African societies, grandparents play a central role in caring for grandchildren while Walsham (2020) argues that the existence of many grandchildren in pensioner households is due to the past polygamous relationships pensioners had which resulted into giving birth to many children and hence translating into many grandchildren. The big size of the households increases the senior citizens' vulnerability and poverty incidence (Nalwanga and Lund 2018 ; Wylde 2012:13).

4.1.5 Occupations of study participants;

Majority (17) of the senior citizens who took part in the study were subsistence farmers engaging in cattle keeping and/or crop growing for home consumption and therefore had low to zero incomes. This is supported by MGLSD (2019) which notes that poverty is more prone among farmers living in rural communities of the Country as these earn no wage from the activity and are uninsured. As such, majority of the study participants were farmers prone to low incomes and hence were vulnerable. Other participants were engaging in low income generating activities for example basket making and trading. The occupation status of the participants could have been attributed to the fact that majority had not received any formal education.

4.2 Family and Community Relations

This section presents findings of lived experiences of study participants regarding their relations with family and community. The section is organised in six themes which emerged during interactions with study participants and these include stability in households, improved social status, status among female beneficiaries, social networks and access to credit, social tensions.

4.2.1 Stability in households

Kabeer argues that familial relationships are key important aspects in lives of people, and through these, social meanings and stable living in environments are derived (Kabeer 1994). Semi structured interviews revealed that the study participants were able to provide for some of their families' needs using a part of their cash transfer for example incomes were being used to pay school fees and school requirements for grandchildren, buy food at home and cover medical bills of household members. Majority of the study participants were family heads and therefore were responsible for catering for the needs of family members and besides being family heads, majority of old aged Africans believe that sharing their pension with kin increases their chances of being catered for when in need (Sagner and Mtati 1999) thereby treating their cash transfer as a household income (Ellis et al. 2009) .

Even though participants expressed that the cash transfer was inadequate to satisfy all their needs, having this assured regular income enabled these beneficiaries to fulfill their roles as family heads. The ability to provide food and to change meals was one of the most mentioned outcome within the families and whenever a good meal was prepared, families ate and drunk together in harmony.

The money is not a lot but whenever I receive it, the family is overjoyed and, on that day, we have a good meal of beef or chicken to celebrate my being on the programme. This is a good way to bring the family together. There is much happiness and togetherness among us because I can buy basic needs like food, soap and sugar at home (68-year-old male beneficiary, 7 August 2020)

My relationship with my family has improved. Before I started receiving the pension, I sometimes failed to provide for needs at home, we never used to change meals quiet often and my grandchildren would lack study material like books and pens. I can now provide for some these and I believe because of this provision, there is more peace and harmony at home. (72-year-old male beneficiary, 3 August 2020)

The above beneficiaries explained that the failure to cater for some of the family needs before had strained their relationships with their wives and children however their ability to provide for their families had improved ever since they enrolled on the programme.

These findings are consistent with findings from a similar study by Samuels and Stavropoulou (2016: 1108) about 'effects of cash transfer programmes on psychosocial wellbeing' in two Middle Eastern Countries and three Sub Saharan Africa Countries which revealed that beneficiaries shared their cash transfers with household members which strengthened their intra-household relationships. Cooperation among family members had increased while violence and tension had reduced within households. Relations between partners as well as parent-children relationships had improved because of parents' ability to better sustain their

families, parents also mentioned that their stress levels and negative attitudes had ceased as they could now fulfil their roles as bread winners.

Discipline within families was also seen to have improved because the grandchildren were promised rewards by their grandparents if they had remained on their best behaviour. Joy and happiness within families had increased and families were living more harmoniously.

Additionally, beneficiaries gave a part of their cash transfer to their household members to engage in development ventures for example saving groups (SACCOs) as stated by a participants;

When my grandson helps me pick the money, I give him some to be able to contribute in the saving scheme (SACCO) he is in at church. I don't do this all the time but still I believe the times I give him; it means a lot to him. (82-year-old female beneficiary, 3 August 2020)

These findings are consistent with studies about pensions in Kenya and South Africa which showed that pension receivers share their incomes with household members (Chepngeno-Langat et al. 2019 ; HelpAge International 2003). Sharing incomes contributes to the well-being of household and community members which consequently improves social relations of beneficiaries (Babajanian 2012) for example as evidenced above, beneficiaries' ability to share their pensions with family members had strengthened intra household relations and family solidarity.

4.2.2 Social Networks and Access to credit

Participating in informal networks or associations creates intangible resources such as group solidarity, information networks, status, participation and through these, individuals are enabled to accumulate or expand their material resources (Kabeer 1994: 280).

In view of the foregoing argument, I was interested in exploring whether SCG beneficiaries were engaging in any social networks. The semi structured interviews revealed that a few (5) of the study participants were engaging in village saving groups amongst themselves. Contrary to Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations (SACCOs) whose membership conditions for example were hard to meet by the senior citizens (eg paying an initial amount of thirty thousand Ugandan shillings to open a SACCO account), beneficiaries had formed village saving groups amongst themselves and contribution towards such groups was only on pay days. One contributed any amount above five thousand Ugandan shillings therefore the amount contributed was not a fixed amount. These groups enabled beneficiaries to save a part of their cash transfer and use it for future purposes or even invest it in their agricultural activities. Conditions attached to the group included i) one could not get a loan above the amount they had saved and hence members were encouraged to save more as the more amount one saved, the higher the amount they could borrow from the group. ii) The total amounts saved by each member were to be disbursed at the end of the year. Saving group meetings were also seen as opportunities for these senior citizens to share programme related information and updates, challenges faced and giving each other moral and financial support as stated by a study participant below:

...I managed to join a village saving group. It has been so helpful to me because when I am having challenges like paying school fees for my grandchildren, I can access money from the group. (70 year old male beneficiary, 11 August 2020)

We are aware of these saving groups. The beneficiaries have entrusted their parish priests to save the money for them, this way they know it is in good hands.

The groups have empowered the beneficiaries with knowledge about the programme and moral lessons in general. (LC V, Nabwigulu sub county, 6 August 2020)

Similar findings were found in Ethiopia and Kenya. Due to the cash transfer, beneficiaries of SCTPP in Ethiopia were able to join rotating funds known as the *Iqqub* while CT-OVC beneficiaries in Kenya were in position to join “merry-go-round” saving schemes due to the cash transfer. Savings from saving schemes were used for purchasing livestock, farm inputs and school costs (Fisher et al. 2017:315). Kukrety and Mohanty (2011: 276) also reveal that due to the cash transfer, approximately 3,400 households in Kenya were able to start, boost or diversify their businesses.

