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My Aging Experiences No Longer Count; Is There Not a Cause?

Examining the Impacts of Senior Citizen Grants on Wellbeing of the Elderly in Kiboga District-Uganda.

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ABSTRACT

The current conversation is one of global citizenship, which binds together national and international actors in the field of development to work towards realizing a full set of rights for all global citizens. International donors in the Global North are now funding social assistance programmes targeting vulnerable groups such as the elderly in the Global South. Therefore, improving the living conditions of the elderly in addition to enhancing capabilities of older persons to enable them actively participate in the development process, is no longer a sole responsibility left to national government bodies and market forces.

By focusing on the Senior Citizen Grant (SCG) programme piloted in one rural district of Uganda, this study aims at contributing towards existing evidence of the social assistance impacts on wellbeing of elderly grant beneficiaries by mainly applying qualitative methods of research (semi-structured interviews, focus groups, direct observations, researcher's diary and secondary data). Despite, the positive grant impacts on easing impoverishment of the elderly beneficiaries, alternative approaches to maximizing elderly grant beneficiaries' wellbeing still need to be actively examined. Hence an analysis consistent with the following key words was conducted: Social assistance, Elderly, Wellbeing, Rights, Indigenous practices, Poverty. This study's findings reveal how my conceptual framework can guide understanding of the ways social assistance impacts the elderly in rural Uganda, and provide alternate ways to maximizing wellbeing for older people through social assistance.

“I [Rebecca Nalwanga] understand and have hereby complied with the university’s policy on plagiarism. I declare that this thesis is properly referenced and that it is my own, I have not copied it or let anyone copy from it”.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This study is dedicated to the senior citizens in Kiboga district where I did my research; your courage, humility and selflessness made this study a success, but above all left a lifelong impression on me. And to all those who take out of their own time and resources to improve welfare and empower vulnerable groups, you are highly appreciated.

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“Little is much when GOD is in it!”

Rebecca Nalwanga, May 2016.

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ACRONYMS

DCDO	District Community Development officer
DFID	Department of International Development
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
NAADS	National Agricultural Research Organisation
NGO's	Non-Governmental Organisations
PSP	Payment Service Provider
RBA	Rights Based Approach
SACCOs	Savings and Credit Cooperatives
SAGE	Social Assistance Grant for Empowerment
SC	Sub County
SC-CDO	Sub County Community Development officer
SCG	Senior Citizens Grant
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UGX	Uganda Shillings
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VFG	Vulnerable Families Grant

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In most developing countries, older people are usually among the poorest population groups and the limitations experienced in earlier life like access to education, older age access to services like healthcare, as well as gender issues, all have critical bearing on their wellbeing. More still, are the social changes brought about by modernization that profoundly affect the traditional systems of care for older people hence informal structures of care, such as family, can no longer be taken for granted as we move into the new century (Apt, 2002:41,39).

In order to break this sequence of intensified individual and structural vulnerability among the elderly, the provision of a formal support system for older persons is crucial in Uganda's current dialogue of providing better life chances for all. In this chapter, I describe the background of social assistance provided to the elderly in Kiboga district-Uganda where the Senior Citizen Grant (SCG) Programme has been piloted. I then state the main objective and three research questions that guided this study. Finally, I briefly present the structure of this thesis.

1.1 Background of the Study

“In recent years, donors have increasingly transferred resources through ‘vertical’ funds, meaning agencies which concentrate on narrow sectorial goals, such as health, education or the environment” (Kharas, 2007:12). The sectorial goal significant to this study is the vertical funds provided to the rural elderly in form of periodic cash transfers also known as grants through the SCG programme. The official Senior Citizen Grant (SCG) pilot phase programme is a type of vertical funding channeled through specialized Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and targeting Uganda's rural elderly (Kharas, 2007). Three international NGOs provide funds whereas, Uganda's Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) spearheads implementation of the SCG programme at national level (Republic of Uganda, n.d). MGLSD is then charged with employing personnel that are responsible for carrying out implementation tasks. Although most funds required for employee salary payments are still provided by the donor agencies. A detailed description of the SCG programme is given in the contextual chapter. It is important to note that collaboration between international donors and national implementers has caused substantial impacts among the elderly grant beneficiaries in Uganda's rural districts.

Within the Central Region of Uganda, there is a predominantly rural district called

Kiboga. Kiboga district is one of fourteen rural districts in Uganda where the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, in partnership with the Department for International Development, Irish Aid and UNICEF, developed and is implementing a five-year Senior Citizen Grant (SCG) programme (Ibrahim & Namuddu, 2014). The SCG programme provides monthly cash payments to the elderly aged 65 years and above (ibid). Within Kiboga district, there are five Sub Counties (see figure 2.2), and the SCG programme is being implemented in only three Sub Counties. Majority of the elderly in three Sub Counties were already grant beneficiaries by the time this study's research was undertaken. However, some elderly who also qualify for the grant were still non-beneficiaries but had been registered so as to receive future grant payments. Thus even though this study mainly focuses on elderly grant beneficiaries, two elderly non-beneficiaries who had been registered to qualify for the next months' grant payment were also interviewed.

“The most direct and immediate impact of cash transfers is on the living conditions and level of vulnerability of the most deprived households”. In most cases, the benefit of the cash transfer immediately relieves the economic hardships that poor elderly households face, even though the level of the transfer may not be sufficient in itself to pull these households out of poverty. More importantly, cash transfers result into certain elderly households not having to keep their grand children out of school so as to maintain a basic standard of living. Other than direct effects, there are many indirect effects cash transfers can have such as the positive multiplier effects of increased income in the community (Kakwani et al., 2006:562).

Therefore, beyond the direct beneficiaries, the grant means spillover effects such as boosting local businesses through increased purchases. For the elderly beneficiaries, receiving the grant assists with overcoming impoverishment struggles and improves their quality of life by enabling food purchases, medical care, house renovations and educating their orphaned grandchildren. Some beneficiaries even engage in productive investments especially agriculture hence greater wellbeing. “*Wellbeing* is most simply defined as the experience of a good quality of life, and *ill-being* is defined as the experience of a poor quality of life” (Chambers, 1997 cited in Williams 2003:5). One elderly person acknowledged, “*we were doing badly off before the grant, but now we go to the shops and buy some milk, sugar, meat, salt and at least eat better; on that day we receive the money we come singing*” (Female beneficiary, 72 years-Bukomero SC).

Despite the positive impacts highlighted above, development assistance like grants is inflated in the impact it has on the elderly's wellbeing (Kharas, 2007). Such inflated impacts also place additional burdens on official social assistance, partly because the detailed planning required to use the funds effectively is lacking, or partly because the needs of the poor seem to increasingly accumulate due to climate change and orphaned grandchildren as a result of the spread of AIDS (ibid). Regardless of formal social assistance provision, elderly grant beneficiaries' and their households are still vulnerable in various ways.

1.2 Social Assistance Theme

“In the context of the ongoing global financial crisis, and in light of discussions about international development goals beyond the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), social protection is increasingly seen as essential – not just to tackle rising levels of risk and vulnerability, but also to promote social justice of which social inclusion is an integral part (ECA et al., 2002)” (Bukuluki & Watson, 2012:5). Therefore, a series of positive actions to achieve equality of access to goods and services, including assistance to all individuals to participate in development and society are crucial.

Social Protection in itself encompasses a set of public actions that address risks, vulnerability and chronic poverty. These actions can be divided into three sub-sets namely: social insurance, social assistance and set standards (Farrington & Slater, 2006). Social assistance can be offered through non-contributory cash transfers such as grants to those deemed eligible on basis of their risk, vulnerability and chronic poverty (ibid). Davies & Davey (2008) point out the increasing popularity of cash transfers as a form of social protection across Sub-Saharan Africa. This thesis focuses on non-contributory, unconditional cash grants targeting vulnerable older persons. Vulnerability refers to, “[...] threats that would impact in a negative way on the life of a person” (Golaz & Rutaremwa, 2011:607). Old age vulnerabilities can be of two different types: exogenous events (drought or floods for example) that equally affect this age group, and endogenous events such as health problems, which are more likely to occur to older adults (ibid).

When respondents were asked about some of the constraining endogenous events they faced, some replied, “*yes I am sick and my sickness is called old age*” as a way of emphasizing the individual vulnerability associated with old age. Many other elderly

complained of exogenous events such as dependent grandchildren under their care, occasional weather vagaries such as storms that make agricultural yields unpredictable in addition to destroying property like kitchens roofs. Such exogenous events highlight structural vulnerability among the elderly as discussed later in this thesis. Golaz & Rutaremwa (2011) specify that the capability of older people to withstand difficulties is highly variable according to their economic or family situation. While in the field, awareness of vulnerability variations and coping levels among the elderly was admitted by one of the respondents. *“We the elderly cannot say we are indeed living happily in life as a whole, I am aware that even our pains are mainly due to old age, but there are some elderly people out there with better health and living happier”* (Female beneficiary, 70 years-Kibiga SC).

Due to the high vulnerability among the elderly that is detrimental to their wellbeing, social assistance in form of cash grants injected in the hands of the elderly comes in as a much needed support system. Elderly grant beneficiaries’ singing on their way home upon receiving the grant together with declarations of a better life signifies an improvement in wellbeing, whereas the anguish before introducing the SCG programme signifies vulnerability eased by social assistance. Besides the consumption of basic needs, cash grants also enable the elderly contribute towards productivity either directly or indirectly through spillover effects. It is important to note that the elderly constantly forge coping strategies. Golaz & Rutaremwa (2011) assert that, even though the power of the elderly is being eroded, they must not be seen as entirely dependent on assistance because they still take care of themselves and those under their care in countries where social security lacks good coverage. Additionally, the positive correlation between wellbeing and income may not be strong since wellbeing is subject to other non-monetary factors; therefore adhering to an income approach on poverty oversimplifies a complex issue (Kingdon & Knight, 2006).

History reveals, in the past social assistance was viewed as non-productive and accorded low priority during resource allocation in national development planning thus explaining why the scope of social policy is still limited to deal with the present chronic poverty and deprivation afflicting majority of African people especially in rural areas (Apt & Gricco, 1994). Moreover with unconditional cash grants placing more choice in the hands of targeted beneficiaries, a debate remains on whether social

assistance extends into productivity or is simply money down the drain with purely consumption effects (Farrington & Slater, 2006). Similarly, feuds over limited scope that leaves out the majority of other vulnerable groups together with fears of leaving former beneficiaries worse when donor funded assistance is withdrawn, all question the relevance of social assistance. In order to unravel such complexity surrounding social assistance, I focused my study on a particular case. Therefore a case study on the rural in Kiboga district was done to enable systematic gathering of information and provide understanding of how the wellbeing of elderly grant beneficiaries is influenced by the implementation of a social assistance programme (Berg, 1995).

1.3 Justification for the Study

Capabilities such as everyday problem solving are indeed present in old age. An examination on age differences revealed that while performance on everyday problem solving inventory and verbal ability test increased with age, education was unrelated to everyday problem solving but highly related to verbal ability (Cornelius & Caspi, 1987). Choosing a policy that focuses old age vulnerability for eligibility and implementation may not only cast shadows on those capabilities but also undermine the elderly's strategies to cope. Notwithstanding presence of capabilities in old age, several vulnerabilities are also prevalent in old age, therefore it comes as no surprise that elderly headed households are so often afflicted by poverty. Worse still, Williams (2003:1) points out that, many elderly in developing societies such as rural areas find themselves squeezed by present day social and economic changes that accompany the development process. In an attempt to comprehend such claims, a research study was carried out from June to August 2015 with a set of research objectives and questions guiding the inquiry.

My personal motivation to undertake this research stems from a desire to serve as a constructive contribution in advising policy during the anticipated SCG programme national roll-out phase. Another key motivation is to fill the research gap regarding the rural elderly in Sub Saharan Africa. Hart (2008) asserts that, it is surely possible to address injustices associated with lack of recognition that occurs in a world of material inequality and divisions by membership to the rural underclass. This thesis will not claim to represent Senior Citizen Grant beneficiaries across Uganda's 14 pilot districts but focuses on the lived realities of beneficiaries in Kiboga district as a local place where a global arrangement of formal social assistance is played out. Overall,

this study aims at contributing knowledge about the benefits and development potential of ‘thinking global and acting local’ regarding social assistance implementation so as to sustainably improve beneficiaries’ wellbeing.

1.4 Research Problem Formulation and Objectives

A number of studies have been conducted on social assistance programmes in Uganda. These studies have focused on: gender issues (Calder & Nakafeero, 2012); governance issues (Muhanguzi et al., 2016); direct and spillover effects (Ibrahim & Namuddu, 2014) among others. However, there has been little focus on rights issues and capabilities of older persons’. Also, the social assistance programme implemented in 14 rural districts in Uganda has so far been designed without input from the actual intended elderly beneficiaries.

This thesis is therefore focusing on the impacts of social assistance provided by the SCG programme on the wellbeing of elderly grant beneficiaries, by examining how both vulnerability and capability in households with elderly grant beneficiaries are negotiated. Rights issues of older persons’ are emphasized through examining the interactions between the different actors involved. By actors I will refer to the SCG programme donors, implementers and elderly beneficiaries, but mainly focus on beneficiaries interactions with implementers.

By framing older persons’ wellbeing and ill-being as a rights issue, donors and implementers are not only obligated to assist the elderly overcome their vulnerabilities but are also obligated to assist the elderly enhance their capabilities. This study further reflects on how indigenous practices and living arrangements in households with elderly grant beneficiaries influence the wellbeing of the elderly. In so doing, this study examines the interplay between rights, SCG programme actors and wellbeing.

Consequently, this approach unravels the complexities surrounding the sustainability of senior citizen grant impacts on the wellbeing of elderly grant beneficiaries. Sustainability and development contribution of such donor funded social assistance programmes is critical because a situation where international donors and national implementers abandon the SCG programme could leave elderly grant beneficiaries worse off than they were before receiving the grant.

1.4.1 General Objective

The general objective is to unravel place and people centered issues by recognizing old age vulnerabilities but also acknowledging older persons' capabilities, so as to stir elderly grant beneficiaries towards self-sustenance rather than promote deeper dependency on the provided grant.

1.4.1.1 Specific Objectives

1. To understand the vulnerabilities, capabilities and coping strategies the rural elderly in Kiboga district experience in their daily lives.

2. To understand the extent of Senior Citizen Grant impacts on the wellbeing of beneficiaries, the persistent ill-being faced, underlying causes and possible resolving mechanisms.

1.4.2 Research Questions

- 1) *What are the indigenous forms of support to the elderly; identifying the maintenance of some and rupture of others?*
- 2) *What are the underlying causes of expenditure patterns among elderly grant beneficiaries and; examine how the Senior Citizen Grant (SCG) programme impacts the elderly's wellbeing?*
- 3) *How can social assistance be made self-sustaining while replicating positive impacts at the national level?*

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

This research paper comprises of seven chapters. Chapter one has provided the study background, a presentation of social assistance theme, study justification, objectives and research questions that guide this research topic. Next is chapter two that presents a contextual framework of the rural elderly in Kiboga district- and a description of the Senior Citizen Grant (SCG) programme. Chapter three then describes the methods chosen for this study and explains the entire research process. Chapter four focuses on theoretical and conceptual framework chosen for this study's analysis. Followed by chapters five and six that discuss the rural elderly and interfaces between the three actors in this study. Together, these chapters analyze the research findings, similarly chapter six suggests methods for replicating positive impacts of the SCG programme. Lastly, chapter seven summarizes the research findings, presents the conclusions and final recommendations.

CHAPTER 2: CONTEXTUALIZING THE RURAL ELDERLY

This chapter provides an overview of older persons' situation in Uganda, in order to set the foundation for understanding the society within which the elderly operate. It will also give a brief classification of households with older persons in a rural setting. Furthermore, I will describe the Senior Citizen Grant (SCG) programme being piloted in 14 rural districts including Kiboga district. By doing this, I give insight into the various procedures involved when providing grants to the elderly in two Sub Counties within Kiboga district chosen for this case study. Overall, this chapter aims to present a framework of structural facets that influence the impacts of the grant on the wellbeing of elderly grant beneficiaries.

2.1 Profile of Uganda

Uganda is a country located in eastern Africa. It is bordered by South Sudan to the north, Kenya to the east, Tanzania to the south and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to the west (see figure 2.2). Uganda became independent from Great Britain on 9th October 1969. Highlights from the 2014 national census show that the country hosts a population of about 34.9 million people, and an annual population growth rate of 3.03% (UBOS, 2014). The sex ratio is estimated at 94.5 males per 100 females while over 10 million out of the total population are children, hence making the dependent population very high (ibid). Life expectancy at birth is around 60 years but many of the poorest people never reach this age (Bukuluki & Watson, 2012:77). Information regarding sex ratio and age composition of the total population is useful in understanding different socio-economic and demographic sub-population issues (UBOS, 2014), because this thesis is concerned with the impacts a highly dependent population has on wellbeing of the elderly. Table 2.1 draws attention to the sex ratio and three sub-populations namely: children (below 18), adults (18–30) and elderly (60 & above).

Table 2.1: Projected Population Uganda by Age Group 2015

2002 Census	2015 Estimates				
	Sub-Population Age (Years)	Total Population	Males	Females	Total Population
Below 18	13,708,263	10,320,200	9,553,800	19,874,000	56.7
18 - 30	5,472,062	2,997,300	3,440,100	6,437,400	18.4
60 & Above	1,101,039	664,200	817,400	1,481,600	4.2

(Source: UBOS, 2014).

Today, Uganda is one of the three youngest countries in the world with estimates of only 4.2% of her total population aged 60 years and above while 56.7% are below 18 years as illustrated in table 2.1 above. It is estimated that only one in five households include a person over 60 (Golaz & Rutaremwa, 2011). Similar to many developing countries is the existence of strong contrasts between rural and urban areas ranging from employment, healthcare, education facilities and many more, even though majority of the population remain confined to rural areas. According to 2014 provisional census results, approximately 18.5% of Uganda's population lived in urban areas and about 81.5% live in rural areas (UBOS, 2014). Whilst in the previous national census carried out in 2002, only 6.6% of households had people over 60 years old living in urban areas whereas the largest percentage of the elderly confined to rural areas (Golaz & Rutaremwa, 2011).

Regarding Uganda's economy, the country has enjoyed peace for more than 20 years although the Northern part of the country remained embroiled in civil war up to 2005 due to barbarous activities of the Lord's Resistance Army (Golaz & Rutaremwa, 2011). Agriculture is a dominant sector and employs about 66% of the working population (Uganda National Development Plan 2010/11-2014/15 cited in Bukuluki & Watson, 2012:5). Uganda is also classified by the World Bank as a low-income country; because although an urban middleclass is slowly emerging, majority of the population is rural and stands to benefit less from public policies (Ibrahim & Namuddu, 2014; Golaz & Rutaremwa, 2011:116). Based on a study conducted by

Kakwani & Subbarao in 2005, 15 African countries including Uganda exhibited significant rural/urban differences hence rural poverty was generally higher than urban poverty in all the countries.

2.2 Profile of Study Area (Kiboga District)

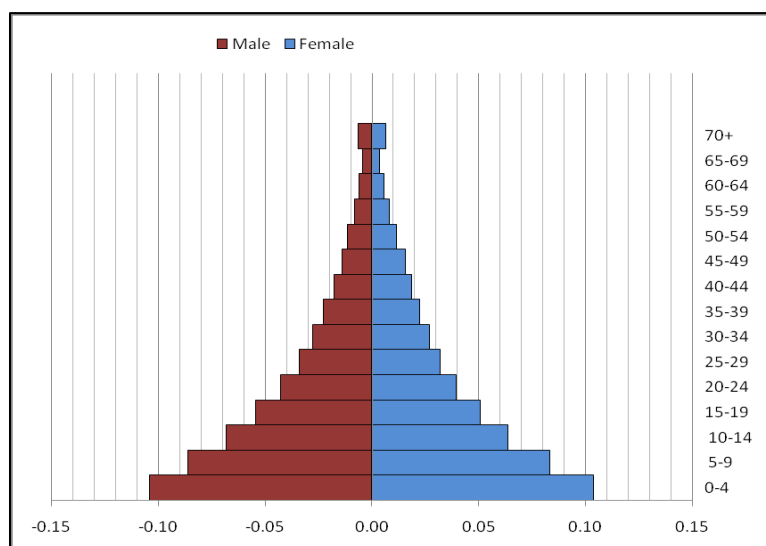


Figure 2.1: Kiboga District Population Pyramid (Source: Kiboga District Local Government, 2012).