Semi structured interviews further revealed that SCG has improved beneficiaries' access to credit services from fellow recipients, from shop owners and from service providers. Some of the study participants revealed that because of the cash transfer, they have been able to access goods and services on credit. Devereux (2001) notes that because of the regular income, pensioners are more trusted when it comes to making purchases on credit. Beneficiaries hired labour they use on farms on credit and paid after receiving their cash transfer, schools were also letting children from beneficiary households to sit their exams after assurance from grandparents that the debts would be paid after receiving money from the programme. The study participants said that before they joined the programme, they did not have access to all these opportunities because people would not entrust them to pay back as they were not working. These findings are corroborated by findings from other studies about SCG which show that beneficiaries use their cash transfer to access credit (Oxford Policy Management 2013 ; Namuddu et al. 2014). Additionally, study participants stated that lending amongst beneficiaries was common as they trusted their fellow beneficiaries' ability to pay back. Study participants stated:

Shop owners are confident that beneficiaries of the programme have the ability to pay back and hence let the beneficiaries access goods on credit from their shops. (LC V, Nabwigulu Sub County, 6 August 2020)

When I get money, I use it to hire someone to work on the farm however he knows that even when I don't pay him immediately, I always do when I receive money from the programme. (69-year-old female beneficiary, 10 August 2020)

A few study participants (6) however expressed being in distress due to failure to pay their debts on time because by the time the money came(after three months), they would have other demanding needs to cater for. Beneficiaries complained that on receiving the money, they realize that a largest part of the amount is to be spent while servicing debts and hence one has to choose what need is more pressing thus ending up failing to pay the debts on time. One of the beneficiaries stated:

The money is given to us after three months, you find that in this time frame you may have accumulated debts from various people. You then have to decide who or what to pay first. I hate when I fail to pay back my debts on time. People will stop lending you if they get to know that you pay late.(72-year-old male beneficiary, 3 August 2020)

The failure of beneficiaries to pay debts on time causes tension and mistrust between the beneficiaries and those they owe as stated by one of the key informants:

Sometimes we get cases that a beneficiary is having troubles paying their debts and we give them loans to pay these debts. We then recover this money from their next payment. Failure to pay back on agreed dates has however affected

their relationships with service providers, mostly shop keepers. (SCDO, Kamuli District, 31 August 2020)

In relation to the Social Relations Approach, Miles argues that building and strengthening networks is a key aspect in people's lives (Miles 2016). From the findings therefore, I can deduce that due to the social pension, senior citizens' networks have been built and strengthened for example they are able to join saving schemes, they can get goods and services on credit and these have led to positive lived experiences. Similarly, Kabeer (1994) argues that participating in associations such as saving schemes enhances autonomy, improves status, influence and esteem (Kabeer 1994: 121-122).

4.2.3 Improved Social status

According to Kabeer(1994:283), the nature and potential of people's relationships determines their intangible resources such as status and claims on others. Bearing this in mind, I was interested in exploring SCG's effect on social status of the beneficiaries. The study participants revealed that due to the cash transfer and the positive relations with family and community, their social status had received a boost. Beneficiaries gained more respect from family members due to improved ability to meet their responsibilities as family heads, this gave them a sense of dignity, confidence and raised their self-esteem within their homes. Beneficiaries felt more responsible and satisfied because of the ability to provide for family needs and ability to send their grand children to school. One of the beneficiaries stated:

Receiving this money has made me gain so much respect because my family says '*yyo munene, government emumanyi*' meaning 'he is a very important person, the government knows him'. I feel like an important person now and I feel very happy about it. I am happy that now I can provide for my family and because of this my wife and grandchildren respect me more. In family meetings they treat me as a person of value and am given audience to speak. Recently I was given a role as a clan head because I have been an active member in the family meetings. (68-year-old male beneficiary, 7 August 2020)

The interviews also revealed that beneficiaries were able to contribute towards social events like funerals, marriages and religious festivals because of the increase in their incomes (Babajanian 2012). The ability of beneficiaries to participate in such ceremonies improved their social status and relations with community members. For instance, one of the beneficiaries stated;

My youngest daughter's traditional wedding was last year and as you know, it is the family of the lady to prepare this particular function. In the past, I always failed to contribute towards my elder children's functions because I did not have money. Immediately this daughter of mine told me about her traditional wedding, I started saving part of my cash transfer and it gave me so much joy to be able to contribute towards her ceremony. (69-year-old female beneficiary, 10 August 2020)

In most African cultures, contributing towards events such as these is associated with prestige and high social status and much as it is not an obligatory thing to do, it is improper to attend these ceremonies empty handed. Similarly, a qualitative study about cash transfer programmes in six Sub Saharan revealed that beneficiaries' gained respect, dignity and felt more socially included due to ability to contribute towards social and religious events (Fisher et al 2017). Beneficiaries further reported that occasionally, they hang out with their friends and

have drinks (local brew) together. They believed that this strengthened their friendships and being able to buy their friends drinks made them feel prestigious. Pay days were also seen as opportunities to meet and interact with old friends who lived far away however due to COVID 19, beneficiaries stated that they were no longer allowed to interact with one another for long periods of time like before. Similarly, in Palestine, beneficiaries of cash transfers mentioned that on paydays, they get to meet friends, share problems and experiences and hence feel closer to fellow beneficiaries who may be facing similar challenges. (Samuels and Stavropoulou 2016: 1109). One study participant stated;

Pay days bring the elderly from different villages together, besides just picking the money, beneficiaries take pay day as an opportunity to reunite and socialise with friends they have not seen for some time. You hear them making statements like “*ehh nawe okyali mulamu*” meaning that “you mean you are still alive?”, “*obweda nesunze okulaaba mukwano gwange*” meaning “I was looking forward to seeing you today my friend”. The cash transfer has therefore strengthened beneficiaries’ relations amongst themselves and even with other community members. (LC I chairperson, 29 July 2020)

Within the community, beneficiaries had gained respect because of improvement in their dress codes and some had been assigned roles to be leaders for example clan elders due to the perception that they had money as stated by one of the beneficiaries.

I use some of this money to buy new clothes, people where I work (in the market) treat me with respect because am always smart. They think am rich because the government gives me money. When I suggest anything they always side with me for example cleaning the market. They listen to me whenever I speak. (70-year-old female beneficiary, 5 August 2020)

Various studies have documented the positive effects of pensions on the status, dignity and independence of senior citizens (Ellis et al. 2009 ; Samuels and Stavropoulou 2016). In their study about psychosocial wellbeing, Samuels and Stavropoulou found out that cash transfers have improved the social status and reestablished dignity of recipients, furthermore, a reduction in dependence increased recipients’ self-esteem. Participants in their study acknowledged having improved and better relationships and interactions with community members due to the cash transfer for instance senior citizens in Mozambique said that because of the pension, their social positions had improved, and they were no longer being looked down on (ibid 2016: 1109). Another study about the SAGE programme also showed that participation in SAGE does not cause any stigma to beneficiaries but is rather associated with positive social status, prestige and social capital. The senior citizens can share and lend out their cash transfer rather than beg or bother their family/community members (Merttens et al. 2016:15).

4.2.4 Status Among Female Beneficiaries

Findings revealed that the status of some of the female beneficiaries within their homes had improved. Beneficiaries said that receiving money from the cash transfer had enabled them to gain some independence and they felt less dependent on their husbands and/or children unlike before to which Barrientos and Sherlock posited that enduring challenges of both age and gender, access to independent sources of income increases the power and status of older women (Barrientos & Sherlock 2002). Pelham (2007:29) also referred to this as validating of women’s status and reasserting their social contribution. Two of the female senior citizens said that;

Since I get money and my husband does not, it gives me an advantage. I do not ask for money from him all the time like I used to. I can buy some of the food

staff using my money and when my grandchildren know that the government has sent us money, they will come to me to ask for money for school requirements, this makes me feel proud and helpful as their grandmother. (69-year-old female beneficiary, 10 August 2020)

'The money has helped me a lot when it comes to my family. I used to depend on my children a lot, sometimes even getting access to them would be a challenge because they are in Kampala. Now I no longer rely on them for everything because I can use the money the programme gives me to buy some of my needs. (82-year-old female beneficiary, 3 August 2020)

Kabeer (1994: 290) notes that there is a difference in access to benefits and control over benefits. The implication of this in the case of cash transfers is that one may be accessing the transfer, but he/she may not have control over how it is spent. The study therefore tried to find out about decision making in homes and mostly among the female pensioners as it is usually women who are marginalised when it comes to matters of decision making. Three of the married female study participants stated that how they used their cash transfer was solely their decision however decision making on matters such as land, agricultural produce and livestock was a responsibility of their husbands or elder sons which confirms Kabeer's notion of distributing resources among men and women according to "culturally assigned roles and responsibilities" such as ownership of land (Kabeer 1994:284). One male participant also mentioned that his wife controlled finances at home because he trusted that she was more responsible than him when it came to money matters. The other three of the married study participants mentioned that their husbands controlled how cash was being used while in the widowed beneficiaries' households, older sons or daughters managed the cash.

My eldest son is the house head and he is in charge of making decisions in this house since I am too old now, but when it comes to this cash transfer, he lets me keep my money and I decide whether to use it or save it. When I get to know that there is something lacking at home, I give him money to purchase whatever is needed eg sugar, salt or food. (85-year-old female widowed beneficiary, 10 August 2020)

I am the house head in this family but actually my wife controls the money at home. As a man and a family head, I control decisions over buildings, land and cattle. My wife is good with finances, she knows how to use money responsibly and plans well for it. So, because of this, I trust her to control money at home. (73 year old male beneficiary, 5 August 2020)

Two female study participants also mentioned that using the cash transfer, they had been able to start businesses; a grocery kiosk and a poultry business. Similar studies in West Bank indicate that women felt more confident and respected because of the cash transfer as they possessed some money of their own and were no longer over dependent on family members (Samuels and Stavropoulou 2016).

As encouraged by the Social relations approach, the social pension is fostering agency (Miles 2016) solidarity, independence, opportunities and greatly changing positions of women in their homes and in society (Hillenbrand et al. 2014).

4.2.5 Social Tensions

When asked about any existing conflicts due to being on the programme, the study participants mentioned that jealousy from fellow old people existed within communities. This was due to reasons such as; eligible non-beneficiaries had applied to join the programme but had not been considered yet while others felt that they had been intentionally left out by programme officials. Contradicting views arose when key informants were asked about social

tensions arising in communities due to the programme. While one of the key informants talked about harmony within the communities within which beneficiaries lived, the other three said otherwise.

I have never got any report of arguments or hatred amongst people because someone is receiving the transfer and they are not. Maybe it's because the money is given to old people. Old people are not troublesome and hence would not stir any competition amongst themselves. Those not on the programme are patient and hoping for their turn to come soon so that they can join the programme as well. (LC I, Kamuli Town Council, 29 July 2020)

..however, I have heard of issues of hatred among people because of some being considered before others, but we advise people to be patient and wait for their turn to be registered. (LC V, Nabwigulu sub county, 6 August 2020)

This is contrary to findings in the end line programme operations performance report about SAGE which showed that very few (3.3 per cent) SCG beneficiaries reported existence of tensions due to the programme (Merttens et al. 2016: 15). In other Countries such as Kenya, studies also show that social pensions do not cause any tensions among recipients as people comprehend that once they are of eligible age, they will start receiving the cash transfer. (Chep-
nogeno-Langat et al. 2019).

On the other hand, studies about cash transfers not targeted towards older people show similar findings like in this study, social tension and division are common and mostly result due to targeting mechanisms (Ellis et al. 2009 ; MacAuslan and Riemenschneider 2011 ; Ellis 2008 ; Babajanian 2012) for example findings from a study in Malawi showed cases of favoritism by headmen in the Mchinji Social Cash Transfer (MSCT) who were responsible for identifying the most vulnerable families in the community. Study participants mentioned that headmen's friends and relatives were selected as eligible for the cash transfer, yet some were not vulnerable. This negatively affected social relations of the beneficiaries of MSCT (MacAuslan and Riemenschneider 2011).

Social tensions were also noted among beneficiaries and some payment officials⁴ such as parish chiefs as on pay days, some felt that the payment officials exercised favoritism while giving out cash to the beneficiaries and hence giving money to people they know first rather than depending on who came first to which Kabeer argued that the distinction between what 'is' and what 'could be' in programmes results into tensions (Kabeer 1994:300).

Sometimes we have to wait for long hours at the sub county office for the bank van to deliver the cash and then the people giving out money will first give money to the people they know. This is so annoying and unfair to those who come very early. People end up quarrelling with each other and inaudibly throwing insults at the payment officials. (68year old male beneficiary, 7 August 2020)

This is in correspondence with findings from a study about the ESP programme which showed that during payments, local leaders such as parish chiefs and CDOs tend to break programme guidelines and procedures (Namuddu n.d:16).

⁴ SCG personnel responsible for handing cash to the beneficiaries on pay days.

4.3 State-Citizen Relations

This section presents findings of the lived experiences of study participants regarding their relations with the state. The section is organised in three themes which emerged during interactions with study participants and these include programme awareness and access to information, rights and citizenship, and programme participation and accountability.