Kiboga district is located in the Central region of Uganda, and among the poorest districts in Uganda with 60.4% of the populace below the poverty line. The district is stated to have a fertility rate of 7.4% compared to the national average of 3.4% and that more than 70% of the population in Kiboga is under 18 years of age. As a result, poor households tend to have more children and so their assets are subjected to greater subdivision (Kiboga District Local Government, 2012:5,2).

Even worse, HIV/AIDS is a major challenge in Kiboga district with a prevalence of 9.5%, which is higher than the Uganda National HIV/AIDS prevalence of 6% (Kiboga District Local Government, 2012:17). Hence various households have either lost a family member, relative to the HIV/AIDS pandemic and are in one way or the other committing their incomes to caring for orphans (ibid). Even though children provide free labour when performing household tasks like fetching water and subsistence farming, the excessive resource sharing within households having many dependent children is often unfavorable to the wellbeing of the entire household. There is no doubt that the average Kiboga household is associated with peasant farming, no wonder Kiboga district was categorized among the poorest rural districts in Uganda. Paul Rigg (2006) defines this link between farming, rural life and poverty as some of the faces of new poverty.

The long spells of drought and the unpredictable heavy rains affect crop yields, whereas the movements of cattle in search of water during dry seasons increases live stock diseases that affect animal production. Some more difficulties faced include: the use of rudimentary methods of farming, high fertility rates and mortality rates, limited road infrastructure development, and low literacy levels which affect the innovation capacity of peoples' mindsets (Kiboga District Local Government, 2012:13,5).

The map of Uganda in figure 2.2 below shows the location of Kiboga district alongside the five Sub Counties found within Kiboga district. Upon arrival in the field, two Sub Counties within Kiboga district namely: Bukomero Sub County and Kibiga Sub County were selected as unique cases for this study's research.

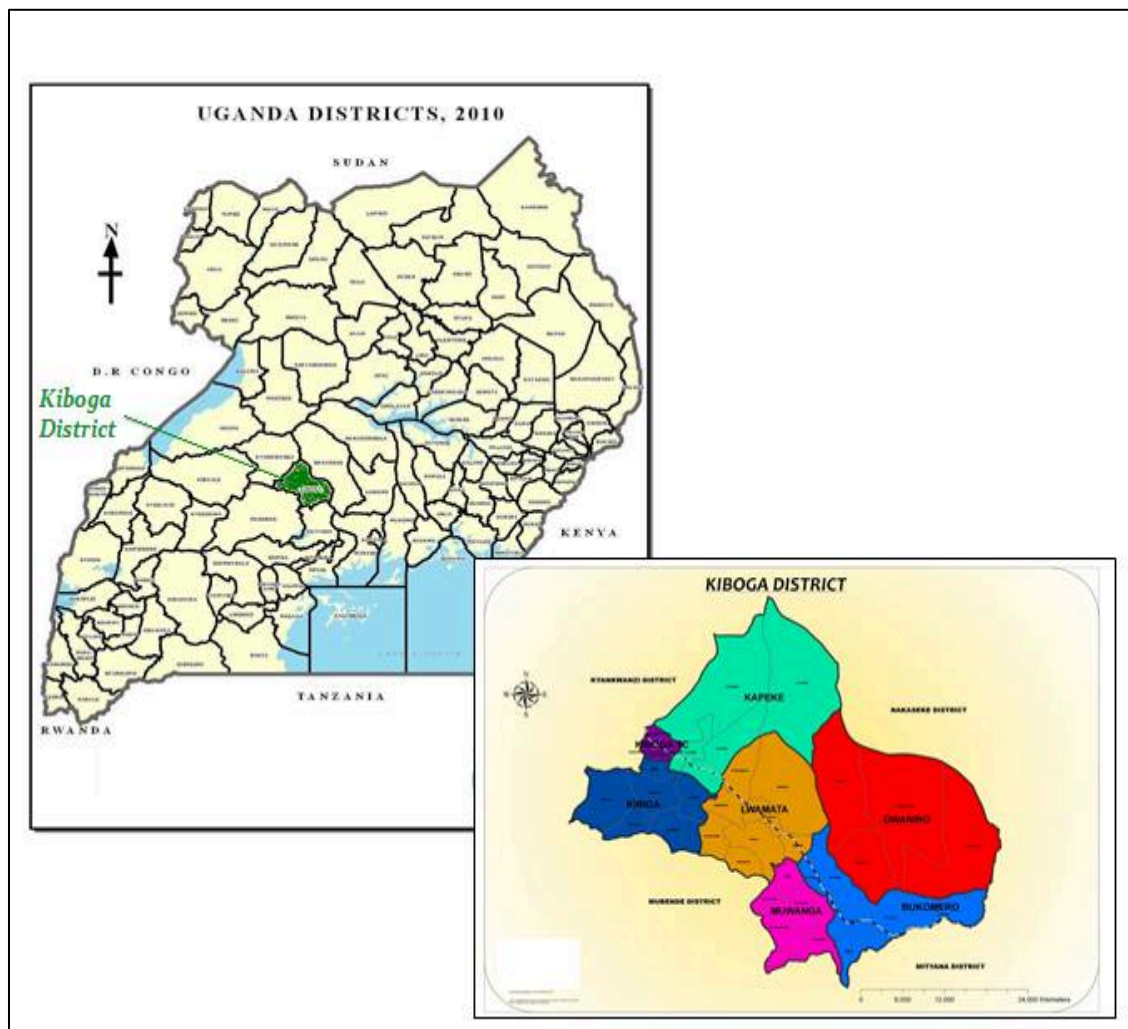


Figure 2.2: Map of Uganda showing research site (Source: Kiboga District Local Government, 2012).

2.3 The Rural Elderly

Studies have singled out the elderly sub-population as prone to poverty (Golaz & Rutaremwa, 2011). Proneness to poverty by sub-population is emphasized when Bilson et al., (2013) mention that vulnerability to risk varies across life-cycle in Uganda, children and the elderly are specified as being at higher risk. Health complications such as such as malaria bouts, persistent limb pains, are an example of a health risk. Majority of older persons' wellbeing is negatively affected since ability to cope with risk is minimized by inability to travel long distances to health centres for treatment and inability to afford medicines that are not provided by the free health care package (ibid).

During a study conducted by Kakwani & Subbarao in 2005, close to one out of five children in Uganda lived with the elderly at the time. One of the reasons explaining such living arrangements was that due to the AIDS pandemic, the elderly, especially grandparents, became caregivers of children in many countries including Uganda (Subbarao & Coury, 2004 cited in Kakwani & Subbarao, 2005:25). "Almost 72% of older people continue as heads of households, with responsibilities for others, especially children" (Calder & Nakafeero, 2012:16). Also see table 2.2. Another research undertaken by UNICEF also indicated that older people, especially grandmothers, care for 45% of Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Uganda (UNICEF, 2007 cited in ibid). Furthermore, many elderly headed households continue to be affected either directly or indirectly by the aftermath of civil wars, and the persistent rural-urban inequalities that reinforce migration of economically active adults whilst leaving behind dependent children in the care of older persons.

"In Uganda, the differences in living conditions between men and women over age 60 are very pronounced, particularly because of widowhood, a phenomenon mainly concerning women (Antoine and Golaz, 2009). Approximately one in every two older women is a widow, versus one man in 10, which corresponds to the African average (Schoumaker, 2000)". Earlier widowhood among women is due to differences in age between spouses and to remarriage, which is more common among men (Golaz & Rutaremwa, 2011:614).

The above statement stood to be true during the research. More female respondents had remained widows and not remarried following the death of or separation from their husband. Many elderly widows either lived alone or with surrogate children under their care. Hence, migration of several youth to urban job centres while living

the young and orphans in the care of relatives such as the elderly grandparents intensifies responsibility burdens on the elderly, particularly women. Moreover, due to an overriding informal sector, pensions are rare and mainly concern former civil servants who have worked long enough for the state (Golaz & Rutaremwa, 2011). Thus the SCG programme that provides formal social assistance assists the elderly to cope. Some elderly solely rely on the income support provided by the SCG programme for their daily sustenance, whereas other elderly combine this formal assistance with other indigenous support systems and income sources as further discussed in the later chapters of this thesis. Below is table 2.2 highlighting selected characteristics on older persons that are significant to this study.

Table 2.2: Summary of selected characteristics of older persons (age 60+) by sex

Characteristics	Male	Female	Totals
Total population of older persons	600,653	703,811	1,304,464
Total population (%)	4	4.5	4.2
Living in urban areas (%)	7.5	7.4	7.4
% employed in agriculture sector	82	87.6	84.9
% economically active	86.7	81.8	84
% who head house holds	87.4	58.7	71.9
% who have a disability	61.6	66.9	64.5
% who have never been to school	32.8	69.8	52.6
% who are illiterate	40.5	79.5	61.3
% living in single person house hold	12.1	9.5	10.7
% who are widows	15.3	63.2	40.9

(Source: Republic of Uganda, 2012).

2.4 Classifying Households with the Elderly

Classifying households with older persons is important because varying aspects such as *living arrangement*, *age of household members* and *income sources* all determine the amount of resource endowments and evidently influence older persons' wellbeing. This type of approach is advisable to this thesis due to lack of time-series data showing development levels of elderly grant beneficiaries from the first grant received until the time of the research.

A *household* is defined as a group of persons who normally live and *eat together*" (Golaz & Rutaremwa, 2011). In this way, one may argue eating together as a type of informal sharing of responsibility, benefits or both. When in the field, formal supports in the form of cash transfers targeting the elderly were informally shared amongst

other household members belonging to different subpopulations. Therefore, findings highlighted that vulnerability was strongly related to the living arrangements older persons find themselves in. Such relationships are important when examining older persons' wellbeing.

For instance, the role of grandparents caring for children such as orphans and those children left behind by migrant parents is emphasized throughout this thesis. When determining the socio-economic aspect of elderly persons in a research by Golaz & Rutaremwa (2011), they draw attention to *structural vulnerability* and develop a categorization of households with elderly persons based on the age of household members. Structural vulnerability can be defined as, “[...] the form of vulnerability concerning older persons living alone or with several children in their care” (ibid: 614). Structural vulnerability as defined here affects approximately 15% of the elderly in Uganda with women being more affected than men because of the increasing proportion of elderly women with dependent children, and also because of more older women living alone (Golaz & Rutaremwa, 2011).

The presence of a child within the household often provides assistance to an elderly person (Whyte and Whyte, 2004 cited in Golaz & Rutaremwa, 2011). This is because the elderly living mainly with children receive support in household tasks such as collecting water or firewood needed for home use. To a certain extent, older persons living mainly with children (elderly headed households) face less individual vulnerability than older persons living alone (single headed households). However, elderly headed households may also face heightened structural vulnerability when older persons find themselves with several dependent children under their care. Regarding elderly within mixed households, their structural vulnerability and individual vulnerability is minimized due to the support they receive from both children and adults they live with. Moreover, the structural vulnerability associated with dependent children is often reduced or even nullified by support from adults in the home.

Income sources accessible to the elderly are another important aspect. Table 2.2 above clearly indicates that 84% of Uganda's elderly are economically active, and that 84.9% are employed in the agricultural sector. These statistics highlight that even though older persons are often perceived as frail, the elderly actively use their skills as

an income source. Figure 2.3 below represents three resource endowment categories based on this study's findings from interviews with elderly grant beneficiaries in Kiboga and Bukomero Sub Counties. Resource classification permits clearer understanding of several variations amongst the elderly in order to fully examine the impacts of social assistance the elderlies' wellbeing.

Resource classification	Living arrangement	Age of Household members	Income sources
Lower resource endowments	-Single household -Elderly headed household	-Elderly living alone -Elderly living with many dependant children	-Grant income -Wages from working as hired labour
Medium resource endowments	-Elderly headed household -Mixed household	-Elderly living with few dependant -Elderly living far away from adults who offer assistance	-Grant income -Wages from working as hired labour -Limited savings income i.e. subsistence family using family labour rather than hired labour -Limited investment income i.e. piggery farming, coffee plantations, mat weaving
Upper resource endowments	Mixed household	-Elderly living few dependant children and active adults -Elderly living near adults who offer assistance	-Grant income -Wages from working as hired labour -More savings income i.e. subsistence family using family labour rather than hired labour -More investment income i.e. piggery farming, coffee plantation, mat weaving

Figure 2.3: Classification of resource endowments for households with older persons

(Source: Household interviews in Kiboga and Bukomero Sub County, June 2015).

2.5 Rationale for a Social Protection Strategy in Uganda

“The ageing of populations brings new policy issues to the fore in developing countries. These include responding to the poverty and vulnerability faced by older people, the effects of migration and HIV and AIDS on inter-generational family support structures” (Bukuluki & Watson, 2012:5). Consequently, cash transfers are increasingly on the agenda of governments, donors and NGOs in the developing world (Schubert & Slater, 2006). In order to relieve the vulnerabilities faced by the majority of Uganda’s elderly, the Expanding Social Protection (ESP) programme was designed in 2009 as a five-year programme under the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD). The ESP programme is funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), Irish Aid, and UNICEF (MGLSD, 2011 cited in Bukuluki & Watson, 2012:18). As a result of this collaboration, Uganda has implemented a 5-year pilot phase of social cash transfers entitled Social Assistance Grants for Empowerment (SAGE). The SAGE programme targets labour-constrained individuals and households who are at risk and vulnerable to poverty due to their reduced ability to engage in productive activity (Bukuluki & Watson, 2012:18). Donors and International NGOs are a major source of funds. The current funding level provided by donors is 41 million pounds (about UGX 160 billion), although national resources availed to social assistance (about 0.5% national budget) still remain at a low level (Bukuluki & Watson, 2012:18; Bilson et al., 2013).

The primary objective for formulating the SAGE programme embodies, reducing extreme poverty and improving life chances for poor men, women, older people, widows, people with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, and children, this objective is also embedded in the National Development Plan (NDP) (Bukuluki & Watson, 2012:19). Oduro (2010) reckons that the objective of public provision of social protection in African countries is to assist vulnerable and excluded groups by reducing chronic poverty and exclusion. Similarly, the rationale for provision of social protection in African countries can be situated within evidence that suggests economic growth may be necessary, but not sufficient, for poverty reduction (ibid). In this way, the goal of social protection actions is to remove obstacles to the participation of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in the development process (ibid). In order to achieve such aims, Uganda’s Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development is currently implementing the ESP programme which comprises of two

different pilot phase programmes providing unconditional monthly cash transfers namely: the Vulnerable Families Grant (VFG) and the Senior Citizen Grant (SCG) (Bilson et al., 2013). While the ESP programme is piloting two types of cash transfers, this research focused on only cash grants aimed at supporting the elderly.

2.6 The Senior Citizen Grant Programme

Oduro (2010:20) argues that, “[...] social protection is not new in Africa. What is new is the development of social protection policy frameworks and the introduction, in more countries, of social assistance measures that provide conditional and unconditional transfers to targeted sections of the population, usually upon a pilot basis”. An example of a new social assistance pilot programme is the Senior Citizen Grant (SCG) programme providing unconditional cash transfers to the elderly in rural Uganda. The SCG programme was launched in 2010 throughout 14 pilot rural districts namely; Apac, Kaberamaido, Katakwi, Kiboga, Nebbi, Kyenjojo, Moroto, Nakapiripirit, Amudat, Kyegegwa, Kyankwanzi, Zombo, Napak and Kole. As mentioned, this thesis focuses on the lived realities of elderly grant beneficiaries in Kiboga district, and at the time this study’s research was carried out in June 2015, the SCG programme was under its final pilot-phase stages. Grants were being provided to the elderly beneficiaries in Kiboga since July 2011 (Republic of Uganda, n.d).

The SCG programme is designed to reduce old age poverty by providing unconditional monthly allowances as a minimum level of income security to all older people (aged 65 years and above) in the selected districts, (except for Karamoja, where the eligible age has been set at 60 years) (Bukuluki & Watson, 2012:19). In doing so, vulnerability of older persons is relieved due to provision of a minimum cash amount needed to meet a portion of basic households needs. The eligibility exception of 60 years in Karamoja for the SCG programme is partly because the Northern part of the country remained embroiled in civil war for a long time thus having a lower life expectancy than the other 13 rural districts. However, program exception from other rural elderly has led to feuds over a few selected districts leaving a majority of non-beneficiary elderly in unselected regions (Republic of Uganda, 2013). There are also elderly non-beneficiaries within selected rural districts who are above 65 years. *“Setbacks in the promised annual registration of the elderly coming of age, and complaints by left out elderly villagers are causing a lot of community*

strife and feuds between beneficiaries, non-beneficiaries and local implementers”
(SAGE secretariat).

Box 1: Management and coordination of the SCG programme

The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) is the lead institution for the management of the SAGE programme, working through the Directorate of Social Protection. The directorate is supported by a Social Protection (SP) secretariat, which is charged with the responsibility of policy development and oversight for programme implementation. At the district level, the programme is integrated into local government systems, with the chief administration officers (CAOs) of the respective districts. accountable for programme delivery and funds. Direct programme oversight at these levels is provided by district community development officers (DCDOs), who report to the CAO.

The district SAGE team/unit, comprising the senior community development officer (SCDO), a SAGE technical officer, SAGE management information systems (MIS) officer, and SAGE monitoring and evaluation (M&E) officer, is responsible for implementation management. The SAGE technical officer serves as a counterpart to the senior CDO responsible for SAGE and co-reports to the DCDO. The SAGE M&E and MIS officers report to the SAGE technical officer, but receive technical line management and support from the national M&E and MIS managers respectively.

At the sub-county level, the programme is coordinated by the sub-county community development officer (SC-CDO). The SC-CDO coordinates day-to-day programme operations including liaising with parish chiefs, parish development committees (PDCs) and village council chairpersons. The SC-CDOs report directly to the senior CDO responsible for SAGE on operational matters, and oversight of sub-county operations is provided by the sub-county chief.

(Source: Bukuluki & Watson, 2012:22,23).

2.6.1 Beneficiary Targeting and Enrolment

First and foremost, the SCG programme in Uganda targets senior citizens in primarily rural areas by transferring periodic grants to older persons in programme locations. In this case, targeting is both *geographical* and *categorical*. The targeting is categorical because eligibility is based on broad social categories and/or groups particularly age (Bukuluki & Watson, 2012:19). Geographic targeting in this case uses information on the characteristics of small areas to rate each by its relative poverty or wealth (Aguila et al., 2014:3). This geographic targeting approach assumes that households within neighborhoods share similar welfare characteristics, that poor neighborhoods can be identified, and this information can be used to universally benefit residents of poor neighborhoods with social programs (Ravallion and Chao, 1989; Besley and Kanbur, 1990 cited in *ibid*).

As mentioned earlier on, the high poverty rates within Kiboga district place about 60.4% of the population below the poverty line. In such a situation, geographical targeting is feasible because the poor are geographically concentrated and overall poverty levels are high (Handa & Davis, 2006:524). Handa & Davis (2006:526) add that, even if actual programme administration is highly decentralized, targeting can be centralized with community selection done centrally using national data based on poverty. This co-existence of centralized targeting by MGLSD at the national level and decentralized administration by local administrators at Kiboga headquarters was a typical occurrence in the field. For instance, community registration of beneficiaries involves community-based local government structures, especially parish chiefs with the support of village local council chairpersons organizing and facilitating village council meetings to identify eligible older people (Bukuluki & Watson, 2012:21). Applicants must also present an official form of identification such as a voter's card, national ID or birth certificate in order to be enrolled for the SCG programme. In case an elderly lacks the requisite identification documents, village councils are tasked to verify the eligibility of individual applicants" (ibid). Additionally, community verification during beneficiary enrolment is crucial, since elderly peers and other locals are used to identify and verify older people whose age qualifies them to receive the grant but might lack required identification documents.

Once the applicant has the requisite ID, there is an enrolment exercise at the local pay point. Qualified beneficiaries then fill in forms, receive SIM cards and open up a money account with the assistance of the contracted SCG programme Payment Service Provider (PSP) staff. If a beneficiary wants to appoint an *alternative recipient* because they are unable to come to the pay point to collect their payment, this requires filling in a form, and the alternative recipient must open the money account with the contracted PSP. (Calder & Nakafeero, 2012:39).