4.3.1 Programme Awareness and Access to Information

Various scholars have argued that investing in communication structures warrants proper dissemination of relevant information to beneficiaries and presenting information in a language that citizens comprehend allows for acceptability and credibility of cash transfer programmes (Osofisan 2011:7 ; Merttens 2016:6 ; Castaneda and Lindert 2005 as cited in Grosh et al. 2008). Bearing this in mind, I wanted to explore the level of programme awareness and access to information among beneficiaries of the SCG.

I started the interviews with participants by asking general questions about the programme. Interviews revealed that beneficiaries were aware of the basic information about the programme for example it's eligibility criteria, target population, the cash transfer amount and the delivery mechanism. Responses revealed that beneficiaries received their transfer every after three months from the local council office. The senior citizens were supposed to present national identification cards in order to receive the cash. The implication of this is that the encouragement the programme gives to the senior citizens to possess national identification cards positively impacts state citizen relations in a way that the senior citizens can participate in electoral processes given that it is mandatory to present an ID for a person in Uganda to vote (Osofisan, 2011:4).

Interviews also revealed that despite receiving the cash after three months, beneficiaries were aware of the total of their entitlement per payment cycle and therefore were in position to request for the right amount in case they had been given less than the expected sum. With regards information, beneficiaries get information related to the SCG programme in different ways, majority(15) from leaders such as local council leaders, parish priests, sub-county leaders while five out of the twenty participants mentioned that through listening to radio, they heard updates concerning the programme. Participants stated;

We receive information about the programme through our local council leaders for example in case of changes like the date the cash is to be given out, our local council leaders inform us. Cars with speakers making announcements also pass through our villages and sometimes announcements about the programme are made. (87year old Male beneficiary, 31 July 2020)

We make general communications about the programme on radio stations for example announcements that apply to all regions. Communications at district level are made per village through local leaders and communication mediums like vehicles that go around villages making announcements on speakers. (SCDO, Kamuli District, 31 July 2020)

These findings are corroborated by the end line programme operations performance report which showed that programme awareness through radio talk shows, community meetings, handbooks and newsletters written in local languages of citizens in areas where SCG

operates is high. The report shows that beneficiaries were aware of the selection criteria, payments they are entitled to, payment criteria and target population (Merttens et al. 2016).

4.3.2 Rights and Citizenship

The semi structured interviews revealed that study participants appreciated having been considered to join the programme, however, the senior citizens were unaware of their rights and the state's duty to deliver social protection to its citizens. Majority of the study participants referred to the cash transfer as a gift from the president/government. Only two of the participants referred to the transfer as an obligation of the government and hence deserved the money and consider it an entitlement.

We thank the president for giving us this money since we are too old to work (83-Year-Old Male Beneficiary, 12 August 2020).

This implies that the SCG has not fostered a sense of citizenship among beneficiaries. It is evident that the social pension has been presented as a need rather than a right. Similarly, a study about social pensions in three African Countries reveals that, like Uganda, the Lesotho social pension has been presented to the senior citizens as a need rather than a right while social pensions in Namibia and South Africa have been presented as a right for the elderly whites (Pelham 2007: 32). As argued by Pelham (2007:29), beneficiaries' not being enlightened about the benefits they are entitled to as citizens of a Nation indicates a weak state-citizen social contract.

Interviews also revealed that unregistered but eligible senior citizens were requesting the local leaders to help them join the programme. This associates the local leaders to having power dynamics of who gets to be on the programme before others and shows an enhanced stature of people involved in the programme implementation. Such power dynamics may result into social tensions between programme implementors and the community as in the case for MSCT in Malawi (MacAuslan and Riemenschneider 2011).

These findings imply that the programme should be designed inclusive of a Social Protection Rights component so as to empower senior citizens to advocate for their rights for example this would encourage beneficiaries to demand for proper treatment at pay points by payment officials. Rights committees can be adopted for example like in Kenya, rights committees in social cash transfers have encouraged beneficiaries at the grassroots to demand for efficient services which has in turn improved state citizen relations (Osofisan 2011).

4.3.3 Programme Participation and Accountability

Various scholars for example Livingstone 2018, Samuels et al. 2013 and Grosh et al. 2008 discuss the importance of accountability in social protection programmes. Strengthening the voice of programme beneficiaries strengthens the capacity of governments to address beneficiary concerns and helps in addressing implementation challenges (Livingstone, 2018:5). Besides poverty reduction, SCG aims to empower citizens and promote justice and citizenship (MGLSD 2016). This can be achieved through involving and engaging beneficiaries in the design and implementation of a project and also allowing beneficiaries to voice their concerns about how the programme. Livingstone (2018:16) notes that it is important to have different ways in which citizens can raise concerns during the implementation of a programme. Having these mechanisms allows for correction of mistakes such as transaction

errors and are a basis for accountability within programmes (Grosh et al. 2008:115-116). Bearing this in mind, I was interested in exploring the measures that the SCG has put in place to ensure that beneficiary voices are heard during programme implementation and the level of participation of beneficiaries.

When asked about available opportunities for beneficiaries to air out their concerns and also the involvement of beneficiaries in design and implementation decision making processes, key informants mentioned of occasional meetings with programme beneficiaries where they air out complaints they have. Beneficiary interviews did confirm this as most mentioned about the meetings with their local leaders in which they are free to raise their concerns.

Before Covid-19, the village leaders used to hold meetings with these beneficiaries where they would air out their problems, although they have not been able to hold any meetings lately. (RTSU Programme coordinator, SCG Kamuli district, 31 July 2020)

In spite of the above efforts, some of the study participants mentioned that they were not consulted and engaged during the design of the project and also in any decision-making process. Also, the beneficiaries revealed that they are scared to express their concerns in fear that they may be removed from the programme. No such case was however reported by the beneficiaries when asked if anyone among those who complained had been removed from the programme in the past.

We have meetings with our local leaders, so we use that chance to tell them about challenges we are facing. But people are always careful about what they say and even others fear speaking because they are afraid that they may be removed from the programme. (75-year-old Male beneficiary, 12 August 2020)

Furthermore, local leaders with whom meetings were held were in no position to address some of the problems beneficiaries faced for example complaints of costs incurred due to long travel distances to pay points, delay at pay points, value of the cash transfer which meant referring the complaints to those with more authority and hence delay in feedback.

For challenges we can address for example favoritism while giving out money, we have talked about this in meetings with other leaders and advised them to stop the act of giving money to some elders before others and even though this is still happening, complaints are not as much as they used to be. Complaints we can't address are forwarded to those with higher authority. (LC V, Nabwigulu sub county, 6 August 2020)

In contrast, a similar study about the Zanzibar Universal Pension Scheme (ZUPS) showed that various mechanisms for example older persons' forums, older citizen monitors, complaint and appeal forms were available for the Country's senior citizens as accountability measures. Older people's forums were groups (managed by elected committees of fellow older people) that brought senior citizens together every month and through these, they were informed about other government programmes, given health advice and taught how to save and start small businesses. Older citizen monitors were surveys that collected data and also provided information and support to the senior citizens (Livingstone et al. 2018: 12). The study showed that the older persons forums and older citizen monitors were effective to the implementation of ZUPS. The senior citizens preferred raising their complaints to older

citizens monitors who visited them at their homes and to fellow but superior elders during older persons' forums (group meetings) rather than ZUPS representatives as they feared being labelled as ungrateful (ibid 2018: 13).

Therefore, as noted earlier, various channels for complaints or assistance are key in social protection grievance and accountability mechanisms. Much as the SCG programme has occasional meetings, these are not operating efficiently given that beneficiaries fear to raise their concerns sometimes. Other grievance mechanisms for example complaint forms can be introduced such that beneficiaries use those to voice their concerns anonymously. Associations and civil society organizations for older people can also be developed to give more power to the old people to be able to voice complaints, seek moral and health advice and so many other benefits of such organizations. This will strengthen the citizen's capacity to hold their government to account hence promotion of social justice.

4.4 Subjective wellbeing

The semi structured interviews revealed that most of the study participants engaged in subsistence farming before the programme and were still engaging in it even after joining the SCG programme. Beneficiaries depended on their farm output for food and confessed to having lacked money to buy some of their home necessities like soap, sugar and those with responsibilities of paying school fees were at times unable to raise the required amounts. A few (3) of the beneficiaries had stalls in the market selling fruits and smoked fish. The involvement in such activities implied that the beneficiaries received little to no income and hence increased proneness to poverty and vulnerability.

Therefore, given that these senior citizens had no sources of income prior to joining SCG, this monthly benefit had a positive impact on their subjective wellbeing (Pak 2020:359). Study participants were overjoyed because due to the cash transfer, they were in position to cater for household needs like food, clothing, soap and paying school fees for grandchildren. This resonates with findings from studies about old age pensions in South Africa, Namibia and Lesotho which revealed that cash is primarily used for securing basic needs (Møller and Sotshongaye 1996 ; Pelham 2007 ; Tangwe and Gutura 2013). Studies done in neighboring countries such as Kenya also indicate that majority of pensioners use the grant to secure basic needs like food, school fees for grandchildren, rent, debt repayment and health care services (Mbabi 2017; Omolo 2017).

It brings me so much joy that I can now pay my grandchildren's school fees. I have even managed to buy school uniform for them so they can be smart at school. (78-year-old female beneficiary, 11 August 2020)

The semi structured interviews further revealed that due to the cash transfer, some study participants were able to engage in income generating activities. Three study participants had set up businesses such as market kiosks and poultry businesses due to the cash transfer, an interesting observation was also made whereby two study participants used the cash transfer to generate more income, but not by themselves, grandchildren and children were involved in helping to multiply the money. Others (two) had boosted their farming activities for example purchased seeds and paid farm labour using the pension. These participants stated that they derived satisfaction from the fact that they were able to multiply their incomes.

Whenever I receive the money, I buy seeds and insecticides to use in the farm. I have managed to start growing food for sell so I need to look after my garden. Sometimes when my grandchildren are unable to do a specific task on the farm, I hire a person to do the job and this is all because of this cash transfer. (73-year-old male beneficiary, 5 August 2020)

I am now able to buy material that my grandchildren use to weave baskets which they sell to raise money for school fees and other school requirements. I also use some of the money to buy soap and medicine incase am sick. (83-year-old female beneficiary, 28 July 2020)

Peasgood (2008) argues that other than incomes, people derive satisfaction from various factors like health, social networks and usage of leisure time. Findings in this study revealed that senior citizens were happy about improved health status and nutrition in their households and as discussed earlier, senior citizens enjoyed spending time with their friends over drinks. Study participants mentioned that households' health status was improving due to ability to buy medicines while nutrition had improved greatly due to ability to change meals unlike before.

Am very happy with the pension transfer, when I receive this money, we buy some nice food at home. We change meals quite often and when I fall sick or when someone else in the house falls sick, we use the money to pay for the medicine. (84-year-old female beneficiary, 30 July 2020)

Similarly, in South Africa and Brazil, studies show that non-contributory social pensions have enhanced the nutrition, health status and school attendance of young children in households with pension receivers (Carvalho and Evangelista 2000 ; Duflo 2003). These studies also indicated that the social pension had reduced psychosocial stress levels among households and consequently the health status of members in beneficiary households was improving (Case 2004) while happiness, peacefulness and feeling tension free among households were also some of the findings from a study done on the Bangladesh social Pension (Begum and Wesumperuma 2012).

Findings in a multi country analysis by HelpAge International showed that cash transfers play a vital role in mitigating demand side barriers to health care for older persons. Senior citizens from countries in this study used the grant to pay for transport services to health facilities, medications, appointment charges as well as treatment costs. Additionally, other positive effects such as increased access to food, improved sanitation and self-esteem were realized. The older persons however mentioned that sums provided were inadequate to address all their needs, a finding that was also dominant in this study (HelpAge international 2017).

Therefore, even though study participants were happy about the pension improving their lives, several pensioners complained about the insufficiency of the pension to cater for all their needs confirming arguments that receiving a pension may not translate into financial satisfaction (Pak 2020). Additionally, very few beneficiaries were able to save because of the limited amount of the cash transfer to which Van Praag et al. (2003:35) contends that having savings positively affects financial satisfaction.

Chapter 5: Concluding Reflections and Policy Implications.

This chapter concludes the study by summarising the findings and their implications to policy. The study set out to examine the lived experiences of senior citizens under the SCG programme in Uganda and to achieve this, the study examined the influence of the programme on social relations and subjective wellbeing of beneficiaries. It considered how the programme influenced relations within beneficiaries' households, with the community and relations with the state. Furthermore, the effect of the SCG on subjective wellbeing of the senior citizens was also examined to understand the lived experiences of the senior citizens. Findings revealed that beneficiaries had both positive and negative experiences as a result of being on the programme. Semi structured interviews using online platforms of Zoom, WhatsApp and phone calls were used to collect primary data from the field and various documents were reviewed to gather the secondary data. Data was analysed thematically.