The SAGE secretariat initiated positive changes regarding grant distribution, that differ from the initial design of SAGE so as to provide improved services offered to beneficiaries (Mugumya, 2014). For example, payment frequency changed from monthly to bi-monthly so as to reduce beneficiaries' costs involved in accessing their money (ibid). During my focus group discussion on 7th July 2015 in Bukomero Sub County, elderly female beneficiaries explained that the reason for this change was because monthly transportation to pay points was more expensive, the majority of elderly grant beneficiaries requested to have their grant payment after two months.

This request was approved so beneficiaries now get UGX 50,000 after two months instead of UGX 25,000 every month. During an interview with the parish chief of Kibiga Sub County, it was mentioned that beneficiaries were also requested to use community-based systems such as village meetings and word of mouth to communicate important information. In turn, this compensated for the limited budgets and personnel of government agencies by having locals assist in communicating important information and recent programme changes.

2.6.2 Grant Distribution

According to the initial SCG programme design, beneficiaries are entitled to a monthly transfer of UGX 23,000 (about \$8.70 using 2011 exchange rate), which is adjusted annually for inflation, thus, starting from July 2012, beneficiaries were receiving UGX 24,000 (\$8.40 (Bukuluki & Watson, 2012:21). Previously, payments to SAGE beneficiaries were to be completed within the first week of each month (ibid). At the time of my research in July 2015, beneficiaries were receiving UGX 50,000 bi-monthly payments within the first week of the second month. Hence the annually adjusted monthly transfer for inflation was calculated as UGX 25,000 instead of the UGX 24,000 monthly transfer that was distributed in July 2012.

A mobile phone company, MTN (Mobile Telephone Network), was contracted as the SCG programme Payment Service Provider (PSP). Once the names on the beneficiary list are approved, the MGLSD, through the SAGE secretariat, sends the list to the PSP, which in turn creates SIM cards containing a chip for each beneficiary (Bukuluki & Watson, 2012:22). Prior to the grant payment, beneficiaries are also provided with identification cards by the programme, which are used to cross-check identity at the pay points (ibid).

The usual method of providing grants to the elderly has been to gather the elderly at an announced pay point location then distribute the grant to beneficiaries on basis of identification and lining up. The Kibiga Parish Chief informed me that first he ensures both pay point location and grant pay day are communicated during his scheduled home visits to the elderly. He also urges all informed elderly to inform and remind their peers. During the parish chief's home visits, other important information such as death of an elderly grant beneficiary is communicated. Following this, a death notification form is filled and the details are forwarded to the SAGE district council

for two main reasons. One is to defer future grant payments. Second is to officially nominate an individual close to the deceased beneficiary to receive a *transition grant*.

The SCG programme requires that the next of kin and community leaders promptly report the death of any SCG beneficiary so that payments can be terminated. Bereaved families are entitled to receive a final SAGE transition grant equivalent to four months of the SCG grant payment. The transition grant is a good initiative, which supports families to meet costs they incur during the bereavement period, and to help support a few dependents of the deceased beneficiary such as orphans and vulnerable children (Bukuluki & Watson, 2012:57).

While at the designated pay point location, gathered beneficiaries receive the grant through contracted Payment Service Providers (PSP) who are responsible for: converting e-credit into cash using a unique five digit personal identification number (PIN) provided to each beneficiary, verifying Identification card of recipient prior to payment, making payments in correct denominations, and resolving payment related inquiries (Ibrahim & Namuddu, 2014). All grant payments are recorded in the PSP transaction cash payment book and counter-signed by the beneficiary or an alternative recipient appointed by the beneficiary (Bukuluki & Watson, 2012:22). If elderly grant beneficiaries so wish, they may also store a portion of their transfer funds electronically and no minimum balances are required (ibid). Almost all elderly beneficiaries were unable to electronically store a portion of the grant due to the pressing needs, and for some beneficiaries the grant was already spent in outstanding debts before they even received the grant.

The SCG programme guidelines include formal grievance procedures to deal with complaints raised by beneficiaries (Bukuluki & Watson, 2012:74). For example, during my focus group exercise carried out on Bukomero Sub County grant pay day, I observed as the elderly approached the complaints desk where complaints and appeals such as lost pay card were registered. In such instances beneficiaries cannot receive the grant until the lost pay card is retrieved or replaced. Unfortunately, formal grievances and complaints are not always perceived to be implemented properly due to technological problems (for example, inability of the payments mechanism to resolve complaints due to the procurement of faulty SIM cards), administrative delays, or other factors. (ibid). One pressing issue noted during my research was delay in replacement of lost beneficiary pay cards.

2.6.3 Proposed National Roll-out Phase

Part of the future of social support in Uganda includes plans to proceed the SCG pilot-phase to a roll-out phase countrywide (Republic of Uganda, n.d). During the Agenda Quarterly district SAGE meeting I attended on 24th June 2015 in the field, a review of both the pilot phase and discussion of future roll-out phase plans emphasized donors' commitment to providing funds together with the Ugandan government national budget contribution to finance the SCG roll-out phase. In an interview with the SAGE secretariat, one of the key informants in my study, it was mentioned that the proposed SCG national roll-out will be targeted at the oldest old. This means that only those elderly who have the highest age in the new enrolled districts countrywide will be selected as grant beneficiaries, hence excluding the young old. Handa & Davis (2006:524) warn on how such algorithms used for representation processes do well at identifying the extremely poor, but are not good at excluding the non-poor, especially those near the poverty line. This deficiency clearly becomes important as the grant is rolled out nationally to the oldest old while excluding the young old without independently assessing potential beneficiary's poverty levels.

The above chapter has presented an overview of the rural elderly in Uganda, with emphasis on the elderly in Kiboga district. In addition to this, a description of the SCG Programme being piloted among the elderly in two Sub Counties in Kiboga district has been presented. Next is the methodology chapter describing data collection techniques applied in the field.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS AND RESEARCH PROCESS

Research methodology through qualitative approach refers to the process of inquiring and discovering underlying meanings to society practices by engaging the study community (Kitchin & Tate, 2013; Limb & Dwyer, 2001). In this chapter I describe the research design, followed by the selection of and access to the research case. I then position myself as a researcher in the study field. I further detail the data collection methods and techniques I undertook in addition to the ethical considerations. I finally conclude the chapter by discussing the analytical process used in data interpretation.

3.1 Research Design

Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings by attempting to interpret data consisting of unstructured words, pictures and sounds in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Ritchie et al., 2003; Kitchin & Tate, 2013). I used small-scale samples while allowing an opportunity to supplement the chosen scale as the research progressed (Ritchie et al., 2003). With this in mind, I applied purpose and random sampling techniques, in order to generalize beneficiaries' responses based on the information gathered from a selected sample of beneficiaries (Kitchin & Tate, 2013). In *purposive sampling*, decisions about selection were made in the early design stages of the research that were based on principal aims of the study (Ritchie et al., 2003). For instance, I used purposive sampling to select both the topic and study area of Kiboga District. This choice was determined by the leading information gathered through literature review prior to the field visit and was my starting point of formulating this study design. After arriving in the field, participants were chosen with a 'purpose' to represent aspects such as age, household size, implementation role and Sub County so as to ensure a representative study. I therefore purposefully selected Kibiga Sub County and Bukomero Sub County in addition to the key informants on the basis of their roles and responsibilities in the Senior Citizen Grant (SCG) programme. This sample selection considered the hierarchy of roles and responsibilities performed by each of the four key informants.

I then used simple *random sampling* when selecting primary informants for in-depth interviews in Kibiga Sub County, such that each beneficiary had an equal chance of being selected (Kitchin & Tate, 2013). The choice of elderly primary informants

during in-depth interviews was random as I escorted the Kibiga Parish Chief during his work routine of visiting several elderly beneficiaries in their homes. *Stratified random sampling* was used during focus groups in Bukomero Sub County. Beneficiaries were first separated into two subgroups of men and women from whom participants were then sampled using the simple random sampling method (Kitchin & Tate, 2013). The female beneficiaries' focus group was done first, followed by the male beneficiaries. Overall time spent during each interview and discussion determined the amount of data collected. My decision to end either the discussion or interview depended on the extent to which collected data responded to the planned purposes of the study and raised issues that were not anticipated but contributed to the findings (Arthur & Nazroo, 2003). I also must add that attending the Agenda Quarterly district SAGE meeting on 24th June 2015 in the field was important in helping me understand the main challenges and criteria concerning the SCG programme as discussed further in the analysis chapters.

3.1.1 Selecting the Research Case

My concerns are embedded in describing how the senior citizen grants offered impact on the wellbeing of targeted elderly beneficiaries. According to Yin (2011), a case study is applicable since this research addresses a single descriptive question directed towards obtaining insights that result in new knowledge. Lewis (2003:52) asserts that, "case study designs can build up very detailed in-depth understanding." This justifies my choice of Kiboga district as one case out of 14 rural districts where the SCG programme pilot phase was launched. More still, with the initial pilot phase being launched October 2010 in Kiboga, this offered a wider time frame to examine the impacts of social assistance on beneficiaries' wellbeing. It was also important to cast a *preliminary research net* negotiating issues that initiated access to appropriate people and places, by thinking through the role of language, ethics and travel costs which enable contact to be made in the first place (Crang & Cook, 2007). Hence sharing a similar local language with a majority, lesser distance and costs therein with Kiboga district greatly influenced my case selection decision.

Consequently, a study on Kiboga District (*typical case*) is justified as suitable for producing an exemplary piece of research through in-depth, up-close examination of a small "case" (Yin, 2011). Upon arrival in the field, I carried out my first key informant interview with the Kiboga District Community Development Officer

(DCDO) during which I was briefed on the two social assistance programmes under SAGE that include both the Senior Citizen Grant (SCG) in three Sub Counties and the Vulnerable Families Grant (VFG) in two Sub Counties from a total of five different Sub Counties within Kiboga district. With this information, I zoomed in on the three Sub Counties administering the SCG programme and particularly selected two namely; Bukomero Sub County since it has a town setting and Kibiga Sub County since it has a village setting. A combination of participants from the two Sub Counties (*unique cases*) would provide better representation and explore various aspects that impact the wellbeing of elderly grant beneficiaries. This preference of a smaller subset (Kibiga and Bukomero Sub Counties) found within the larger set of (Kiboga district) is related to Yin's (2011) distinction between a unique case and a typical case respectively.

3.1.2 Accessing the Research Case

I went through several procedures and guidelines required in the ethics of planning, conducting and reporting research. These procedures of research are further discussed in this chapter. The university introduction letter and clearance from the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) were crucial in both identifying me as a researcher and acquiring acceptance into the research site. Gaining access to primary informants and key informants was not a simple activity as it involved “some combination of strategic planning, hard work, and dumb luck” (Van Maanen & Kolb 1985:11 cited in Okumus et al., 2007). Organizations may deny access because researchers fail to provide answers about what, how, and why they will carry out a specific study (Coleman, 1996 cited in Okumus et al., 2007). For this reason I availed details concerning my fieldwork process and intension to several *gatekeepers* since the entire research process could have been jeopardized if this stage was not executed with utmost scrutiny. “A gatekeeper is generally understood to be someone who has the power and control over access to communities and key respondents in a particular location selected for research” (Lund & Panda, 2015:3).

Upon visiting the research site, a challenge arose when I was rejected timely access by one of the staff members at Kiboga Town Council headquarters, who proposed that I wait a month to get a response. Luckily, I was referred to the SAGE programme Kiboga DCDO also located at Kiboga Town Council headquarters. As a researcher,

remembering that rejections should neither be taken personally nor surprising since research may inconvenience certain people enabled me to stay consistent in seeking a favorable timely response (McCracken 1988b; Stewart & Shamdasani 1990 cited in Crang & Cook, 2007). Eventually, this first visit was progressive as I arranged to meet another gatekeeper, the Kiboga DCDO who was more sympathetic to my project, and also provided crucial guidelines (Crang & Cook, 2007). First, I presented the Kiboga DCDO with details about my fieldwork intentions, introduced the research objective and need for data, the Kiboga DCDO assessed the feasibility of my research topics then advised three Sub Counties within Kiboga district as relevant cases for my study (Lund & Panda, 2015). Second, the Kiboga DCDO provided information concerning the final gatekeeper (Social Assistance Grant for Empowerment (SAGE) secretariat) to approach.

Following this, I secured an appointment with the national SAGE secretariat after which I was granted full permission to access both the research site and the necessary assistance from the District SAGE office located at Kiboga Town Council headquarters. One may argue that this approach is *snowballing* in that once contacts had been cultivated, I asked who else was worth talking to about the topic so as to obtain either their contacts or an introduction (Cassell 1988 cited in Crang & Cook, 2007). The entire research processes applied snowballing when accessing the research case and when in the field. After gaining access, on my second visit to Kiboga, I undertook my first in-depth interview with the Kiboga DCDO, who then introduced me to two other key informants: the Bukomero Sub County Community Development Officer (SC-CDO) and the Kibiga Sub County Parish Chief. As trust and rapport already existed with these gatekeepers, they readily opened the gate and negotiated access with potential primary informants by stressing that they knew and trusted my research intentions (Sanghera & Thapar-Björkert, 2008). For example, the Kibiga Parish Chief acted both as a gatekeeper and a research assistant when in the field. This was because the Kibiga Parish chief identified possible research participant homes and assisted in contacting these research participants to inform them about the time of our home visit when the interview was to be carried out (Lund & Panda, 2015). Similarly, being introduced by the Bukomero SC-CDO as beneficiaries received the grant at the designated pay point eased the process of obtaining participants for the focus groups. Hence, the relationship with the gatekeepers eased the entire process of

access, because introduction of my research to the elderly by the different gatekeepers also quickly built rapport with the elderly, and I ceased from being a complete stranger. Although this was a methodological leap that enhanced my fieldwork, traveling with the Parish chief in Kibiga and being introduced by the Bukomero SC-CDO often got me labeled as part of the SAGE administration team and not as a researcher. Details on how I handled this misidentification are explained in my epistemology position below.

3.2 My Epistemology Position

Epistemology is concerned with the nature of knowledge and how it can be acquired (Snape & Spencer, 2003:23). When learning and attaining knowledge about the elderly's wellbeing in regards to the SCG programme, I restricted my position from situations that risked the authenticity of findings. Takacs (2003:27) emphasises that, "our Positionality biases our epistemology because who we are and where we stand in relation to others shapes what we know about the world". I therefore positioned myself as a naïve student and neutral outsider when relating with my research participants.

3.2.1 The Naïve Student

From the start, I adapted a role of a naïve student in the presence of both key and primary informants. I emphasized that my interest was to learn but not to criticize their work or lifestyle. During my field visits with the Kibiga Parish Chief in beneficiary homes, the elderly gladly welcomed us and immediately asked whether the Parish Chief had brought them another *Musomesa*¹. The Parish Chief would then reply by introducing me as a student. I preceded this introduction with a greeting and affirmation of my position as a student anticipating to learn from the elderly. I soon learnt that the label of teacher referred to the Parish Chief's role of availing the elderly with vital information concerning the SCG programme such as set grant pay days, adjustments and queries. Likewise, researchers were always perceived as educated and knowledgeable of elite programmes like the SCG programme thus had no need to learn from the elderly, majority of whom were an uneducated majority among the elderly (see table 2.2). In this role, I learned to listen to my participants and let myself become the student as the elderly beneficiaries fully stepped into their

¹ Derived from luganda dialect to literary mean teacher but also used by beneficiaries to refer to individuals involved in

position as teachers, by educating me the researcher about various issues such as grant expenditure and the underlying reasons for their expenditure patterns. Researchers positioned to learn from participants gain, “[...] an in-depth and interpreted understanding of the social world of research participants by learning about their social and material circumstances, their experiences, perspectives and histories” (Snape & Spencer, 2003:3). Consequently, the elderly felt that they were respected rather than charitable society members since my position as a student guaranteed that voicing their experiences themselves mattered.

In the course of focus groups, initial reluctance regarding grievances, ignored capabilities and opinions contradicting with peers turned out to be a sign of ‘ritualized humility’ among the elderly. I borrowed this perception of the elderly practicing ritualized humility from Jason Hart’s study on children’s participation in child work decision making. Hart (2008:414) states that a trend has emerged of adults practicing ‘ritualized humility’ during consultations where adults represent children as speaking in one voice, commonly expressing opinions that mirror the values and agenda of organizations concerned. With this in mind, I noted the ritualized humility amongst some beneficiaries that expressed their satisfaction and gratitude concerning the SCG programme but were reluctant to express their discontent and opinions. Bukuluki & Watson (2012) reveal that, some beneficiaries fear to complain even when they have a genuine reason since they view and hear rumours that complaining may annoy those serving them to their disadvantage, whereas other beneficiaries observed that although they raise their concerns about the programme they rarely get feedback. Eventually, the initial ritualized humility and reluctance progressed into mutual dialogue as I continuously emphasized my naïve student position and enthusiasm to learn from the elderlies’ versatile aging experiences. As a naïve student, I made conversation that was different from the research topic both before the interview or focus group in order to make the participant comfortable, and after so as to check that the participant had not left any issues of burning importance unmentioned (Legard et al., 2003). Often times these conversations sparked more reflections and new information, some of which were significant to the study that I had to take *field notes* of them or even ask the participants to repeat them with the tape recorder running (ibid). Even though elderly beneficiaries willingly disclosed personal information, it also stirred up hurtful feelings (Lewis, 2003). This was because many stories were filled with painful loss

that made it inevitable for me to show compassion and caused delays, as I thought of a less painful destruction while the beneficiary calmed down.

3.2.2 The Neutral Outsider

Regardless of a shared local language and familiarity with a majority of beneficiaries' culture, I was still foreign to the SCG programme being studied since I was neither an implementer, donor nor beneficiary. Even the most proficient speaker will not necessarily be identified as an 'insider' even if they are familiar with their research community's language because the language is still likely to have local slangs (Crang & Cook, 2007). Besides language, acknowledging the differences in age, location and lifestyle between participants and myself had a compelling impact on findings. For this reason, I positioned, myself as an 'outsider'.

The following field experience is significant in justifying my neutral outsider positioning. Among the primary informants, two were newly registered non-beneficiaries, and one was a widow scheduled to receive her very first grant payment in the month I undertook my research study. The purpose of this was to find out and evaluate several indigenous forms of social assistance utilized by the elderly. It is clearly stated that, "bereaved families are entitled to receive a final SAGE transition support grant equivalent to four months of the SCG payment" (Bukuluki & Watson, 2012:57). Unfortunately, the widow faced a complex situation since her late husband had also lost his grant pay card three months before his death. As I observed the elderly widow inquiring from the parish chief about the grant income she was owed due to her husband's death despite the lost grant pay card, I pondered on the outsider role I took during a field observation described below.

In between the interview, the elderly widow looks up to the Kibiga Parish Chief and asks, "when will I get the four months' grant deposit for my husband's death and three months' grant payment my husband forewent while he was still alive but had lost his beneficiary pay card?" The Parish Chief then answers, "I do not know when exactly since the issue of lost beneficiary pay cards is still an unresolved issue." She then responds, "it is now two months since my husband's death but you keep giving me the same response." Within a moment she looks at me with the question now directed to me and in a reflex, all the three of us have our eyes staring at each other. I purposefully got back to noting this observation in my fieldwork notes so as to avoid

taking sides by neither backing-up the Parish Chief nor giving a response the elderly widow seemed to seek from me (Field notes, Observation).

In my reflections later about what had transpired, I tried to reconstruct this scenario and wondered whether I should have acted otherwise which meant adapting the insider or biased role by intervening. May (2011), affirms that uncompromising research involves the separation of researchers from the subject of their research hence the researcher should be detached and thus objective in order for the research to become more than a reflection of my personal opinions. Therefore, my neutral position was particularly relevant in regards to the Kibiga Parish Chief since I was an outsider to how policy decisions in the SCG programme are made, I could not assume if and when this elderly widow's query would be resolved. I also wondered whether the Parish Chief would later resent me for giving a response to an inquiry he had already answered. Nevertheless, aloof separation by the researcher from the researched is criticized by feminist thought, therefore some researchers propose 'empathic neutrality' as a position recognizing that research cannot be purely objective and advocates that researchers should make their assumptions transparent (May, 2011; Snape & Spencer, 2003:13). In line with this, I refrained from making any assumptions by substituting an unproven response with an empathetic response through consoling the elderly widow about the grief of her husband's death.