In terms of relations within households and at the community level, the study revealed that beneficiaries' social status and relationships have improved due to receiving the cash transfer. The beneficiaries have gained more respect because they are now able to meet their responsibilities as heads of families, contribute towards social events such as marriages, funerals and religious festivals and could dress well. This made them more confident, more dignified and it raised their self-esteem. Among other benefits, female beneficiaries also became more independent from their husbands which made them develop a sense of responsibility and satisfaction from being self-reliant. Other positive experiences included ability to access goods and services on credit and ability to join saving groups. These findings are consistent with findings from cash transfer programmes in Africa and Latin America which have shown positive effects of cash transfers on relations of beneficiaries (Samuels and Stavropoulou 2016 ; HelpAge 2003 ; Babajanian 2012 ;). On the other hand, negative experiences of social tensions and divisions existed among beneficiaries and some of the community members and between beneficiaries and programme implementors. Therefore, the often made argument that cash transfers can negatively affect relations of beneficiaries is true and is supported by studies about cash transfers in Latin America and Africa (Jones et al. 2013 ; MacAuslan and Riemenschneider 2011 ; Ellis et al. 2009 ; Ellis 2008)

In this regard, there is need to engage with and sensitize programme implementors on the role their status plays during targeting and programme implementation in general. Categorical targeting can result into social tensions and divisions if some people feel left out (Babajanian 2012) and it is also important to note that targeting and any mobilizations that involve individuals for example chiefs can result into jealousy, suspicion and can affect citizens' cultural values which can negatively affect the wellbeing of people (MacAuslan and Riemenschneider 2011). Raising the awareness of programme implementors on unintended outcomes that may result from favouritism when giving out the social pension and power dynamics during targeting will allow for better programme implementation and improve beneficiaries' relations as these are key components in beneficiaries' lives.

In relation to state citizen relations, it emerged that senior citizens had access to information about the programme and were participating in programme activities. The senior citizens were however not aware of their rights and the duty of the government to provide social protection to them. Most of the study participants referred to the cash transfer as a gift from the president or government. Only two participants considered the cash transfer to be an entitlement meaning that they understood the government's responsibility towards their welfare as citizens of Uganda. The implication of these findings is that there is need for policy and programme designers to include social protection rights components in programme designs so as to empower their citizens to advocate for rights and to enlighten citizens about benefits they are entitled to as citizens of a Nation. This helps to strengthen the social contract between states and their citizens (Pelham 2007). Due to lack of information about their rights, senior citizens in the study still think that the government is doing them a favor, therefore there is need to educate the senior citizens about their rights and obligations as this would further improve accountability and improve programme implementation. Accountability mechanisms were also found to be insufficient as the only available mechanism were meetings with local leaders to which study participants expressed fear to air out some of their concerns. This implies that various complaint mechanisms should be introduced in social protection programmes for example complaint forms, associations and civil society organizations for elderly persons for accountability purposes (Livingstone 2018 ; Grosh et al. 2008).

In terms of subjective wellbeing, the study found that beneficiaries' derived satisfaction from the change in their livelihoods. Prior to the cash transfer programme, most of the beneficiaries in the study were small scale subsistence farmers, often lacked money to buy home necessities and rarely changed their meals. Due to the cash transfer, beneficiaries had invested in their agricultural activities and some had started businesses such as market stalls. This enabled the beneficiaries to better sustain their lives and due to access to better living standards, they were happy, and households lived more harmoniously. Beneficiaries also derived happiness from the fact that they could now afford to purchase needs like uniforms for grandchildren, soap, clothing, change meals quiet often and pay school fees unlike before. These findings are consistent with other studies which show that cash transfers contribute to wellbeing of beneficiaries (Samuels and Stavropoulou 2016).

There is however need to link beneficiaries to complimentary services, besides giving out cash, social protection programmes can reach out to beneficiaries in other ways for example sensitizing beneficiaries through outreach services, health campaigns. This can help in enhancing health of the programme participants and there by contributing to their wellbeing (Case 2004).

In brief, the study revealed that beneficiaries have positive experiences despite tensions due to targeting and grant distribution, limited accountability mechanisms and unawareness of rights.

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Appendices:

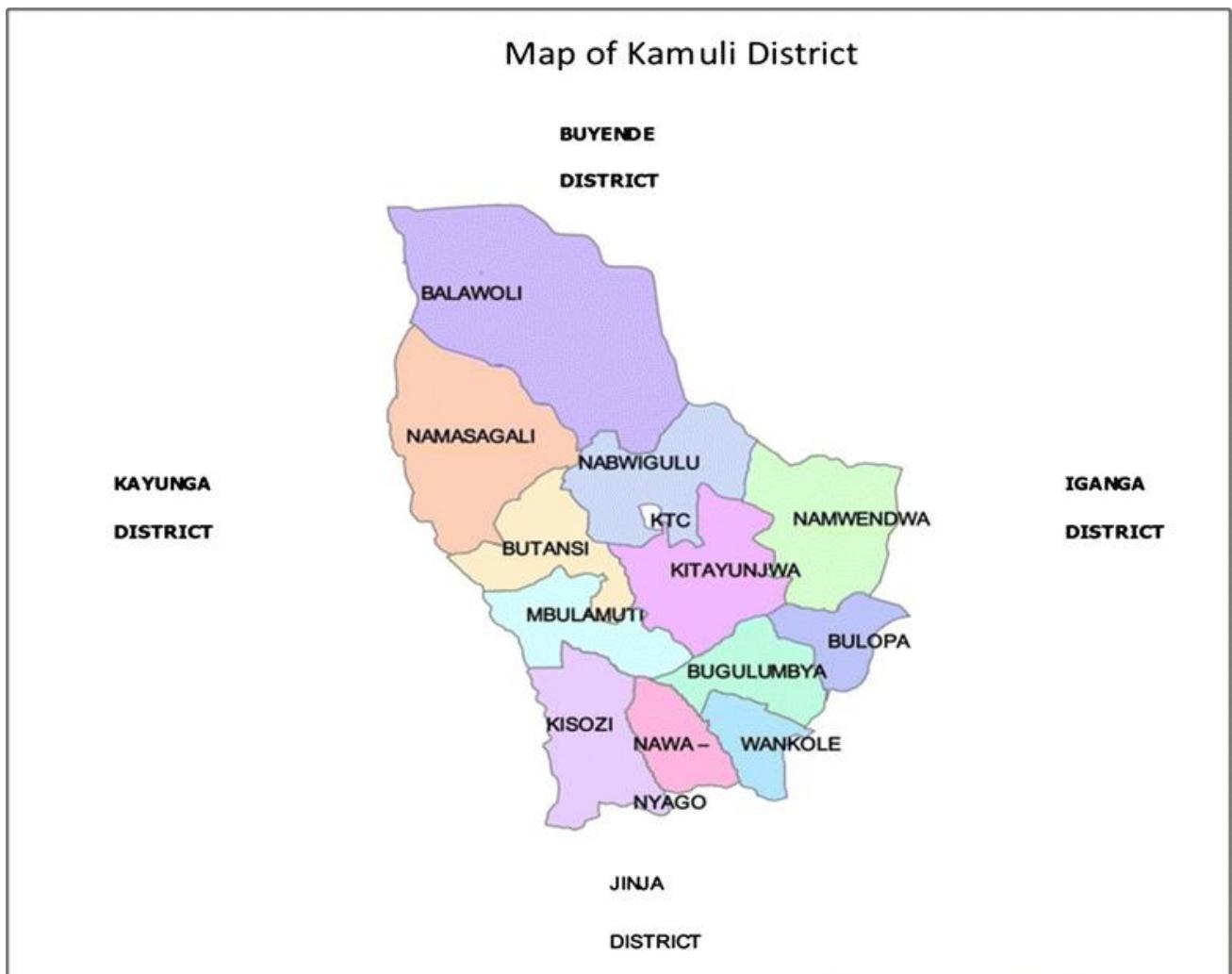
Appendix 1: Uganda's social protection programmes

Category	Programme	Type of programme
Social transfers	Social Assistance Empowerment Grant (SAGE)	Social transfer
	Northern Uganda Social Action Fund I (NUSAFF1)	Cash -for-work (CfW)
	Northern Uganda Social Action Fund II (NUSAFF2)	Cash -for-work (CfW)
	Northern Uganda Rehabilitation Programme (NUREP)	Cash -for-work (CfW)
	Northern Uganda Agricultural Livelihoods Recovery Programme (ALREP)	Cash -for-work (CfW)
	Karamoja Livelihoods Programme (KALIP)	Cash -for-work (CfW)
	Literacy Enhancement and Rural Nutrition (LEARN)	Cash -for-work (CfW)
	Restoration of Agricultural Livelihoods in Northern Uganda I (RALNUC1) and Development Assistance to Refugees I (DAR1)	Voucher-for-work (VfW)
	Restoration of Agricultural Livelihoods in Northern Uganda II (RALNUC 2) and Development Assistance to Refugees II (DAR 2)	Voucher-for-work (VfW)
	World Food Programme (WFP) and Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRRO)	Mainly food aid and cash -for-work (CfW) pilot
	World Food Programme (WFP) Country Programme	Food aid
	World Food Programme (WFP) Karamoja Productive Assets Programme (KPAP)	Cash -for-work (CfW)/ food-for-work (FfW)
	World Food Programme (WFP) Emergency	Food Aid
Social insurance	Public pensions	Pension
	Workers' compensation	Workers' compensation
Social care	Community-based rehabilitation for PWDs	Social care: community-based
	Disability and Elderly programme	Social care: institutions
	Youth and Children affairs	Social care: institutions
	Community Development Officers (CDO) wage and non-wage recurrent	Social care: community-based
	Mine Action Victim Assistance	Social care: psychosocial support by CDOs
	UN Joint Programme on Gender	Social care: GBV institutions
	UNFPA support by Norway	Social care: gender-based violence (GBV)
	GoU-UNFPA Programme	Social care: gender-based violence (GBV)
	Irish AID Gender-based Violence (GBV)	Social care: gender-based violence (GBV)
	DFID Sexual Gender-based Violence (SGBV) programme	Social care: gender-based Violence (GBV) institutions
Complementary	OVC programme	Social care: child protection
	WFP Karamoja ECD programme	Food incentives
	OVC programme	Education and health incentives

Source: MGLSD, 2012 as cited in Bukuluki & Watson (2012:94)

Appendix 2: Maps

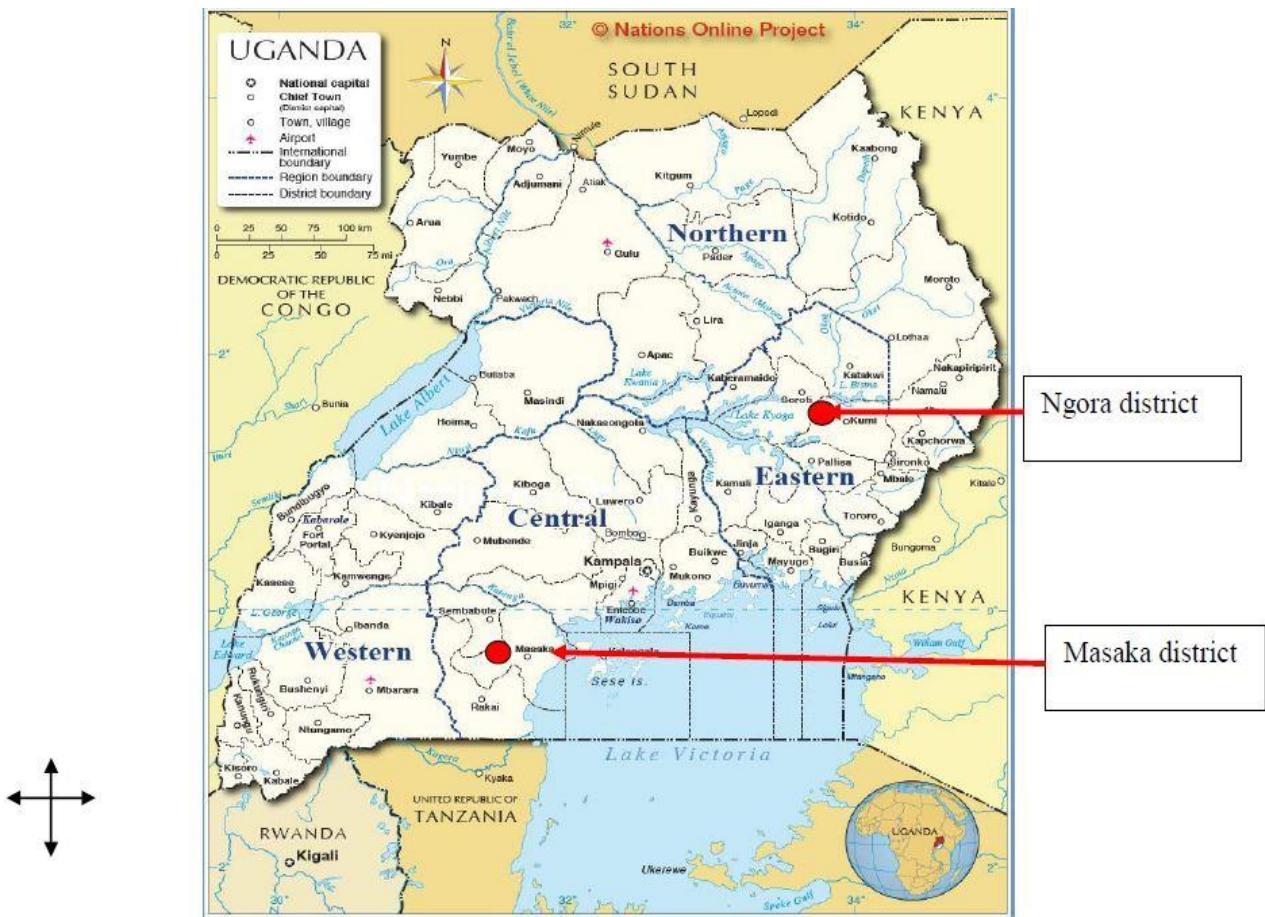
Map 0.1
Map of Kamuli District



The two areas of study were KTC and Nabwigulu sub county.