3.3 Data Collection Methods

My case study on SCG beneficiaries and implementers in Kiboga district benefited from having multiple rather than a single source of data (Yin, 2011). Berg (1995) alerts that, different research methods impose certain perspectives on the same symbolic reality, since each method is a different line of sight directed toward the same point. For example interviews assume a stable reality while observations assume a reality deeply affected by the actions of all participants (ibid). By combining several lines of sight to examine the impacts of social assistance on the elderly's wellbeing, my data collection obtained a more complete view of reality (ibid). This process of using multiple lines of sight and drawing on different data sources is known as *triangulation* (Clifford et al., 2010). Under this arrangement I used in-depth interviews, focus group, observation, researcher's diary, secondary data and a participatory exercise drawing (see figure 3.1). I was also involved in creating a space in which participants were free to talk about the research topic for example within a

home compound during in-depth interviews and under a tree shade during focus groups (Crang & Cook, 2007). Since some elderly participants faced challenges with eyesight, hearing and limbs, I was very keen on using these multiple methods to achieve optimum participation and ensure that no data was lost.

3.3.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

Conducting *semi-structured interviews* was one of my primary data sources. I conversed with a total of twenty-one participants individually, by asking predetermined questions drafted on my interview guide and offering participants a chance to explore key issues they felt were important to the study (Longhurst, 2010). Using an interview guide provided direction for the interview to stay in line with the research objectives whereas key issues explored by the participants enabled me to update my interview with relevant but undetermined interview questions and data. The seventeen primary informants were randomly selected and interviews were carried out within beneficiary homes like the compound, sitting room or backyard garden. Time frame for each interview was between twenty to forty minutes all of which depended on how much data was gathered. For example interviews with some enterprising beneficiaries and other beneficiaries who had renovated their kitchen, pit latrines took longer as the conversation was first in the compound then in the backyard for observation purposes, whereas shorter interviews were done with some beneficiaries who were found sick and weak. During the four key informant interviews with the SAGE secretariat, Kiboga DCDO, Bukomero Sub County CDO and Kibiga Sub County Parish Chief, I sought to understand how the SCG programme pilot phase is administered and policy recommendations established for the roll-out phase.

As part of the interview process, I used a voice recorder to concentrate during the interview and enable storage of the conversation used for transcribing. Consent to record the interviews was provided first by the institution as the overall gatekeeper for the research participants, then individual consent had to be given by the participant before I could proceed recording. Confidentiality was prioritized for participants who desired to remain anonymous unless they desired otherwise (Longhurst, 2010). All informant quotes including gender, age, affiliation to SCG programme and Sub County details recorded throughout this thesis refer to informants whose consent was obtained. I also noted down observations in my diary during the interviews. Overall

the key informants approached appreciated my study, which evidently made it easier to access secondary data documents such as the SCG programme institutional framework files, whereas the primary informants were both eager and happy to be a part of the study because they appreciate the income support provided through the SCG programme and viewed their participation as a contribution to the programme's improvement. However, due to hearing impairments and general weakness of some elderly beneficiaries audibility became an issue that I immediately managed to resolve by sitting very close to elderly respondents so as to avoid missing out any information. I was generally able to conduct most of the interviews as planned, with the exception of the SAGE secretariat interview that was cut short, and representatives of international SCG programme donor organizations that I was unable to interview. Fortunately I was availed with exclusive SCG programme publications by the SAGE secretariat as useful secondary data sources.

3.3.2 Focus Groups

I administered two gender-specific *focus groups* with ten female beneficiaries and six male beneficiaries by asking predetermined interview guide questions in order to keep the group discussion in line with the set research objectives (Longhurst, 2010). Both focus groups were conducted in the presence of a research assistant with whom I compared and discussed our findings at the end of the discussion. *On-site recruiting* was implemented as beneficiaries were approached and the focus group conducted at a grant pay point located at a local playground near in Bukomero Sub County (Longhurst, 2010). Due to grant payment activities such as cash collection, signing for received payment that were taking place at the pay point, called upon beneficiaries ready to receive grant payment were excused from the discussion and would return to the discussion right after. Choosing the pay point location accessible to the elderly attracted beneficiaries to participate and was ideal for the busy pay day activities since beneficiaries participated in the study while carrying on with their grant payment procedure at the same time (Lewis, 2003).

Recordings of all participants' names, age and phone contacts were obtained to necessitate order and obtain vital details for needed follow up. These records were helpful as I later contacted three of the focus group participants and scheduled a visit to their homes for a follow up study. Choosing a follow up of these three participants was purposefully done. Participant one had eight orphan grandchildren; participant

two was living alone; and participant three lived with her adult daughter-in-law with whom she operated a small cocoa business. Therefore these three participants reflected living arrangements relevant to this study indicated in figure 2.3 in the contextual framework chapter. In addition to the follow up interviews, I formulated a pre-sketched *tree diagram* that I filled out at the end of the female focus group with responses provided by participants in order to illustrate beneficiaries' income, expenditure and support systems. The three main tree parts namely: roots, trunk and branches symbolized a specific category that was used to visualize patterns and identify breakdowns that were essential for the study (Mayoux, 2003). The level of participation I realized through this exercise addressed the communication limitations faced by most elderly since they could not read or write (ibid). The exercise started with the roots symbolizing income sources such as the senior citizen grants, farming; followed by the trunk symbolizing indigenous forms of support such as family members, community groups; and finally the branches symbolizing expenditures such as food, medical care, grandchildren's school fees. In addition, voting by showing of hands by the 10 female focus group participants was done for the given responses then numbers were marked on each response as illustrated in figure 3.1 below (Mayoux, 2003). The findings of this participatory exercise are further discussed in the analysis chapters.

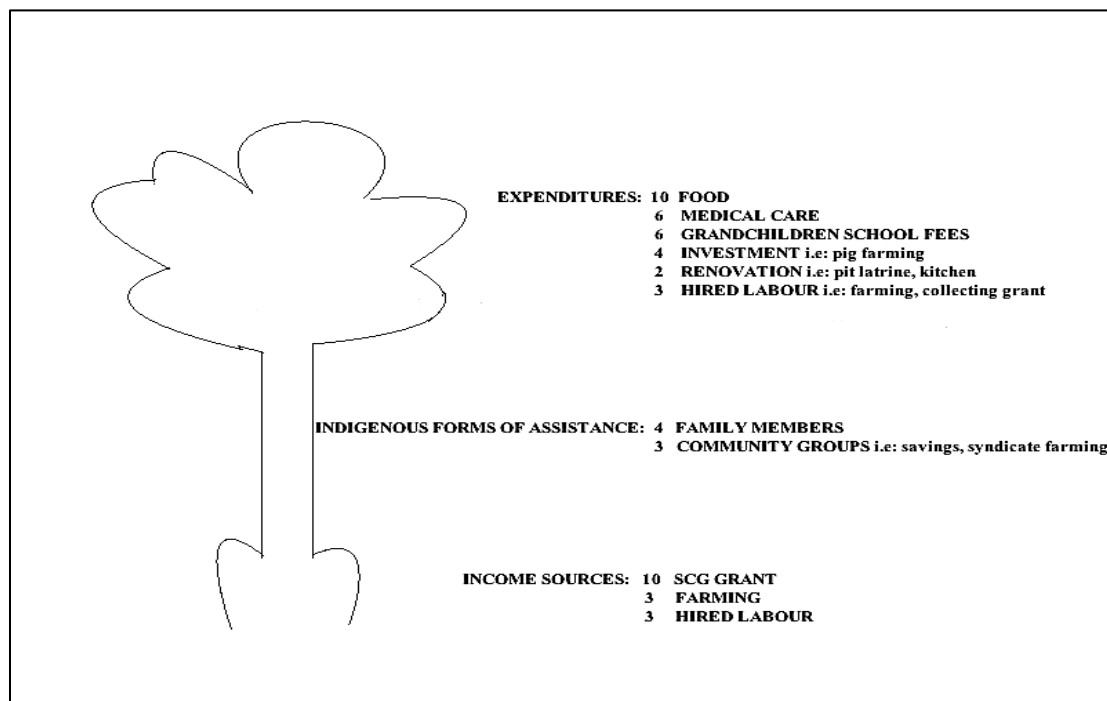


Figure 3.1: A participatory exercise tree diagram (Source: Women Focus Group, Bukomero Sub County).

However a challenge was faced as some beneficiaries who had been absent and returned right after receiving their grant payment offered repetitive responses that had already been discussed while they were away. Regardless of this set back, I considered such repetitions as validation for already provided data and then guided the returning participants with the currently discussed question in order to stir the discussion forward. Confidentiality during the focus groups was complicated when compared to semi-structured interviews due to the many members in the group (Longhurst, 2010). Therefore, I constantly reminded participants to treat the discussion as confidential and advised participants to refrain from offensive language (ibid). Similarly, transcribing both focus groups was a lengthy process that required full attention because of the many participants' voices, and patience given that the female focus group lasted two hours whereas the male focus group was one hour and thirty minutes.

3.3.3 Direct Observations

I mainly used *direct observations* by focusing on human actions, physical environments through using my sight and hearing senses in the field (Yin, 2011). For example, initially before the interview, overheard comments and seen events became a starting point for informal conversation and helped in relating the observed activities to the set interview questions. I also applied the guidelines put forward by May (2011), of using an exercise book with a wide margin on the left-hand where I noted key words such as expenses, indigenous support to jog my memory about how the observation notes on the right-hand related to my study. Noting anything or everything was both impossible and undesirable therefore *field notes* taken were guided by events to be investigated further in relation to my study objectives (May (2011). The field notes captured the observations made in the field setting (Yin, 2011). This blend of observation done concurrently with other methods like interviews and focus groups enabled me observe and note the bodily gestures and reactions of my research participants to different issues in order to understand the impact intensity of the various issues on their wellbeing. For instance, the smile on beneficiaries' faces when speaking of their grandchild's education or sorrow expressed due to death of a pig bought by saving two months' grant payment, gave insight into how these particular situations impact on their wellbeing.

3.3.4 Researcher's Diary

I used a diary at the end of each fieldwork day as a piece of autobiographic writing summarizing the day's activities and key findings that emerged (Latham, 2010:189). It was through my diary notes that I built on my reflective thinking. For instance, I reviewed some of the earlier interviews done in the day to make meaning of the data and evaluate whether it had any correlation to my study. Because of this I was able to identify certain links and gaps within the data that I included in the next day's task in order to carryout a follow up study. The researcher's diary also enabled me revise some of the decisions I had taken earlier in the field as well as evaluate the activities successfully done in comparison to my scheduled work plan. Drawing up a work schedule was an effective indicator if I was either on time or delayed (Clifford et al., 2010). At the start of my fieldwork it was quite difficult for me to differentiate between diary notes from observation notes made because they seemed similar. Nonetheless, I strived to make a differentiation between the two and purposed to also make a correlation such that both the observation and research diary could complement the study. Several findings discussed all through this thesis mirror the reflections in my diary notes, thus building on my field experiences.

3.3.5 Secondary Data

In addition to retrieving data through primary sources, the study also applies secondary data. Secondary data refers to already existing literature data that is used to provide a contextual background to the study and give meaning to primary data. The secondary data I have found will also be applied as part of the basis in my research analysis (White, 2010). It is also explicitly stated that secondary data may assist in justifying the research and it's findings (Crang & Cook, 2007; White, 2010). For this study, secondary data was attained using government publications and MGLSD's SAGE department policy publications in order to retrieve information, laws and structural arrangements regarding the senior citizen grant programme in Uganda (White, 2010). In order to provide more extensive knowledge to my research findings, I also obtained secondary data taken from statistics, SCG programme publications written by other researchers, journals, news articles, and online sources concerning the topic of social assistance, senior citizens and theoretical concepts. Most importantly, the validity of secondary data used throughout this thesis has been backed by rightfully referencing the sources.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

Throughout the data collection stage, I purposed to behave with integrity and commit myself to avoid or at least minimize doing harm by respecting the rights of my research participants (Hay, 2010). Still, the data collection process posed a number of ethical issues and considerations, some of them unique to me as a new researcher. As I focused on a few beneficiaries within one SCG pilot district, the impact of grants on the elderly beneficiaries' wellbeing is understood in perspective of a specified place and people so as to minimize biases. Biases are one of the factors, resulting from inevitable sampling errors and researcher's influence on the study for example during interpretation of data (Cragg & Cook, 2007). Below I describe four major ethical issues and how I handled certain biases during the field study.

3.4.1 Informed Consent

All participants' informed consent was obtained by providing them with clear information about the purpose and objectives of the study, in addition to being sensitive to the hierarchy of the SAGE organisational structure by getting clearance from both the national and local SCG programme implementers who were gatekeepers (Lewis, 2003). I also sought confirmation of the key informants' consent by issuing a consent form before proceeding with my research. Eventually, four of the gatekeepers approached were included in the study by accepting to be interviewed as key informants and also granted access to the research site for me to seek primary informants' informed consent. Given the go-ahead from the gatekeepers, the elderly beneficiary participants also had their individual consent sought by explaining to them through the details of the study and why their participation was crucial. Next I declared consent questions that were detailed on a consent form asking whether to continue or discontinue and the resultant action was dependent on the participant's verbal consent. The argument presented in favor of verbal consent among primary beneficiaries included inability to read and write as well as eyesight challenges faced by most elderly beneficiaries.

Hay (2010) emphasizes that, caution has to be taken when obtaining consent from participants in dependent relationships. With this in mind, I questioned the practicality of seeking only direct consent from an elderly beneficiary whose inability to sit up right, walk, stand or collect grant payment on her own unless with the help of a household member caring for her. Beneficiaries who report inability to go to a

designated pay point (for example, due to physical disability), designate a relative or trusted friend who acts as an alternative recipient that receives the cash on their behalf (Bukuluki & Watson, 2012). One elderly beneficiary approached in the field was crippled and heavily depended on the care provided by her adult daughter who also acted as her alternative recipient. Faced with this situation, I debated on whether I should interview this beneficiary and soon made a decision to proceed, as this would render the study representative of the lived realities of elderly persons in Kiboga district. I therefore relied on the alternative recipient's consent on top of the elderly beneficiary's consent. This approach is described as opportunistic sampling where the researcher adopts a flexible approach that takes advantage of unforeseen opportunities as they arise during the course of fieldwork (Ritchie et al., 2003). After interviewing an elderly couple that were both grant beneficiaries, another unforeseen situation emerged that adjusted the ethical consideration of seeking consent from only research participants to seeking consent from the researcher.

Before photographing the couple who willingly accepted, the elderly wife exclaims, "I look bad to take a picture in these dirty garden clothes, I want to change into clean clothes." The Kibiga Parish Chief then responds, "it is better for you to take a picture in your garden clothes since they also represent that the elderly are hardworking people." After reading the unsatisfied expression on her face I immediately respond, "please go ahead to do what makes you feel most comfortable and happy." As she swiftly goes inside a small room to change, we continue chatting with her husband who adds "sometime ago we were rushed to sit down and take a picture without being given time to prepare ourselves as if we were prisoners." The wife later comes out smiling in a pink gomesi², we all compliment her beautiful changing dress and proceed to take the picture in smiles (Field notes, Observation). (See figures 5.2: field images).

This field experience symbolized how listening to research participants and respecting their wishes is a fundamental ethical consideration. Hence my response that respected the elderly wife as an autonomous agent who had the right to fulfill her desire to change into clean clothes, because of her discomfort to take a picture in dirty garden

² A colourful floor-length dress commonly worn by females in the city on special traditional occasions and in rural areas as a daily dress.

clothes (Hay, 2010). Overall, most elderly were very eager to take part in their study and fully consented to reveal their full identity including field photographs. When ending the interviews I confirmed with the elderly participants again who willingly re-affirmed their identity consent.

3.4.2 Rapport Building

Rapport building also refers to building relationships with others. I established a good working relationship with participants from the moment of seeking access to the research case until I exited the field by demonstrating interest, showing respect and being understanding and empathetic (Thompson, 2000 cited in Legard et al., 2003). Establishing rapport with my key informants was more direct and took short time because key informants were more familiar to engaging with visiting researchers whereas primary informants are usually sampled randomly, so the research experience was new to some. On my first visit to Kiboga Town Council headquarters where the SAGE offices are situated, I acknowledged the gatekeepers' administrative positions as a rapport building strategy by addressing each of them by their designated titles as a sign of respect for their SCG implementation role. It was partly because of the respect I accorded each gatekeeper, that prompted them to refer me to both primary informants and other key informants required for my research. For example the friendship built with the Kiboga DCDO led her to request the Kibiga Parish Chief for his assistance as my designated field guide. I first indirectly built rapport with primary informants through introduction by the Kibiga Parish Chief when visiting beneficiary homes. I then purposefully disregarded the power differentials that were perceived by the primary informants to exist between them and me as a rapport building strategy. For instance, when offered a chair during the interview I would politely decline and ask whether I could sit down on the sitting mat together with the beneficiary. This not only got rid of the perceived power difference between beneficiaries and me, but also enabled clearer interviews as most elderly spoke at a low tone. Similarly, respecting cultural roles when visiting the home of a beneficiary couple by sitting down on the mat with his wife while her husband and male Parish Chief sat in the chair became a common ground upon which a rapport was built. Unfortunately, embedded in such cultural gestures of respect is, a tendency to assume men are capable of reason while women are emotional and excluded by virtue of men rendering them incapable of reason (May, 2011). To avoid these power differentials disconnecting the

participation of male and female beneficiaries, I constantly probed the wife to contribute her opinion even after her husband had given a response. A number of writers advise researchers to develop a rapport with interviewees which is sufficient to elicit responses while keeping the necessary social distance (Crang & Cook, 2007). Following this advice I carefully recorded and exchanged contacts like phone numbers and email addresses with my participants without giving up much personal information that would jeopardize my position as a researcher.

3.4.3 Reciprocity

Reciprocity is one of the most debatable issues in ethical research with several scholars sharing mixed reactions and view. However, different geographies demand different ways of negotiating reciprocity with the researched. Therefore going by Lewis's (2003) view, I adopted the usefulness of giving something to the participants in return for the assistance, time and thought in order to necessitate some level exchange during the research. In line with the above statements, I executed a practical form of reciprocity during the women focus group. One of the elderly participants responded that she used part of the grant to locally process and package soya beans powder that she also marketed to fellow elderly beneficiaries on the grant payday, (see figures 5.2: field images). Other elderly focus group participants testified that they enjoyed spicing their tea with her soya beans powder since it was cheaper than sugar. I soon learnt, only a few had purchased from her due to the limited grant amount as compared to their pressing needs and that finding market for her coca was a challenge most times. Without disclosing my final intension, I offered to purchase some soya beans packets from her that I later distributed to both male and female elderly focus group participants at the end of the discussion. Distributing the soya packets at the end of the focus group enabled me to avoid any data biases since I did not disclose my intension until the focus group discussion was completed. This also supported the elderly woman's business but also acted as a token of appreciation for the participants' time invested in the discussion; one hour and thirty minutes for the male beneficiaries focus group and two hours for the female beneficiaries focus group.

Another form of practical reciprocity I adopted entails disseminating research information back to participants. For instance, following the above quoted beneficiary couple photograph experience; I sent back the two copies of the particular field image

to the photographed couple as an appreciation for their full consent to take part in the study. I also intend to provide a final copy of my thesis to the office of SAGE secretariat's office and Kiboga Town Council headquarters.

3.4.4 Research Participants' Expectations

In my study, I was faced with an ethical dilemma of doing harm when interviewing dependent elderly beneficiaries and it was important to avoid ways in which taking part would have harmed the participants (Hay, 2010; Lewis, 2003). Despite my position as a student researcher, some of my research participants did not stop from expecting assistance from me. Particularly during my interviews with primary informants, some elderly beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries had expectations of my research benefiting them directly and requested that the grant amount be increased, and solutions about grievances such as lost pay cards. Lewis (2003) suggests that, an appropriate response when faced with such an ethical dilemma would be for the researcher to encourage the participant after the interview to report the issue themselves, and seek help in some other way. Therefore, I explained to such requests that my position as an outsider without direct influence on the SCG programme decision making leaves the decision of increasing the grant amount to a hierarchy of SCG programme insiders such as the interviewed key informants, donors alongside beneficiaries. I also vividly informed the beneficiaries that my research would not immediately have direct benefit to them but could possibly influence policy formulation and implementation in the unknown future. Moreover, making any promises to beneficiaries about the grant amount would jeopardize my relations with the SCG programme administration. From my diary reflections, I compounded this ethical dilemma together with other research findings about social and political relationships regarding between donors, implementers and beneficiaries as discussed more in the analysis chapters.

3.4.4.1 Additional Constraints

In addition to the above dilemma, time constraints prevented the male beneficiaries focus group from undertaking the participatory exercise tree drawing. Apart from using the discussions to draw comparisons between elderly male beneficiaries and elderly female income sources, support systems and expenditures, I was unable to compare the two groups participatory tree exercises. Also, one elderly beneficiary living alone was slightly mentally frail and could barely recall her age, family history

or even recognize the Parish Chief even though the Parish Chief acted as her alternative recipient. I was therefore unable to sustain our conversation long enough to obtain detailed information from the beneficiary. Observation and additional information provided by the Parish Chief as the alternative recipient of this particular beneficiary, both played a larger part in my assessment of this elderly's wellbeing.

Nevertheless, the above dilemmas and other constraints mentioned throughout this chapter did not compromise the validity of this study's research findings. *Validity* seeks the credibility ability of the applied concepts and research experience to represent the real-life experiences of the subjects that are studied (Crang & Cook, 2007). In order to achieve this, my entire research exercise emphasized understanding the elderly's perspectives by constantly probing for detailed information about their lives (from their own perspectives and, to a more limited extent, from my own observations either of the circumstances in which the elderly live or their engagement with this research's issues) (Snape & Spencer, 2003:21). With the different data sources used through triangulation, each data source assisted in validation of findings thus reducing the biases that could result from a single method's perspective and maximizing results from the multiple methods (Berg, 1995). I also restricted my position from situations that risked the authenticity of the research findings as mentioned in my epistemology positioning. Furthermore, in order to for this research to supplement and be supplemented by multiple researches, my study holds the principle of *theoretical generalization* throughout the theoretical chapter by making use of theoretical ideas to enhance deeper understanding of field findings (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003:277). *Inferential generalization* is also adopted throughout this thesis by using other settings in which similar conditions exist to relate with this study's focus (ibid).

3.5 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data analysis started when the research begun as I linked collected data and methods used to the set research objectives and questions. To start off my analysis process, I transcribed all interviews and focus groups in addition to aligning participants' responses to the specific research questions being answered. After transcribing, I *coded* the material into different categories and themes. Coding also constitutes relating my field observations into the collected data (May, 2011). In addition to this, I analyzed the collected data through relevant theoretical concepts in order to create

worthwhile insights and knowledge (Crang & Cook, 2007). Throughout the data collection and analysis, I used critical reflexivity by questioning accusations that were made and considering alternative viewpoints so as to understand various underlying patterns that influence the impact of the grant on beneficiaries' wellbeing. Throughout my study, I aim at relating the background, methodology, theory and analysis to ensure a presentation of correlated thesis chapters.

The above has been the methodology chapter describing data collection techniques applied in the field, next I outline the theoretical concepts relevant for the analysis of my study findings.

CHAPTER 4: THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In this theoretical chapter, I begin with explaining circumstances surrounding old age in the rural Global South, followed by an insight into the gap between indigenous elderly practices and expatriate policy approaches. Next, I reflect on the significance of contemporary rights talk in shaping elderly grant beneficiaries' wellbeing. Finally, I conceptualize the wellbeing of grant beneficiaries with emphasis on relational wellbeing. Throughout this chapter, highlighting the importance of alternative bottom-up approaches over mainstream top-down approaches signifies an alternative development standpoint.

4.1 Being Old

This section emerges out of a need to represent local literacies and responds to research question one: *What are the indigenous forms of support to the elderly; identifying the maintenance of some and rupture of others?*

4.1.1 Old Age in the Rural South

In developed Western societies, such as Europe, Japan or North America the ageing population has unfolded within a context of rising household living standards, and an overall expansion of state resources (Aboderin, 2013:419). In contrast to the developed Western societies, the ageing population in developing Southern societies with emphasis on rural Sub-Saharan Africa has unfolded within a context of economic strain and constricted public resources (Kalache, Barreto & Keller, 2005; United Nations, 2005 cited in *ibid*). Consequently, “the lives of many older people in developing societies are dramatically, and, most frequently, negatively influenced by the social and economic changes that accompany the development process” (Williams, 2003:1). For example, transition from a solely subsistence lifestyle to an existence comprising both cash and subsistence was evident among the elderly in Kiboga. To give an example, all interviewed beneficiaries' grant expenditures included processed food products like maize flour, sugar, salt despite the presence of food crops planted in their home backyards. This finding questioned the myth of rural households' complete reliance on subsistence farming for their daily sustenance. In regards to this coexistence of both a subsistence and cash economy, Williams (2003) warns that, in developing cash economies where subsistence is achieved through the purchase of commodities that meet basic needs a level of income is required. Without

such income levels many elderly suffer income poverty (Williams, 2003).

For this reason, a certain amount of income is required by the elderly in order to support their daily sustenance and combat income poverty. With reference to a field experience, an elderly male beneficiary had sold his mango tree for cash even though the mango tree was still planted in his backyard, this example implies that some elderly facing income constraints may at times give up their subsistence so as to survive in a growing cash economy. Other elderly resort to various income sources as a form of support. In this study, all the elderly research participants apart from two interviewed non-beneficiaries heavily relied on *non-farm income* provided by the Senior Citizen Grant (SCG) programme in the form of bi-monthly grant payments (Ellis, 2000:12). Some elderly also supplemented the grant income with other forms of *non-farm income*, gained from rural wage labor outside agricultural employment, leasing land and property, urban-rural remittances from family members (ibid). With an assured bi-monthly grant income, some elderly easily accessed credit from local shops and also obtained a grace period for their foster grandchildren to be retained in school despite a lunch fee debt because they promised to settle the debts immediately after receiving the grant. However, the challenge was that for beneficiaries who accessed credit, by the time the grant was paid it was already used through credits (Bukuluki & Watson, 2012). Unfortunately, other urban-to-rural non-farm income transfers like formal pensions, subsidies, formal loans were mostly absent among grant beneficiaries and are therefore not emphasized in this study (Ellis, 2000:12).

Therefore, a great need for income source diversification among the elderly still remains. Most elderly relied on *farm income* activities that are common among rural households, such as home coffee plantations, forest land plantations, livestock rearing mostly pigs purchased with accumulated grant savings, and food crops like beans (Ellis, 2000:11). The various clampdowns leading to a significant rupture of farm income as a support system among the elderly is further discussed in the latter chapters. Additionally, support from *off-farm income*, which refers to wage labor within the agricultural sector is crucial, for instance some relatively healthy elderly occasionally earned money by working as hired labour on other local farms (ibid). During the male and female beneficiaries' focus groups carried out on 7th July 2015 in Bukomero Sub County, those elderly beneficiaries who are able to diversify and

combine their grant income with various income sources explained that they experienced different wellbeing impacts when compared to their grant dependent counterparts. On top of income sources, wellbeing of beneficiaries in this study was also influenced by the elderly's living arrangement as illustrated in figure 2.3 in the context chapter and further discussed in the analyses chapters.

Skinner & Joseph (2011) state that, within the community and household settings voluntarism is crucial in sustaining the independence of ageing rural residents in the sense that volunteering acts as an informal activity that makes up for the lack of numerous formal supports. Formal assistance for the Southern elderly was generally non-existent before and is presently absent for basic needs such as nursing homes available for many Western elderly (ibid). Southern elderly are often only assisted while remaining in their homes. Therefore, support from volunteers (often family members, neighbours, churches and elderly residents themselves) still remains crucial to elderly rural residents.

The above statements accurately reflect the lives of rural elderly grant beneficiaries in Uganda where district level formal social assistance is only five years old, since the launch of SCG pilot phase in October 2011, and the elderly are only assisted with a monthly grant within their homes. The lived experiences of research participants in Kiboga district revealed that *voluntarism* as emphasized by Skinner & Joseph (2011) is a maintained mechanism of support within indigenous and new spaces of care for the elderly. Williams (2003) also asserts that ageing adults increasingly need support from others who are not necessarily found exclusively within their household.

However, voluntarism among the elderly in Kiboga was seen to be on a lower scale at community level and is at times skewed in the disfavour of highly vulnerable elderly living in elderly headed households. Therefore, in spite of the crucial role of voluntarism in supporting the elderly, a critical policy issue arises due to the unresolved tension between individual vulnerability and structural vulnerability since elderly residents that are often asked to volunteer face a danger of using up already limited resources to support others in rural communities (Joseph & Chalmers, 1998 cited in Skinner & Joseph, 2011).

This also stands true considering a significant rupture in the renowned support by family members since migration of young rural adults to cities undermines the traditional extended family support system since the elderly are left behind to fend for

themselves in rural areas (Khasiani, 1987; Gaisie, 1989; Hunt, 1989; Udvardy & Cattell, 1992 cited in Williams, 2003). Also many non-migrant elderly face voluntary vulnerability when caring for left behind infants, orphans and abandoned grandchildren. As a result, elderly women are increasingly becoming caregivers to their grandchildren, as caregiving is traditionally a woman's task undertaken within the voluntary supportive context of an extended family (Tout, 1993; du Germany, 1997 cited in Williams, 2003). It is important to note that reciprocity is necessary principle in indigenous support forms such as voluntarism. According Hebo (2013:15), reciprocity is the essence of informal social assistance. This study will briefly refer to two types of reciprocity namely: *balanced reciprocity* and *generalized reciprocity* in chapter 5.2.2.1 to partially explain the rupture of some indigenous support mechanisms.

4.1.2 A Gap Between Indigenous and Expatriate Knowledge

An interest in indigenous knowledge has grown due to dissatisfaction with modernization as a means of improving living standards for the majority population in the Global South hence the acknowledgement of indigenous knowledge as a valid body of knowledge (Briggs, 2013:107). Despite this, much current development thinking still reflects dominance of formal knowledge, so much so that development remains a technical challenge and the voices of the poor are still little heard (ibid). Ferguson (2007) also contends that, contemporary development thoughts about poverty still question the relation between the formal policies and informal indigenous knowledge. Ferguson (2007) then reveals that, the downside to policy 'formalities' in programmes such as the Senior Citizen Grant is that policy formalities may be streamlined in a way that makes programme implementers and donors engaged (as grant providers for the elderly) yet disengaged (taking no real interest in shaping the conduct of elderly beneficiaries) towards a betterment of beneficiaries' wellbeing. In the lives of the interviewed elderly, this disconnect between formality and informality plays out as informal indigenous practices by the elderly versus formal policy approaches, in this case, the Senior Citizen Grant (SCG) programme that is implemented and funded by expatriates. More disconnect also exists between the formal SCG programme and other existing formal associations such as NGO's, i.e. NAADS, all leading into a series of linked issues such as; *duplication*, *marginal productivity* and *dependency* that ultimately impact on the elderlies' wellbeing.

I consider this contexted review regarding dominance of the formal knowledge over informal knowledge as an important aspect reflecting the gap between indigenous elderly practices versus the expatriate implemented grant policy, and a need to bridge this gap. Based on commentaries and findings from the field, along with theoretical data backing, this study aims to refute the isolation and persistent disconnect between formal and informal practices. For instance indigenous forms of support among the elderly were seen to improve wellbeing hand in hand with formal social assistance provided by the grant. I therefore emphasize the importance of mixed knowledge's and mixed forms of support i.e. by linking indigenous support systems with formal assistance, and mixed practices like in pig rearing that avail alternatives, because elderly grant beneficiaries' were seen to benefit from a combination of formal and informal practices. To give an example of indigenous practices, throughout the study, many elderly accurately predicted the weather and farming seasons, practiced morning exercise walks as they escorted their grandchildren to a distant primary school in addition to self-treatment using local herbs. Nonetheless, most could neither explain the nutritional value or proven facts of such practices, but this did not disregard how well the elderlies' lives benefited from these practices.

One astounding finding was an elderly beneficiary using human urine to treat and prevent and treat swine fever for her pigs that she had purchased using her two months' accumulated grant savings. Her successful pig rearing was distinct from those beneficiaries who were ignorant of this indigenous knowledge, and who were devastated by loss due to death of pigs because of the highly infectious swine fever. Such indigenous knowledge is not to be romanticised but can offer place-specific opportunities as a meaningful solution to development (Briggs, 2013:108). This finding resonates with a study by Andersson (2015) concerning human urine as a valuable, yet underestimated and under-utilized valuable resource for plant fertilization that has been used in agriculture since ancient times, in much of Sub-Saharan Africa, including Uganda. Despite the notable value of human waste, its use in agricultural production is not a common practice (Winblad & Simpson-Hérbert, 2004 cited in Andersson, 2015).

Ferguson (2007:83) suggests that a striking vision of the future is in acknowledging that “[...] the informal economy is not to be overcome or incorporated, but enhanced and expanded”. The *binary divide* regarding tensions between formal Western science and/or policies versus informal practices remains a fundamental problem in deploying indigenous knowledge in development and the solution lies on greater sympathy of the view that indigenous knowledge represents a complementary, not competing, role which can be intensified once the validity of indigenous knowledge has been confirmed through the formal lens (Briggs, 2013). Prout (2012:319) adds that, engaging in such forms of joint data and analyses would provide indigenous people with unique tools of advocacy for articulating local needs and aspirations.

Moreover, with the realisation that in developing countries, where stable full-time waged formal sector labour was never the norm, especially among the present day elderly, it is increasingly unlikely that waged formal sector labour will become the norm (Ferguson, 2007). Therefore, grant payments ought not to be most significant as neither temporary substitutes for formal pensions, temporary relief nor charity, but as a means of either enhancing production or enabling entrepreneurial activity amongst elderly beneficiaries (ibid). Worse still, social protection programmes tend to concentrate on the physical vulnerabilities that many older people experience, thus reinforcing stereotypes and stressing their welfare needs over and above their social and economic contributions to society (Apt; 2002:42). It is therefore important to explore the social contributions of older people, acknowledge their practice of indigenous knowledge, and examine the underlying reasons why such contributions remain unrecognized and even remain unrewarded, for example, caring for the young children, grooming and contributing towards grand children’s education.

4.1.3 Interfaces Between Indigenous and Expatriate actors

Previously I conceptualized the gap between indigenous and expatriate knowledge and practices. This gap according to quoted literature has also been cited as formal versus informal practices. To set the foundation of analyzing how certain interactions impact the wellbeing of elderly grant beneficiaries, it is crucial to also conceptualize the interfaces between indigenous and expatriate *actors* in this study.

Norman Long (2001) introduced, “Encounters at the Interface” as an important tool to investigate both interactions and conflict processes between different actors to

identify how and where the different actors are connected and influenced by each other. The advantage of an actor-oriented approach is that it precisely aims at grasping the importance of starting from responses and lived experiences of elderly grant beneficiaries in order to obtain a systematic ethnographic understanding of the ‘social life’ of development projects like the SCG programme (Long, 2001:14). With the primary concern of this study being wellbeing of older persons, particularly elderly grant beneficiaries. The elderly are categorized as indigenous actors while the expatriate actors category consists of national SCG grant implementers and international donor organizations. To some extent, donors remain anonymous given that most information concerning donors was mostly gathered through secondary data. In spite of that, donors remain actively represented by the grants the elderly receive since donors provide large sums of money and also influence decisive actions regarding the SCG programme. Therefore, the main findings of this study are built on primary data gathered from the elderly grant beneficiaries’ experiences and their interactions with national SCG programme implementers.

For purposes of this study’s analyses chapters, encounters at the interface is not detailed as a theory but is used as a framework that guides the discussion by purposefully putting into formation theoretical concepts, such as rights, actors and wellbeing. This analytical framework permits critical awareness of the dynamics of interface encounters and how they shape events, particularly elderly beneficiaries’ wellbeing (Long, 2001:91). Firstly, the notion of interface provides a hands-on device to understand ‘autonomous’ fields of action among actors’, for instance how the elderly forge their own survival and the pressures impinging on them that may regress their wellbeing (Long, 2001:91). Secondly, because the elderlies’ wellbeing is to some extent determined by the interlocking of actors’ ‘projects’ and practices, which results into intended and unintended outcomes that compose frameworks, which either restrain or enable older persons’ social action to impact their wellbeing (Long, 2001:4). Therefore, even though interface interactions presume some degree of common interests between the three actors, for instance a common interest of improving the elderlies’ wellbeing, varying interests and unequal power relations amongst actors often exist. Hence, the interface notion identifies sites of either social discontinuity or linkage amongst actors hence sensitizes this study on critical points of how the elderly beneficiaries’ wellbeing can be transformed by exploring issues such

as knowledge or resource access (Long, 2001:89). These transformative issues that ultimately impact older persons wellbeing are conceptualized as rights issues discussed below.

4.2 Contemporary Rights Talk

“One of the main characteristics of a Rights Based Approach (RBA), and what distinguishes it from most other development approaches, is that it is normative: it is derived from a framework assigning rights and obligations to individuals, groups and states. These global standards are grounded in ‘the idea that states are obliged to provide appropriate regulation of labour and financial markets and an acceptable basic standard of health care and education, all of which will improve the ability of households livelihood strategies that are focused on improving standards of living’ (Conway & Norton, 2002: 535)” (Piron, 2004:4). According to the RBA, Social protection instruments e.g. cash transfers can support the realization of human rights for the poorest and most vulnerable by guaranteeing that basic standards are met (Piron, 2004).

In line with the above statements, a Rights Based Approach (RBA) to social assistance offered to the rural elderly in Kiboga district is relevant to this study. Since the RBA addresses the interconnection between rights, needs and livelihood strategies, in addition to emphasizing the importance of both the state and development partners assisting the poor such as the elderly realize this interconnected full set of rights. Through this concept, the study addresses research question three: *How can social assistance be made self-sustaining while replicating positive impacts at the national level?*

4.2.1 Identifying Elderly's Ill-being as a Rights Issue

When poverty and vulnerability of the elderly is defined in relation to more than income, the relevance of all human rights are brought to bear on social protection policies and programmes. This is because the elderly have ‘the right to a standard of living adequate for wellbeing’ ‘including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services (UDHR, Art 25). Therefore, social protection policies and programmes ensure that both these basic standards are met and the whole set of rights required to promote livelihoods and wellbeing. Moreover, achieving growth without respect to rights is accompanied with undesirable results, particularly increased inequalities (Piron, 2004:11).

Certain organizations have therefore made a conscious choice to adopt a Rights Based Approach (RBA), as a means for increasing people's opportunities to meet their own

needs because the failure to respect, protect or fulfill human rights is a leading obstacle to alleviating poverty and wellbeing (Rand, 2007). By adopting the RBA problems faced by the elderly such as lack of access to information, health services, and discrimination are framed as rights rather than those problems being framed as needs (ibid). In addition, placing emphasis on sharing existing resources more equally and assisting the elderly assert their rights to those resources, the RBA challenges the needs-based approach focus of only securing additional resource delivery (Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi, 2004:1417). Rand (2007) explains that, the RBA asks why discriminated groups like older persons face impoverishment along with analyzing the dynamic underlying causes of older persons' impoverishment such as access to resources and understanding power struggles in order to uncover the vulnerabilities older people face. For instance, identifying basic impoverishment causes in chapter 6.2.1, and analyzing power struggles in line with gender unravels why more elderly females wind up as foster parents to several grandchildren when compared to their elderly male counterparts. Three essential elements indicated by Rand (2007:27) are crucial to this study, "namely: that rights-based approaches 1) frame problems as rights, linked to international, national or customary standards; 2) emphasize capacity and agency of rights holders; and 3) engage and hold duty bearers accountable for meeting their obligations".

Piron (2004:25) asserts that based on moral, economic or political ground, there is a right to international assistance and there is an international obligation to support transfers to guarantee that minimum standards are met, even in poorer countries. This argument is used in response to those that argue that social protection is justified in wealthy Global North countries but not in poorer Global South developing countries.

In line with the Rand's third essential element and Piron's statement mentioned above, (duty bearers) are obligated to the elderly (right holders), thus the national government together with the international community as the principal duty bearers have a responsibility to assist the elderly in realizing their universal human rights (Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi, 2004:1417). Therefore, effective implementation and policy design that are necessary for a positive impact of social assistance on the wellbeing of beneficiaries are an obligation to both Uganda's national Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) implementing the SCG programme and the foreign donor organizations, namely DFID, UNICEF and Irish

Aid funding the SCG programme. In furtherance of the three essential elements indicated in the previous paragraph, this study's analysis chapter 6.2 will refer to the five *Community Capacity Development strategy* steps provided by UNICEF's approach to implementing a 'rights- based approach', namely 1) identify *basic impoverishment causes* such as discrimination of the elderly, health concerns; 2) analysis of the complex web of *social and political relationships* between right holders, i.e. elderly grant beneficiaries and duty bearers i.e. MGLSD legislating as SCG programme implementer, donor organizations; 3) analysis of *capacity gaps* that prevent duty bearers i.e. government agencies in this case MGLSD from fulfilling their obligations; 4) identification of *candidate actions* to particularly equip right holders i.e. elderly grant beneficiaries in relation to the identified specific issue; and 5) emphasize the importance of *priority actions* sensitive to the level of society at which each action is being undertaken (Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi, 2004:1425).