Source: https://media.springernature.com/full/springer-static/image/art:10.1186%2Fs12936-016-1153-5/MediaObjects/12936_2016_1153_Fig1_HTML.gif

Map 0.2
Map of Uganda showing districts



Source: <https://jollykabirizi.com/images/map2.JPG>

Appendix 3: Profile of Study participants

3.1 Profile of beneficiaries

Sub County	Gender	Age in years	Marital Status	Years spent on programme	Education Attainment	Occupation	Household size	No. of dependent children	Date of interview
KTC	F	83	Widowed	4	Primary	Farmer	07	05	28 July
KTC	M	85	Married	5	None	Farmer	07	04	28 July
KTC	M	88	Married	5	None	Farmer	07	05	29 July
KTC	F	84	Widowed	4	Primary	Farmer	10	08	30 July
KTC	M	81	Married	4	Primary	Farmer	10	08	30 July
KTC	M	87	Married	4	None	Farmer	11	08	31 July
KTC	M	72	Married	4	Primary	Trader	14	10	3 August
KTC	F	82	Married	4	Primary	Farmer	15	12	3 August
Nabwigulu	F	89	Widowed	5	None	Farmer	03	02	4 August
Nabwigulu	M	69	Married	3	Primary	Farmer	07	05	4 August
Nabwigulu	F	70	Widowed	3	Secondary	Market stall	07	06	5 August
Nabwigulu	M	73	Married	4	Secondary	Farmer	08	05	5 August
Nabwigulu	M	82	Married	4	Primary	Farmer	09	06	6 August
Nabwigulu	M	68	Married	3	None	Farmer	09	07	7 August
Nabwigulu	F	69	Married	3	None	Farmer	10	08	10 August
Nabwigulu	F	85	Widowed	4	Primary	Farmer	10	08	10 August
Nabwigulu	M	70	Married	3	None	Farmer	11	09	11 August
Nabwigulu	F	78	Widowed	4	None	Basket weaving	12	10	11 August
Nabwigulu	M	83	Married	4	Secondary	Farmer	12	08	12 August
Nabwigulu	M	75	Married	3	None	Farmer	15	12	12 August

3.2 Profile of key informants

Region	Title	Sex	Date of Interview
KTC	District Community Development Officer	M	31 July
KTC	Programme Coordinator from RTSU	M	31 July
KTC	Local Council Chairman I	M	29 July
Nabwigulu	Local Council Chairman V	M	6 August

Appendix 4: Interview guide

Dear Respondent,

My name is Racheal Nakajiri. I am a student from the International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University, Netherlands. I am conducting a research on beneficiaries' lived experiences of the SCG program as part of my dissertation leading to the award of Master of Arts in Development Studies.

I would therefore be grateful for your assistance in completing the following questions to the best of your knowledge. The responses that you will provide in this research will be treated with confidentiality and are only meant for academic purposes. Your identity will be kept, and you will not be forced to answer any question that you do not feel comfortable to answer. However, it will be essential to answer all the questions for me to get all the necessary data I need for the study.

Thank you for your cooperation and if you agree to participate in this research, please indicate your signature or initials of your names below;

Interviewee signature: _____

Enumerator signature: _____

Date: _____

BENEFICIARY INTERVIEW GUIDE;

Section A. General Identification Information (profile of beneficiary)

1. Name of SubCounty.....
2. Gender of interviewee.....
3. Age of interviewee.....
4. Marital status (single/married/divorced/widowed).....
5. Education attainment (none, elementary , primary, secondary, college).....
6. Occupation (work history)
7. Number of people in the household.....Dependants.....
8. House head

Knowledge of SCG

1. Do you know the SCG?
2. Who/what kind of people get to benefit from this programme? (targeting)
3. What do you have to say about this targeting criteria? Is it fair or not? Why do you say so?
4. Could you tell me how you got to know about SCG and how did you go about applying for it? (enrolment process)
5. How much cash income does the programme give?
6. For how long have you been receiving the cash transfer income?
7. How do you receive the income? (payment process).
8. What do you have to say about this payment mechanism? .. Is it convenient or not? Why do you say so?

9. How often do you receive the cash transfer income?

Effect of SCG on family and community Relations

10. Has being a beneficiary of the SCG changed your status among your family members?
11. If your answer to question was yes, please explain how it has done so. If no, why do you say so?
12. Has being a beneficiary of the SCG changed your status in this community?
13. If your answer to question was yes please explain how. If no, why do you say so?
14. Have there been any social tensions between you and your family members/community due to you being on the programme?

Effect of SCG on state-citizen relations

15. Have you been involved in any decision-making process in the designing of the SCG?
16. Did you/ do you face any difficulties in accessing the cash transfer?
17. If yes, what did/do you do about those difficulties?
18. What did/do the programme implementors do to address these difficulties? (accountability and grievance mechanisms)
19. Do you take being on this programme as a right/ entitlement by virtue of being a citizen or do you think it is a gift/charity?

Effect of SCG on the subjective wellbeing of the senior citizens

20. How were you sustaining your welfare before you were selected as a beneficiary of the SCG?
21. How do you think the SCG has impacted your living standard?
-positively or negatively? Please elaborate.
22. How satisfied are you with the cash transfer income that you receive?
-Very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not satisfied. Please elaborate.
23. Are there any other forms of support you get from the programme besides the cash transfer amount? If yes, which ones?

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE:

1. How has the programme improved beneficiaries relations within their households?
2. Does the programme have an effect on the wider community? If yes, please elaborate.
3. What effects does the programme have on social cohesion at community level?
4. What are some of the challenges/complaints beneficiaries face/have?

5. What opportunities/mechanisms exist for beneficiaries to voice these challenges/complaints?
6. How have you addressed these challenges/complaints?
7. Are there any complementary activities/services accompanying the transfer?
8. If yes, which ones?
9. Does the SCG encourage beneficiary participation during programme implementation?
10. If yes, How?
11. If No, what strategies can be devised to encourage beneficiary participation in the programme?