Another key distinction is drawn between a *rights-based approach to public policy* at the local level, and a *rights-based approach to development cooperation*: A rights-based approach to public policy at the local level would be most desirable to this study's focus because of the movement away from political, economic or social oppression that leads to poverty eradication, hence positively impacts the wellbeing of older persons, which can only be sustainable when it springs from within the elderly and is in harmony with their local culture and values (Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi, 2004:1420). On the other hand, a rights-based approach to development cooperation is undesirable as it seeks to bring about empowerment through external pressure and is based on the dogma that poverty eradication only requires 'good' leadership, 'good governance' and it seems to assume moral superiority of the donor over the local people with regard to insights into what would be in the best interests of the South (ibid). Therefore, it is important to refer to this distinction between public policy versus development cooperation to examine which rights based approach form was most displayed by the SCG programme practices by the time the research was carried out and how those practices influenced the grants' impact on wellbeing of beneficiaries.

4.2.2 Monitoring the History of Elderlies' Rights

Given that RBA recognizes the politics of processes such as power and resource access that either limit or fulfill the elderlies' capabilities rather than solely focusing

on issues such as increasing the grant amount, rights talk seeks to understand the elderly's wellbeing and the politics within which they stage their survival. Rand (2007) highlights that rights talk makes the process of development clearly political. However, some charge that today's rights-based development resonates remarkably little with its politicized history since the 'development' and 'human rights' domains remain aloof to issues of economic and social justice among discriminated groups such as the elderly (Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi, 2004:1421).

History reveals that at the base of independence struggles in Africa were struggles against human rights abuse such as oppression and brutal exploitation experienced in everyday life (Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi, 2004:1421). This soon emerged into a tradition of struggles for rights informed by the specific experiences of those involved (ibid). This tradition of struggles for rights corresponds with Uganda's bush war period of 1961-1965 in which, the National Resistance Army (NRM), that saw itself as a people's army leading a war aimed at replacing the old regime 'with structures moulded during the course of the struggle by the masses interests and the demands of the times' (Ondonga ori Amaza, 1998:28 cited in Baker, 2004). With a majority of present older persons in Uganda having experienced the bush war period of which some even served under the NRM. The elderly are not simply passive recipients because by virtue of their participation in the bush war and life experiences, they have been actively involved in construction of Uganda's contemporary social and political systems (Chalmers & Joseph, 2006). Based on such contributions to the state, a few interviewed beneficiaries (right holders) expressed their sense of entitlement to the grant as good citizens being rewarded for their loyalty whereas others referred to the grant as a gift.

"I served my country in the bush war for our president and I know all the wars on my fingertips. Receiving the senior citizen grant makes my hard work feel remembered as a citizen who has seen it all" (Male beneficiary, 89 years-Kibiga SC).

"The President gives me this money as a form of appreciation because by the time tax per head was abolished, I had paid a total of 43 taxes, therefore I feel that I worked for this money in my younger days and it is now like a pension in my old age days" (Male beneficiary, 77 years-Bukomero SC).

4.2.3 Challenging the Rights Based Approach

Even though focusing on rights of grant beneficiaries provides a different and potentially more powerful approach to development, it also presents a set of challenges. Since majority of the rural elderly facing impoverishment also face little or relatively no access to the institutions that might enforce their rights, and the interface between different legal systems governing access to their entitlements makes the process of recognizing and claiming rights complex (Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi, 2004:1418). In a quarterly regional meeting I attended while in the field, where the main issue at hand was loss of beneficiary pay cards whose replacement took over six months, the absence of elderly beneficiaries themselves remained significant even though there were representatives for the elderly. Participation of elderly beneficiaries in such legal framework meetings was challenged by illiteracy of most elderly, health complications and physical immobility's that accompany old age.

Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi (2004:1418) address such shortcomings in executing rights by suggesting that, how we understand participation requires revision due to lack of acknowledgement by rights based approach advocates of the wide range of strategies, tactics and institutions outside of formal legal instruments through which people frame and make rights claims. I therefore find the RBA relevant to this study as it points towards various informal instruments through which participation and inclusion of indigenous older persons' knowledge can be represented and wellbeing improved.

4.3 Wellbeing of Beneficiaries

This study operationalizes wellbeing of the elderly as the ability of the elderly to realize their full set of rights by meeting their basic needs such as food, healthcare, education, housing, social obligations, and enhancing older people's capability such as farming skills. Inability to realize these rights is interpreted as ill-being. This section seeks to respond to research question two: *What are the underlying causes of expenditure patterns among elderly grant beneficiaries and; examine how the Senior Citizen Grants (SCG) programme impacts the elderlies' wellbeing?*

4.3.1 Beneficiaries' Wellbeing

Wellbeing has many elements and is open to a whole range of human experiences such as social, mental and spiritual, as well as material (Williams, 2003). I recall an elderly beneficiary who affirmed abandoning pig rearing that she had started with her

grant savings because the pigs uprooted the neighbor's food crops yet her Christian spiritual affiliation emphasized living in harmony with one's neighbor for one to live a good quality life. Therefore, identifying the mixed elements, both monetary and non-monetary, within the elderly's lived realities and understanding how they ultimately impact their wellbeing is useful. According to Williams (2003:3) there are three forms of poverty that this thesis focuses on in order to conceptualize compelling aspects of older persons' wellbeing namely; *Income poverty* is the minimum sum required to purchase commodities that meet basic needs mentioned in chapter 4.1.1. *Subsistence poverty* entails the needs that are seen as basic to human life. These include apart from income, access to health services, education, employment and participation in the social and political life of the community. *Capability poverty* refers to the elderly's ability to lead a life not simply lacking in impoverishment but which is valuable to the elderly and in their community. Based on these definitions, it was necessary to examine what extent of elderlies' basic needs purchases (income); health needs, community participation, grandchildren's education (subsistence); farming initiatives, voluntarism (capability) that was met by the grant. For instance, with the grant many elderly voluntarily living with their grandchildren were capable to pay their grandchildren's lunch school fee and scholastic requirements, which improved their wellbeing in terms of the pride of being able to educate their grandchildren even though their income for household needs was cut short. *Capabilities* also particularly refer to, "[...] individual's ability to function effectively and are dependent on physical and mental abilities, skills and aptitudes (Williams, 2003:20). Therefore, aspects such as grant income, farming skills, personal health weather conditions and local morals such as voluntarism were influential to wellbeing of the elderly.

4.3.2 Linking Elderlies' Wellbeing to Rights

Certain international agencies explain the foundation for a rights based approach in their work as follows: the central goal of development will be the promotion of human wellbeing because human rights define and defend human wellbeing, in that way, a rights based approach to the development process provides a practical framework for improving the wellbeing of elderly grant beneficiaries (Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi, 2004:1426). Consequently, enhancing local literacies in data collection and interpretation is important in order to monitor the wellbeing of rural elderly within

their region, manage governments with respect to their civic responsibilities to this population so as to proactively and imaginatively plan for the future of the indigenous people in their region (Prout, 2012). Therefore Prout, Cornwall and Nyamu-Musembi all articulate key aspects relevant to this study by announcing the relationship between rights based development, accurate indigenous people's representation and wellbeing.

Another conceptual argument that is contrary to this thesis' fieldwork findings, but assists in highlighting the study focus, regards how age size impacts wellbeing in relation to rights. South & Tolnay (1992:116) argue that for certain age categories such as elderly and children, larger age size benefits wellbeing since both children and the elderly vote and lobby for policies beneficial to their age group hence the more numerous the proponents for a given group, the greater the likelihood that those policies will be adopted. Therefore, the larger the group the greater their wellbeing (ibid). However, little is mentioned about the direct effects of cohort size on the wellbeing of the elderly who may not be able to press their demands for state action, and are also caught up in living arrangements with many children who equally have little means to demand their rights from the state. In this situation, elderly beneficiaries are transformed into benefactors who share their grant. These elderly beneficiaries and children are affected by and also share the disadvantages accompanying their lack of rights. I conceptualize this interaction when the lack of rights meets wellbeing within grant beneficiary households as *relational wellbeing*.

4.3.3 Relational Wellbeing among Beneficiaries

By considering the relational characteristics of old age, I explore how multiple hierarchies are responsible for the wellbeing of elderly grant beneficiaries. The welfare of persons outside the typical labor force ages, like some of the interviewed elderly in Kiboga, is determined more by governmental programs and resource transfers. These transfers take place in two main arenas namely the state and the family, for instance voluntarism by say family members (South & Tolnay, 1992:116). In certain elderly headed households, access to state grants has often proved to be the only thing keeping poor households on their feet. For example, with the grant-receiving grand mother replacing the absent wage-earning father or mother. Thus social grants have been holding together what might otherwise have been an explosive impoverishment situation (Ferguson, 2007). Ultimately, grants nominally targeted to

senior citizens aged 65 years end up supporting not only the elderly but rather large multigenerational households (ibid). As much as the grant meant for the elderly eventually included expenditures on other household members, the wellbeing of the elderly also positively relied on support and voluntarism from household members. Understanding how specific underlying causes such as household size and age structure affects expenditure patterns is equally important. Households comprising of only the elderly or both the elderly and dependent grandchildren are more vulnerable. However, not all grandchildren are completely dependents, as some elderly living alone face more difficulty without the assistance of younger children in domestic tasks such as collecting water, firewood (Williams, 2003). Some interviewed elderly living alone relied on using part of the grant to hire farm labour or younger children to perform such domestic tasks like collecting water and firewood.

The above has been the theoretical conceptualisation chapter. It has explained three major concepts regarding rights, wellbeing and elderly grant beneficiaries as one of three actors. Next, I will briefly introduce encounters at the interfaces as a framework, followed by two analyses chapters examining the research findings in relation to the above theoretical concepts.

4.4 Using Encounters at the Interface as an Analytical Framework

An interface framework of analysis is applicable to how this study examines the processes surrounding those elderly whose wellbeing is influenced by the Senior Citizen Grant (SCG) programme. The illustration in figure 4.1 below captures critical points of interaction encounters between previously discussed theoretical concepts i.e. rights, actors and wellbeing.

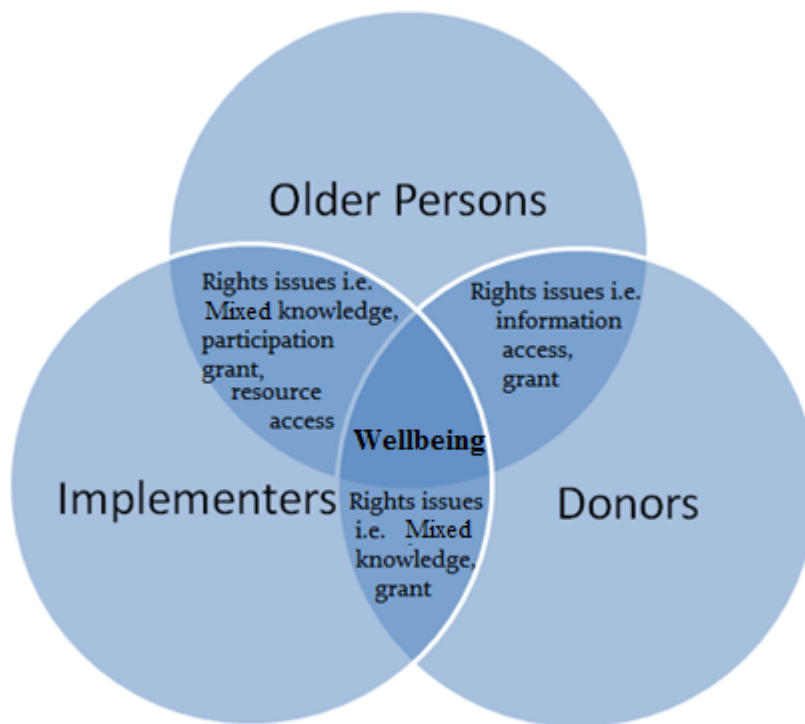


Figure 4.1: Interfaces of this study

The elderly/older persons, national SCG programme implementers and international donor organizations represent three main actors selected for this case study. Even though autonomous indigenous old age support forms are acknowledged throughout the analyses chapters, the significance of how and why interactions between the three actors impacts wellbeing of elderly grant beneficiaries is also emphasized in chapter six. In this case, the concept of rights that encompasses issues of social services; access to resources like grants, information; participation through inclusion of older persons; and consideration for mixed knowledges through a combination of indigenous knowledge and expatriate knowledge. The mentioned right issues are used to promote deeper understanding of elderly beneficiaries' wellbeing. Consequently, varying dimensions of wellbeing result from varying interactions between actors as

further discussed in the later chapters. For example, with many beneficiaries requesting for grant increment, it seemed necessary to analyze how the desired grant increment would impact right holders wellbeing if interactions with duty bearers that influence rights issues are restricted or remained unchanged (see figure 6.2).

Long & Jinlong (2009:66) warn against one-sided interactions amongst actors by stating that, if intervening actors such as donors or state implementers fail to take seriously the ways in which the elderly mobilize and use resources like grants through existing social networks and cultural commitments, they run the risk of being rejected by, or distanced from, the life experiences and priorities of the elderly since donors and state implementers represent only one set among a large array of actors such as beneficiary households, informal community groups like SACCOs who shape wellbeing outcomes of the elderly grant beneficiaries. Hence, analysis of varying wellbeing in relation to older persons' autonomous actions with say informal community groups, households, and analysis of elderly grant beneficiaries' varying wellbeing in relation to their interactions with SCG programme donors and implementers formulates model patterns that resonate with this study's findings.

CHAPTER 5: THE RURAL ELDERLY

The research findings of this study are analyzed according to the rights based approach and wellbeing. Practices of indigenous knowledge among the elderly are also acknowledged. The interactions between duty bearers (donors, SCG implementers) and right holders (older persons) are indicated as rights issues, the wellbeing of elderly grant beneficiaries is examined as an outcome of such interactions.

5.1 Encounters with the Rural Elderly

5.1.1 Rural Elderlies' Lived Realities and the Trade-offs involved

All interviewed elderly attested to the fact that, not so long ago, large harvests by rural households during the agricultural seasons ensured a food supply that would last well into the following agricultural season. In addition to subsistence agriculture, sales of cash crops especially coffee, cotton and subsistence food surpluses were a guaranteed income source.

Overall, most Ugandan farmers including rural elderly grant beneficiaries practice subsistence farming, most of which takes place on small family-owned plots and seldom use modern farm machinery such as tractors, fertilizers, or commercially available seed because these are too expensive (Otiso, 2006:119). Instead, elderly farmers work the land in a labor-intensive manner, using hoes and machetes, and use part of the previous season's harvest for seed (ibid). Unfortunately, for most interviewed rural elderly, small family farming usually done in the backyard was neither sufficient for daily sustenance nor reliable for farm income. Several elderly discussed causes accorded to crop failure that negatively impacted food supply and incomes: weather vagaries like storms, dry spells; soil exhaustion; less farming strength during old age; failed alternative coping attempts like forest farming, pig farming. One interviewed elderly widow, for example, who had resorted to crop farming on nearby forest land in order to counterbalance backyard soil exhaustion eventually faced even more crop failure because pine trees that were soon planted on the same forest land destroyed her crops. Unfortunately, this elderly was simply evacuated from the forest land but was not compensated for her crop loss. Another common practice among interviewed elderly beneficiaries was investing UGX 50,000, an equivalent of two months' accumulated grant savings, to purchase a piglet. Unfortunately, swine fever frustrated pig farming as a coping attempt due to pig

death. According to Kakwani & Subbarao's (2005:11), high household vulnerability to risks such as chronic food insecurity is an outcome of weather shocks like heavy droughts, health shocks like malaria bouts, severe fluctuations on trade items like cotton, coffee. This resonated with many elderly's testimonials that included storms sweeping off their kitchen roofs, destroyed crops due to dry spells, health complications like, malaria, ulcers, poor eyesight and overall body weakness that accompanies old age hence inability to cultivate regularly. Ultimately, this amounted to unaffordable health costs, in addition to a double blow on both food and cash crop farming, thus high impoverishment existed among the elderly and their households before the grant was introduced.

A majority of elderly indicated inability to afford basic needs due to lack of income to support their households before social assistance grants (Ibrahim & Namuddu, 2014:15). Dos Santos et al., (2009:602) reveal that the extra income generated by poor households from cash transfers results in an increase in demand for processed food products from sectors such as, 'meat industry', and 'other sectors connected with food production. This stood to be true, given the increased processed food purchases among elderly grant beneficiaries such as: salt, sugar, corn flour, meat, milk. These purchases proved that the rural elderly in the two Sub Counties (Bukomero and Kibiga) no longer relied on subsistence agriculture for their daily sustenance, but were rather dependent on cash transfers, wages and periodic remittances that provided the income needed to purchase basic needs such as processed food. Many elderly beneficiary respondents attested to this fact by emphasizing their enhanced affordability of basic processed food products upon receiving the grant. *"I buy food with my grant money to take better care of my old life instead of saving it and starve. In the past I saved and bought pigs but one died; now I have one pig. I only eat meat if my one pig gives birth. I also collected some money previously from my coffee plantation, unfortunately the coffee this year has failed to yield anything. Currently, me and my grandson's diet relies on a sack of maize flour, I also buy some sugar"* (Male beneficiary, 92 years-Kibiga SC).

It was evident that, even though the elderly desired to supplement their diet with certain products such as meat, it often remained unaffordable due to the high cost per meat kilogram. This meant that purchasing certain items was either irregular,

substituted or even traded off so as to distribute the limited income amongst the many personal and household needs. For instance, meat purchases were irregular and for beneficiaries that were heavily dependent on grant income, only one meat kilogram was purchased in over four months. Beneficiaries also substituted some processed food purchases for more important needs such as using part of the grant to pay for their grandchildren's school fees. With capability poverty in mind, grandchildren's school fees were highly valued and a priority for most elderly, hence higher grant expenditure on grandchildren's school fees was accepted as later discussed under relational wellbeing in this chapter sub-heading 5.3. There was also high income poverty due to limited income sources amidst various cash requirements such as processed food products and grandchildren's education. This meant that the elderly had to either forego or postpone some necessities or even resort to incurring debts.

Another critical trade-off was witnessed during an interview. When asked to mention his income sources, a 90-year-old male beneficiary in Kibiga replied, "*I sold the mango tree in my backyard for cash*". The tree was still planted in his home backyard but he was not allowed to harvest the mangoes. The new owners regularly harvested the mangoes and even transported some for sale in a neighboring town. This finding highlights the issue of foregoing daily subsistence and a potential income source in exchange for immediate cash payment so as to bridge the income gap. There are certain rights issues embedded in such a critical trade-off as discussed later on. Another indispensable explanation for such a critical tradeoff was the dominance of agricultural products with a lower price (inferior goods) such as coffee, cotton. Most interviewed elderly still had sizeable coffee plantations in their backyards that fetched minimal or close to no farm income at all, amidst income loss due to failure of dairy products with a higher price; for example frequent pig deaths. Therefore, even though the elderly acquired extra grant income, they experienced reduced production in some sectors, especially agriculture. It is no wonder that, livelihoods in the Rural South, and for many households continue to depend on smallholder agricultural production that is rooted in peasant agriculture (Rigg, 2006). During the research food crop and cash crop farms, in addition to animal rearing, surrounded most elderly homes. This manifests the new faces of poverty because regardless of owning land and being engaged in agriculture, most elderly lived in impoverished conditions. Moreover, off-

farm income was often hindered by the usual health complications that accompany old age hence some elderly could not regularly work as hired labour.

5.1.2 Beneficiaries' Grant Expenditures

Spelling out the general grant expenditures is important to understand what items affect the elderly's wellbeing; it also lays a foundation for analyzing the underlying factors responsible for such expenditures. The elderly beneficiaries' cash transfer usage illustrated in figure 5.1 below resonates with Piron's (2004:11) concern on rights reflected by the satisfaction of basic standards that include: essential food stuff; essential primary health care; basic shelter and housing; and the most basic form of education. Based on data collected from the field, similar expenditures were realized. Basic household needs included: salt, sugar, corn flour, soap, meat, milk, paraffin and matchbox. Ill health was a major setback among interviewed elderly persons. Some elderly could not accurately describe an illness they suffered from due to unaffordable medical bills, which meant they had no medical diagnosis. Healthcare expenditures included: medical drugs, transportation to health center, medical attendant fees that were charged in case of services that were excluded from the free medical care services from Kiboga government hospital and only paid for medical drugs. Hired labour included: paying for tasks such as fetching water by children, collecting grant by alternative recipient. Shelter expenditures included: fitting of windows/doors, cementing the murrum floor inside the house, pit latrine and kitchen reconstruction. Two elderly respondents had only recently replaced their old pit latrines that were full and in bad condition. They hired labour using a portion of the grant income to dig new pit latrines because the local authorities had constantly warned them to do so even though they had been reluctant due to lack of money. Savings and Investments included: rotating saving schemes.

Institutional arrangement documents accessed at Kiboga headquarters when in the field revealed that, the grant amount represents approximately 20% of monthly household consumption for the poorest of Uganda's population (Republic of Uganda, 2013). Figure 5.1 illustrates this since majority of the grant beneficiaries' expenditures exceeded the elderly's plan to spend. Therefore this implies that the income spent by the beneficiaries exceeds the income amount equivalent to their income source hence the high income poverty. A participatory exercise (tree diagram

in the methodology chapter) showed that income poverty and subsistence poverty were exacerbated by expenditures (branches) that exceeded both indigenous forms of support (trunk) and income sources (roots).

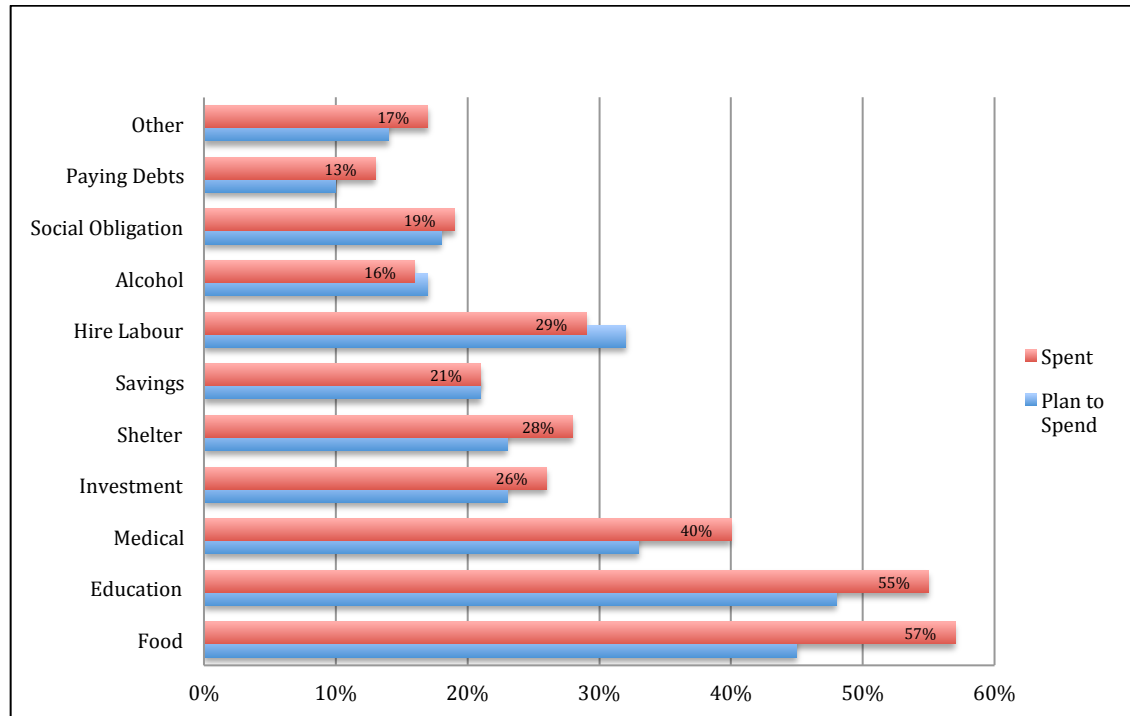


Figure 5.1: Cash Transfer Usage (Source: MGLSD, 2014).

5.1.3 Elderly’ Grant Beneficiaries Practicing Indigenous Knowledge

Elderly rural inhabitants continue to rely and practice indigenous knowledge in their day-to-day life. During fieldwork, the difficulty was that the implementation rationality of SCG and other local NGO’s, such as formal farmers associations, appeared to favor expatriate knowledge over indigenous knowledge. In this study expatriate knowledge particularly points at SCG implementers and donor organizations whereas indigenous knowledge points at elderly grant beneficiaries. Chambers (1997:2) explains that rural poverty is often unperceived because, outsiders such as international ‘experts’, academic researchers, headquarter and field staff of government organizations are trapped in ‘urban’ cores that generate their own sort of knowledge while rural ‘peripheries’ that communicate their own sort of knowledge are isolated and neglected. A question is then paused whether the persistent gap between indigenous and expatriate knowledge cannot be reconciled, and whether through reconciliation mixed knowledge can be constructed? Regardless of the significant differences between the views supporting each knowledge, this study’s

analysis section emphasizes the crucial role of mixed knowledge and mixed practices to bridge the persistent gaps separating indigenous knowledge utilization from expatriate knowledge.

Rip (2001:13) recognises that, there are gaps between the policy level and the practices in specific countries, there are also tensions between established modes of research and local knowledge production. He further affirms that the transformation of local experiences to findings with a cosmopolitan status is an essential ingredient of the scientific mode of knowledge production: and it is the basis of scientific claims of universal validity hence what originated as local knowledge can have some validity in other places and times, without having to assume its inherent universality (Rip, 2001:14). Rip's discussion resonates with this study as it demonstrates alternative forms of the utilization of knowledge in policy (and in practice) in which local practices can serve as a reference point, rather than locations of uptake where research results are transported (Rip, 2001:13). Piron (2004:4) asserts that international standards (expatriate knowledge) constitute only one normative 'level' or 'regime' in a rights-based framework. Therefore, customary and other informal systems and behaviors (indigenous knowledge) are also relevant (ibid). One of the challenges of a rights-based approach to social protection is the translation of informal standards into practice at the national and community level (ibid). Briggs (2013:107) adds that African farmers use their own knowledge system as the basis for successful agricultural invention. In line with the discussion above, the field conversation below with a widowed grant beneficiary is worthy of full quotation.

"I have always reared pigs and the income I raise through pig farming helped me educate my children after I divorced my husband. I came to Kiboga district in 1986 after the war with my one pig. Since then, I have reared and sold many pigs (a one-month piglet costs UGX 50,000). Pigs are like children; I give mine water to drink in the morning. Then I feed them smaller food amounts regularly rather than a single large food portion a day; pigs eat soil when they are hungry and that is not good because they instead catch diseases. I rear my pigs deep in the garden so that they don't get exposed to diseases. I also use human urine and soapy water to treat pigs. It works wonders, and is better than expensive counterfeit herbicides" (Female beneficiary, 67 years-Kibiga SC).

5.2 Older Persons' Wellbeing and Forms of Assistance

5.2.1 *The Joy of Pay Day (the Role of Formal Social Assistance)*

During the men's focus group at a pay point location in Bukomero Sub County, I observed and listened to the elderly expressing their joy after personally receiving a two months' grant payment worth UGX 50,000 (an equivalent to about 15 dollars at the time). One beneficiary then pointed out, "*some elderly already have many debts, and may use up all the grant at the nearby shop, then fail to reach home with any money*" (Male beneficiary, 86 years-Bukomero SC). Another beneficiary added, "*some beneficiaries even use a different pathway home so as to dodge the direction of the shop where they have accumulated debts*" (Male beneficiary, 70 years-Bukomero SC).

Throughout previous SAGE programme publications, debts among beneficiaries are no new occurrence. Therefore just as elderly beneficiaries eagerly awaited the grant, local businesses anticipated increased sales and possibly debt repayment. Hence direct and spillover effects of cash transfers have been experienced in Kiboga district. Coate 1989, cited in Gelan (2006:601) asserts that if there are markets for food in the community, donor funds distributed to the needy such as the elderly in form of grants enable the elderly purchase food in these markets. This draws attention to the indirect benefits that occur because of the multiplier effects of cash transfers; moreover, findings show that transfers to rural households generate the highest multipliers (Gelan, 2006:621). Ibrahim & Namuddu (2014:24) also strongly noted that, "beneficiaries who belong to saving groups also lend out money to non-beneficiaries at an interest of between 5-10%, the borrowed money was reported to be invested in non-beneficiary businesses." Friendships were cultivated and community trade boosted through increased purchases and two-way credit arrangements between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. Nevertheless, the relationship cultivated between the elderly and local shops depended on prompt debt payment in order to maintain the friendship whereas prolonged unpaid debts meant disagreements. Whereas some cash transfer impacts are positive, there are some beneficiaries that are reportedly not putting the money to good use such as excessive alcohol consumption (Mugumya, 2014). Several respondents confirmed occurrence of such conspicuous consumption to the extent of incurring alcohol debts from local shops. Still, not all debts incurred are irrational. For instance; an 89 year-old male beneficiary in Kibiga SC claimed

that, *“SCG helped me clear an accumulated debt with my doctor which I was very worried about. I rarely fall sick but when I get a fever it is intense, my doctor comes to my house with treatment whenever I get a bad fever”*.

Even though free care is provided at Kiboga hospital. Not all medical drugs are available, therefore patients have to buy the prescribed drugs. Other rational debts included basic needs like processed food and sending their grandchildren to school by promising to pay upon receiving grant payment. Debts assist older persons bridge their income gap just as other income sources like working as hired labour, remittances from family members supplementing the limited grant income. Worse still, recurring inflation undermines the suitability of grant income when compared to income needed to bridge the income-basic needs gap. Commodities purchased by the elderly continuously face increased prices without hopes of returning to a previous lower price. Besides, inbuilt SCG programme design adjustments of grant amount are too minimal to prevent the grant value from being eroded by inflation. *“For example; monthly beneficiary cash transfers amounts have reached UGX 25,000 from UGX 22,000 in 2011 (which is inbuilt in SAGE design to cater for inflation)”* (Mugumya, 2014:66).

Overall, when respondents were asked to compare their wellbeing according to three time frame experiences namely: past experiences before receiving the grant; present experiences while receiving the grant; and future projections with or without the grant. In response, majority of elderly beneficiaries agreed that daily survival before the grant was extremely difficulty and uncertain. Upon receiving the grant, some hope was revitalized and survival secured since the elderly grant beneficiaries could now afford certain basic needs in addition to using guaranteed grant income as security to access credit. Regarding future projections, varying experiences determined the response, i.e. beneficiaries that consumed all the grant income versus beneficiaries who saved and invested a portion of the grant. For those elderly that invested the grant some faced heavy losses such as pig deaths while a few successfully used the grant to boost alternative income sources despite constantly faced obstacles. Inability to save and heavy investment losses meant dependency, therefore life without the grant was unimaginable. However, the elderly beneficiaries who saved invested hence boosted income sources were optimistic about life without the grant.

5.2.2 Indigenous Forms of Support (The Role of Informal Social Assistance)

Informal social protection is described as “either actions to minimize risks or transfers between individuals or households to cope during difficult times” (DFID 2006:6 cited in Oduro, 2010:4). Several informal support mechanisms also referred to as indigenous support in this study, played a supplementary role to formal social assistance for some elderly grant beneficiaries. It is therefore important for this study to discuss indigenous forms of support utilized by the elderly in their lived realities to understand the rupture of some and maintenance of others. Based on the research findings, two main forms of indigenous support are discussed namely: Family support and Community moral obligation. Apt (2002:41) asserts, “the most striking feature of indigenous support in Asia, Latin America and Africa is reciprocal care and assistance among the generations, with older people not only on the receiving end but also fulfilling an active, giving role.” Hebo (2013:9) uses the phrase, “giving is saving” to portray the reciprocity embedded in informal social protection systems. The implication is that, the interconnection between voluntarism and reciprocity guides this study’s concerns regarding vulnerability of elderly grant beneficiaries.

In most of Sub-Saharan Africa’s pre-colonial era and post-colonial times, it is commonly believed that the family serves as a provider of social protection in the event that an individual’s normal livelihood activities are interrupted by sickness, disability, or old age (Kpessa, 2010:41,42). Oduro (2010:15) also describes the family as an important institution for informal social protection; he illustrates receiving assistance from the extended family like remittances to aged persons when ill as a protective measure. The family, as a source of assistance depends on “*the capacity of family members to help*” (Oduro, 2010:16). Another decisive factor is the willingness to provide assistance, which depends on the strength of the links between the older person requesting assistance and the potential benefactor (ibid). The willingness to provide assistance can also decline when there is migration. Failure to stay in touch weakens family ties causing a lessened sense of obligation to assist an elderly family member (ibid). The above statements by Oduro were accurate for some elderly beneficiaries in this study, who had relatives like children working in nearby towns such as Kampala (the capital city of Uganda). I recall an elderly beneficiary couple whose children worked in Kisekka market (a mechanical repair and merchandise market located in the suburbs of Kampala city). The elderly couple spoke of how their

children in the city supported them with money, which they used to buy basic household needs. Because of this assistance, the couple combined their grant income in order to send their one orphaned granddaughter to secondary school. Unfortunately, in the recent past business had declined for their children hence less assistance. The couple then pointed me towards an incomplete brick house construction that was being built for them by their children in the city but had come to a standstill due to declined business in the city. It was clear that this elderly beneficiary couple had close family ties with their children who had migrated to the city and therefore enjoyed a higher wellbeing as long as business in the city was good.

In contrast to this elderly couple's experience, other elderly grant beneficiaries faced a rupture in family support due to death of their adult children or abandonment by their migrant adult children, most of whom left behind grandchildren in the care of their elderly parents. The HIV/AIDS epidemic in Sub-Saharan African Africa magnifies the problems that elders face as a result of the changes in family composition (Williams, 2003:1). "[...] Elderly women are increasingly becoming caregivers to their sick and dying children (Rwezaura 1989) and surrogate parents to their orphaned or abandoned grandchildren (Hunter 1990, Dunn 1992)" (ibid). Oduro (2010:17) refers to, children becoming one's form of insurance in old age. For the elderly acting as surrogate parents to their grandchildren, one way in which the institution of the family provided assistance was through grandchildren providing free labour needed to fetch water and working on the family farm. Elderly who lacked free assistance from grandchildren often incurred costs, like using a portion of the grant to hire labour for fetching water from far away distances due to lack of energy to perform such tasks on their own. Throughout the focus group discussions, both men and women listed their grandchildren as being part of their assets and support system to a certain extent. A 76-year-old female beneficiary during the women focus group in Bukomero SC simply said, "*my grandchildren are my strength.*"

Beyond the family, the community level exists as a second pillar for social protection in sub-Saharan African countries Kpessa (2010:44). Therefore, community moral obligation stood out as another form of indigenous support. The moral economy is defined as "non-economic norms and obligations e.g., reciprocity" (Arnold, 2001 cited in Kpessa, 2010:56). Some elderly grant beneficiaries engaged in new and

maintained old relationships that transcended the boundaries of the extended family for support. These extended boundaries encompass: rotational savings schemes, syndicate arrangements practicing activities like farming, burial funds and religious groups like local churches. A widowed elderly beneficiary whose six children had died and left eight grandchildren in her care expressed her relief as a result of assistance from a local church.

“Two of my eight grandchildren are being taken care of by a local Christian church group who provide them with food and school fees. When a child is wise in school and well behaved or when you go to a church and the church members they feel touched to assist. This support has reduced my present burden from caring for eight to caring for six grandchildren” (Female beneficiary, 73 years-Kibiga SC).

Rotational saving schemes, which the elderly also referred to as a collective saving box, were more popular among beneficiaries in Bukomero Sub County than in Kibiga Sub County. This was due to more self-help groups voluntarily organized amongst the elderly grant beneficiaries in Bukomero Sub County. The rotational savings scheme is an informal mutual-help arrangement in which members pay specified portion of their grant periodically into a common pool called the saving box (Bouman, 1995 cited in Kpessa, 2010:44). The funds are later distributed back to members who contributed following predetermined criteria such as illness, unemployment, or scheduled payments (ibid). As a mechanism to ensure compliance with regulations of the rotational savings scheme, each contributor was expected to provide guarantors, who were made to meet the obligations of the defaulting member (Kpessa, 2010:45). Another compliance mechanism included the elderly pledging their assets like land, maize harvest in case of default payment incidences. This was because in rural areas community relations are closely knit (Kpessa, 2010:45).

Within non-monetary associations rendering other beneficial assistance services, the elderly as actors were not passive victims but actively participated and made viable contributions. For example, collective labour (syndicate) arrangements, where a group of individuals including the elderly combine their labour to promote a common interest such as farming, or voluntary help to the needy. A male beneficiary aged 83 years in Kibiga SC realized the benefits of syndicate arrangements. This particular male beneficiary was crippled, landless and a migrant, he expressed the several

constraints he faced including immobility, lack of any family support on top of loneliness. At first, a female beneficiary aged 85 years also living in Kibiga, sympathised with the male beneficiary and allowed him to live in her kitchen. When a storm destroyed the kitchen, the female beneficiary voluntarily offered the male beneficiary a small piece of her land, where he was to live as a squatter. Other community members including physically capable older people voluntarily mobilised themselves, and built a simple shelter for him on the piece of land he was offered. This entire arrangement shows how both the elderly and other community members voluntarily combine their labour and resources to actively provide support.

5.2.2.1 Rupture of Indigenous Support

Traditional family support is deteriorating and also open to abuse. Problems are posed to the traditional social protection arrangement, due to migration, breakdown of extended family structures and general changes in the economic structure of African societies (Apt, 2002 cited in Kpessa, 2010:47). Majority of interviewed elderly grant beneficiaries lived in isolation, owing to the outward migration of the able bodied young family members and death of their children. Surrogate parenthood burdens weigh down the elderly who repeatedly spend their limited grant income to support both themselves and cater for grandchildren left behind by migrated and deceased family members. Abuse arises from the fact that, many household family responsibilities of older women particularly in Africa are not rewarded, even when these responsibilities release other family members to do remunerated work outside the house (Apt, 1996; 1991 cited in Apt, 2002:42).

At the community level, rotational saving arrangements were also challenged by migration and mobility. The rotational saving system is only conducive in places where people are permanently settled because traditional societies lack modern market securities (Kpessa, 2010:47) Additionally, ill health that accompanies old age resulted into exclusion of non-performing members. Exclusion occurred in indigenous support forms built upon *balanced reciprocity*, i.e. syndicate farming. Worse still, breakdown of community resource systems such as traditional healers and traditional birth attendants who are mainly older persons has led to inactive ageing since most of the elderly skilled in providing these services no longer practice them frequently (Republic of Uganda, 2012:5). This is also accompanied by witchcraft accusations (Bilson et al., 2013:11). Interviewed elderly in this study proved to be local geniuses

at local herbs but with such baseless accusations and breakdown of community systems, the result is a large percentage of the elderly categorized as, *the economically active poor*. “These are older persons who are economically active, but they are not gainfully employed. Most of the work they do is either voluntary or unpaid family work” (Republic of Uganda, 2012:5).

Consequently, informal mechanisms can sometimes offer protection at certain costs that may limit the ability of beneficiaries to claim a greater set of rights hence ill being (Piron, 2004:19). This leads me to questioning whether voluntarism embedded within indigenous support forms either reduce individual vulnerability or increase structural vulnerability. References by Hebo (2013:15) about balanced reciprocity and generalized reciprocity have afforded a deeper response to the discussion concerning vulnerability. *Generalized reciprocity* refers to assistance, “in which obligation to return is diffuse and unspecified both as to the time within which the return is made and as to the amount that is returned” (Pocock 1998 cited in *ibid*). *Balanced reciprocity*, on the other hand, ranges from a perfect balance, “*simultaneous exchange of the same type of goods to the same amount*” to a loose balance, “*which stipulates returns of commensurate worth within a finite and narrow time*” (Sahlins 1968:47-8 cited in *ibid*). My data analysis revealed that, to a larger extent, those indigenous forms of support such as rotational savings scheme or syndicate farming where assistance operated in the context of balanced reciprocity often decreased elderly’s individual vulnerability, because all participants contributed and reciprocated equally in terms of savings and labour. For example, a group of villagers took turns during syndicate farming to provide free farm labour to dig each and every group members’ farm together.

However, indigenous forms of support such as informal grant-sharing within the household, caring for grandchildren where assistance operated in the context generalized reciprocity often increased elderly’s individual vulnerability, A conclusion is therefore drawn that, there is an increased structural vulnerability associated to generalized reciprocity support systems. For instance, elderly grant beneficiaries living alone or with several children in their care spent a portion of the limited grant income on hiring labour or grandchildren’s education rather than on fulfilling their own basic needs.

5.2.2.2 Linking Informal Indigenous Support with Formal Grant Support

In spite of rupture of certain indigenous forms of support, the reality on ground among older people in many African societies like Kiboga district, identify family networks, religious societies, traditional councils, saving groups and burial societies among the institutions forming part of their support network (Kaseke, 1999 cited in Apt, 2002:44). Informal social protection practices, thus, do not seem to be secondary institutions but primary lines of protection for the majority of older people in developing countries like Uganda (Hebo, 2013:14). Formal and informal social protection mechanisms interact with each other (Hebo, 2013:17). Better yet, formal social protection that is predictable and reliable such as monthly cash transfers to the elderly can complement informal social protection practices; beneficiaries even confirmed increased access to financial support from different sources that know they have an assured source of income (Philomena, 2013:63; Ibrahim & Namuddu, 2014:24). For example, some elderly beneficiaries saved a portion of the grant, which was used to participate in collective saving box arrangements hence there is a linkage between formal and informal support systems. This linkage consequently improves the elderly's wellbeing due to more income sources. Such linkages also lead to creation of new savings and credit associations, strengthen existing ones, thereby enhancing existing social protection mechanisms (Mugumya, 2014). Respondents who had mixed forms of support by linking their grant to other informal support systems were seen to be better off than beneficiaries who were entirely dependent on grant income.

Symbols of modernity were also present among some elderly who saved and invested their grant income. During the women focus group in Bukomero SC, a female beneficiary aged 67 years mentioned that she had used her accumulated grant savings and bought a solar panel to assist her with light at night. This single modern light equipment in turn helped her and her daughter-in-law work even at night on their small cocoa packaging business. Furthermore, informal social protection mechanisms are not always inclusive since the very poor and very old can be excluded if access to assistance requires contributions in cash or in kind (Philomena, 2013:64). This was evident among physically incapacitated elderly, who could not attend local gatherings, or personally collect their own grant payment. They often entrusted alternative recipients who helped deliver the grant income and communicate relevant SCG

programme updates. Without such linkages the most vulnerable elderly could be left out. Also deeper impacts of formal social assistance like empowerment of beneficiaries towards self-sustenance could be undermined.

5.3 Relational Wellbeing (when the absence of rights meets wellbeing)

A study by Kakwani & Subbarao (2005:7) reveals that some elderly live in mixed households while other elderly live with children only. Also the proportion of households headed by the elderly is relatively large in some African countries (ibid). Ten out of fifteen African countries exhibited a higher incidence of poverty than the average in households where the elderly live with children (usually grandchildren) (Kakwani & Subbarao, 2005:9). The above findings relating living arrangements of the elderly to the incidence of poverty prompted this thesis to, critically analyze three questions by relating the difference in wellbeing among elderly grant beneficiaries to their living arrangements. Is wellbeing,

- a) higher in single headed households where elderly grant beneficiaries live alone?
- b) higher in elderly headed households where elderly grant beneficiaries mainly live with children?
- c) higher in mixed households where elderly grant beneficiaries live with both children and adults?

When assessing the impact of providing the grant, study findings revealed that though the grant is given to the elderly, it is shared amongst other household members. Dominant forms of such household resource-sharing with elderly grant beneficiaries included: surrogate grandparents paying school fees for grandchildren and sharing food bought using cash transfers. Therefore, wellbeing of elderly grant beneficiaries is subject to the three living arrangements stated above. Figure 2.3 in the context chapter also highlights the relational characteristic of elderly grant beneficiaries' wellbeing, by classifying resource endowments based on characteristics, such as household members and income sources.

In the same way, wellbeing as discussed in the theory chapter is relational to two aspects described as cohort size aspects namely: household size and age of household members. This chapter will now discuss relational wellbeing by spelling out how the

three living arrangements stated in the bullet points a, b, and c above encompass the three aspects namely: age of household members, household size, and income sources (see figure 2.3) all interconnect and in turn influence the wellbeing of elderly grant beneficiaries.

According to Kakwani & Subbarao's (2005:11), high household vulnerability to risks is also related to rights issues such as little access to markets and burdensome cultural practices subjected on women. As underlined in the theoretical and context chapters, older persons especially elderly women are increasingly becoming caregivers to their grandchildren since caregiving is traditionally a woman's task. Statistics in also state more elderly widows 63.2% versus elderly widowers 15.3% (Republic of Uganda, 2012). The outcome of elderly women subjected to caring for many grandchildren (living arrangement b), is excessive sharing of limited grant income, whereas elderly widows living alone (living arrangement a), fail to perform certain tasks due to old age weakness and often lack free household assistance in performing tasks like fetching water. Therefore, high structural vulnerability is largely a female phenomenon, due to the significant number female grant beneficiaries either living alone or living mainly with children.

Even though grandchildren in the care of their grandparents performed assistance including free household tasks like fetching water, several burdens accompanied (living arrangement b) hence leading to negative impacts on the wellbeing of elderly grant beneficiaries' living mainly with children. This is because elderly beneficiaries who had become caregivers for their grandchildren also became principal breadwinners for the family (Kakwani & Subbarao, 2005:11), which meant sharing the limited grant amount amongst household members. Earlier in the theoretical chapter, subsistence poverty was described as the basic needs to human life which include apart from income, access to health services, education, employment and participation in the social and political life of the community. Because of excessive grant sharing, the elderly with many grandchildren in their care were unable to meet various personal and household basic needs thus they experienced more subsistence poverty. Therefore even though the elderly suffer from subsistence poverty due to limited grant income, the living arrangements elderly grant beneficiaries are set up in significantly worsen their ill-being, due to the high structural vulnerability coupled

with high subsistence poverty.

An interesting finding was that elderly grant beneficiaries living alone were not better off than elderly grant beneficiaries living mainly with children. A comparison between the two living arrangements revealed that, within both living arrangements, wellbeing benefits were often traded off for another discomfort. For example; as much as grandchildren performed household tasks for free, they still consumed their grandparents grant income through school fees and food costs. On the other hand, even though older persons living alone may not incur extra caring costs they often have to hire labour tasks that would have been freely performed by a grandchild. Elderly beneficiaries living alone were only better off if those elderly living mainly with children had very many grandchildren under their care. In this case, limited grant income and high caring costs due to many dependent children were too extreme to be offset by free tasks performed by grandchildren. When it came to mixed households (living arrangement c) where elderly grant beneficiaries' live with both children and adults, wellbeing was better off. Living with adult's added value to the life of elderly, which reduced capability poverty. For example adult household members acted as alternative recipients who collected the grant on behalf of incapacitated. Adult household members also assisted with farming, medical follow-ups for the elderly, supplemented household income hence decreased subsistence poverty together with decreased income poverty that resulted into increased elderly wellbeing.

5.3.1 Beneficiary Transforms into a Benefactor

Throughout this research, incidences of elderly grant beneficiaries transformed into benefactors reoccurred. The cycle is that targeted elderly beneficiaries obtain grant income, followed by the elderly using the grant to support their household members hence transforming into benefactors for household members (new beneficiaries) especially foster grandchildren. According to the MGLSD situation analysis report (2009), older persons care for 63% of the orphans and vulnerable children (Republic of Uganda, 2012). A deeper analysis into wellbeing of the elderly beneficiaries who transform into benefactors is important to this study. Special attention is placed on whether voluntarism associated with caring for grandchildren either reduces elderly's individual vulnerability or increases structural vulnerability.

Kpessa (2010:42,43) states that, based on traditional values and the principles of intergenerational reciprocity, every working generation supports the younger one and the cost incurred in raising and educating children is regarded both as an investment against the uncertainties of old age; and a strategy to increase the productive capacity of the younger generation. Under intergenerational reciprocity, there are no formal retirement ages and the elderly, while they are cared for, continue to contribute to the general wellbeing of the family by helping to raise, educate, and pass on respected traditional values to the younger generations (Kpessa, 2010:42). This active nature of the elderly is backed up by the UBOS National Household survey report 2009/10 showing 84% of older persons (aged 60+) are economically active (Republic of Uganda, 2012). During the focus groups, my discussion was cut short with a few elderly beneficiaries that had appointments to work as hired labour on local farms in order to provide for their households. Even in the absence of other income sources, elderly grant beneficiaries voluntarily transform themselves into benefactors by taking on roles like paying school fees for grandchildren, buying basic household items because this is valuable to the elderly and their community. Therefore, with capability poverty in mind, continued participation by the elderly in reciprocal family relationships has been shown to be crucial to the self-esteem and confidence of the elderly (Stroller, 1985 cited in Kpessa, 2010:43).

Just like the elderly prioritized educating their grandchildren, the importance of education as a basic human capability is widely recognized by many governments in developing countries who have attached increasing importance to improving schooling outcomes as part of their development strategies (Coady, 2002 cited in (Kakwani et al., 2006:557). In Uganda, the Universal Primary Education policy was implemented in 1997 and required the government to pay the tuition fees for four children per family (Grogan, 2009:224). The policy was amended in 2003 to benefit all children in a family but households were still responsible for school meals, exercise books and transportation (ibid). Following such amendments, many elderly beneficiaries can afford the minimal school fees to support their grandchildren's education. Grandparents also valued the education of their grandchildren as an investment, because a household's future consumption level depends on the grandchildren's future earnings, which are in turn a function of their educational achievement (Glick and Sahn, 1998 cited in Kakwani et al., 2006: 564). All elderly

respondents apart from one, were illiterate. They expressed the difficulties they face because of illiteracy, and valued the benefits associated with having an educated grandchild as one of the reasons why grandchildren's school fees was a priority and one of the highest grant expenditures.

For those elderly who managed to send their grandchildren to school using grant income, some tradeoffs are still made. For instance, the households faced with the decision of how much to invest in the education of their grandchildren, had to take into account the household's unearned income due to grandchildren's school attendance (Kakwani et al., 2006:564). Elderly beneficiaries with school-going grandchildren confirmed that their grandchildren had limited time to help out on the farm and home tasks, all of which led to high unearned income within the household. Ansell (2002:92) points out that lack of formal sector employment opportunities in rural areas reduces the value of education certificates for those grandchildren able to obtain higher education (ibid). Besides, academic training does not offer the skills and time needed for rural self-employment in sectors such as agriculture, woodwork, metalwork (ibid). Worse still, because rural schools remain less well resourced, some children attending school in rural communities are still functionally illiterate when they leave school due to the poor quality of teaching (Ansell, 2002; Handa & Davis, 2006:557).

Concerning the negative side of investing in grandchildren's education, the point is not to disregard the importance of formal education. But to critically examine how this form of voluntarism is built on generalized reciprocity whereby grandchildren's obligation to return is unspecified since return is unknown in value and assumed to be a long term. Most elderly viewed returns with hopes of grandchildren growing up and attaining formal employment. The danger of generalized reciprocity in this case is that, relational wellbeing is open to abuse since new beneficiaries (grandchildren) might end up consuming more than they transfer to benefactors (elderly) hence increased individual vulnerability of the elderly due to the high structural vulnerability.

However, some elderly headed households that were unable to meet their basic needs, were not able to pool their own (few) resources to invest in their grandchildren's education, or to borrow sufficient money for such a long-term investment even though they wanted to do so (Kakwani et al., 2006:565). Some elderly headed households were credit-constrained and could not afford to send the children to school because of the high income and subsistence poverty they faced (ibid). At times the bi-monthly income provided by the grant was unable to overcome the high credit constraints. Some grandchildren who were previously enrolled in primary school (UGX 35,000 fee), even had to dropout especially as they approached higher education levels like secondary school (UGX 80,000 fee) where the costs were slightly higher. For those elderly who valued education, inability to make a valuable contribution in supporting their grandchildren's education meant increased capability poverty. This scenario was common amongst elderly grant beneficiaries living with many children under their care.

I disagree, however, with the argument put forward by South & Tolnay regarding cohort size. They argue that for certain age categories such as elderly and children, larger age size benefits wellbeing since both children and the elderly vote and lobby for policies beneficial to their age group, and the greater the likelihood that those policies will be adopted (South & Tolnay, 1992:116). Based on the high impoverishment and school dropout rates faced by elderly living with many children, the situation was worse off for elderly grant beneficiaries living with many children under their care (large age size), whereas the situation was better off for elderly grant beneficiaries living with few children under their care (small age size). For example the elderly beneficiary couple with only one grandchild was able to combine their grant and support their granddaughter's secondary level education despite the higher school fees. Oduro (2010:17) states that the death of adults through HIV and AIDS has created a generation gap that affects the family and severely eroded the role of the family as a provider of insurance through one's children. He adds that, the effect of such an idiosyncratic negative event on one household also has trickle down negative effects on the elderly (ibid, 2010:18). This study's findings correspond with Oduro's statement above.

The experience of one elderly beneficiary quoted below further illustrates ill-being associated with a large age size due to absence of rights. *“My three adult children died of HIV/AIDS. They used to buy me home food items and pay for my medical bills but now no one provides for me. Instead, my deceased adult children left me eight young grandchildren to provide for. Even though two of my eight grandchildren are being taken care of by a local Christian church group who provide them with food and school fees, I still have to provide for the remaining six grandchildren. I work as hired labour on local firms and also use a portion of my grant income to pay school fees for three grandchildren. The remaining three do not go to school. I am happy when I get hired to work on people’s farms, at times I work on the farm with my three grandchildren who do not go to school”* (Female beneficiary, 73 years-Kibiga SC).



Figures 5.2: Field Images

Starting from the *top-left*, the first image shows a female grant beneficiary who sells her packed cocoa and snacks to other beneficiaries at a pay point location in Bukomero Sub County. This image was taken on the grant payday while other beneficiaries were lining up to receive their grant. The second image at the *top-right* is an elderly with one of her four expectant pigs. She has successfully used the grant to boost her piggery farming together with her indigenous practices in pig rearing such as using human urine and ash mixture to cure swine fever. In the *middle-left*, is a shelter built by community volunteers for an elderly disabled male grant beneficiary living alone. The land on which this elderly male beneficiary lives as a squatter, was voluntarily offered by another elderly female beneficiary. The image in the *middle-right*, highlights constraints such as water access for older persons, this particular elderly mostly relied on rain water harvesting in the pot besides her house pictured above, especially when she could not afford to hire labour for fetching water from the distant borehole. On the *bottom-left* is the elderly beneficiary couple whose photograph experience in relation to informed consent is explained in the methodology chapter 3.4.1. The final image on the *bottom-right* shows a 92-year-old female beneficiary pictured with her young grandchild she lives with. An entrusted community member assists as her alternative recipient and collects the grant on her behalf. This particular image reflects the high structural vulnerability and individual vulnerability faced by some elderly grant beneficiaries.

CHAPTER 6: INTERFACES BETWEEN THE ACTORS

6.1. Interactions Between Actors

Rights such as information, social assistance (grant), and participation condition the wellbeing of the elderly. In the same way, the interactions and roles played by the different actors influences what rights are either realized or neglected. As a result, wellbeing of the elderly is seen as an outcome of the interactions between the actors namely implementers, donors and older persons. Throughout this chapter, the main focus is placed on the elderly.

6.1.1 Presence of Rights Meets Wellbeing (Ideal Situation according to Policy Objectives)

As discussed earlier, older persons, national SCG programme implementers and international donor organizations represent three main actors relevant for this discussion. According to Piron, (2004:11), “human rights are ‘inter-related’ and ‘inter-dependent’”. With reference to the three actors named in my study, Piron’s statement means that focusing on senior citizens vulnerabilities and grant provision alone, while neglecting other rights like participation and information access that the elderly lack negatively impact on the elderly’s wellbeing. Rather, wellbeing is only maximized when actors work towards assisting the elderly to realize their full set of rights. Moreover, if older peoples’ rights are promoted and protected, the elderly would not have to be in a position where they are completely dependent on the grant. In such cases, powerful actors like donors effectively provide and SCG implementers effectively distribute resources (cash transfer) while also respecting older persons’ rights. Equal participation of all actors exists hence indigenous knowledge is valued in the same way as expatriate knowledge; and first priority is given to such mixed knowledge during SCG policy implementation of government policies.

According to Cornwall (2008:272) equal participation by all actors is defined as *interactive participation* where participation of people in joint analysis and development of action plans is seen as a right, not just the means to achieve project goals. The result of such ideal even-handed interactions amongst actors, the wellbeing of elderly grant beneficiaries is substantial in Figure 6.1. The explanation for the illustration below indicates that when both donors and implementers interact more with older persons and work towards realizing more rights of older people, hence wellbeing is substantial. Therefore larger intersections exist between older persons,

implementers and donors. This reflects provision of social assistance to the elderly and presence of other inter-related rights needed to support the elderly’s wellbeing hence more overall rights recognition. In addition to duty bearers recognizing older peoples’ rights, this also reflects more participation by the elderly in the SCG programme and other policies that affect the elderly. Therefore a *rights-based approach to public policy* is displayed. However, this was not the situation on ground because, “older people are abused socially, physically, sexually, economically and psychologically” (Bilson et al., 2013:11). Such abuses include rape, dispossession of property, theft and burglary (ibid). Some respondents’ farming initiatives had been destroyed due to theft of their livestock like pigs, chickens, and villagers harvesting from the elderlys’ backyards without permission.

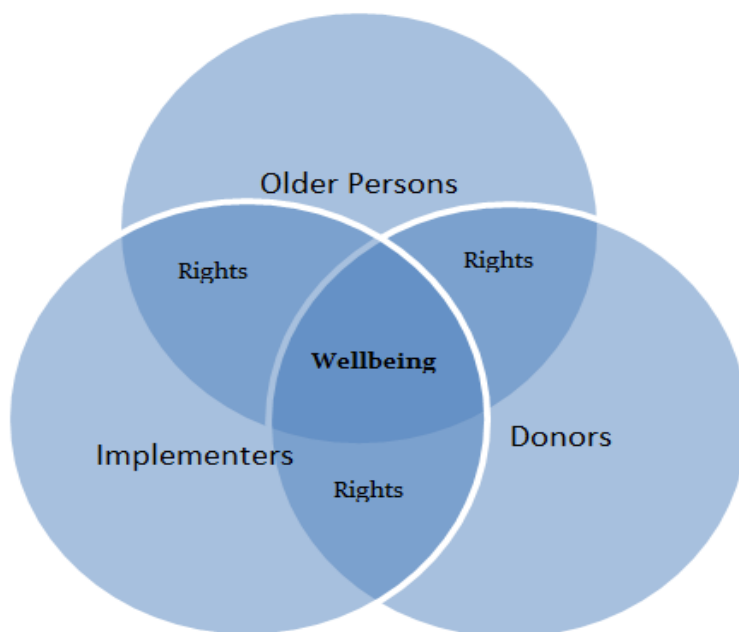


Figure 6.1: Older persons’ wellbeing is maximized

6.1.2 Absence of Rights Meets Wellbeing (Actual Situation in Policy Implementation)

In reality, older persons’ basic human rights, such as the right to work and, the right to freedom from discrimination are violated. During the focus group discussion, it was mentioned that some community members purposely refrain from hiring elderly laborers due to a preconceived fear that an old person could die on the farm. Such

discrimination stripped some elderly from alternative income sources yet the limited grant income was barely enough for daily sustenance. Some elderly were almost starving as they impatiently waited for the next grant payday. In addition to abuse, many elderly grant beneficiaries suffered the double effects of living with many children who also lack rights. As a result, the coping strategies transformed elderly beneficiaries into benefactors yet all this often resulted into increased vulnerability hence ill-being. Other initiatives such as using indigenous knowledge in pig farming were only known to one elderly. Yet other elderlies lacked access to this information and could barely afford modern pig medication. Therefore, regardless of donors and SCG implementers focus on the grant, elderly beneficiaries' wellbeing remained limited due to the large number of absent rights. As a result of such actual one-sided interactions amongst actors, wellbeing of elderly grant beneficiaries is limited in Figure 6.2 below. The explanation for the illustration below indicates that both donors and implementers interact less with older persons and solely focus on providing the grant. Therefore, smaller intersections exist between older persons, implementers and donors. This reflects provision of social assistance grants to the elderly but absence of other inter-related rights needed to support the elderlies' wellbeing hence lesser overall recognition of rights. In addition to duty bearers recognizing older peoples rights, this also reflects less participation by the elderly in the SCG programme and other policies that affect the elderly. Therefore a *rights-based approach to development cooperation* is displayed.

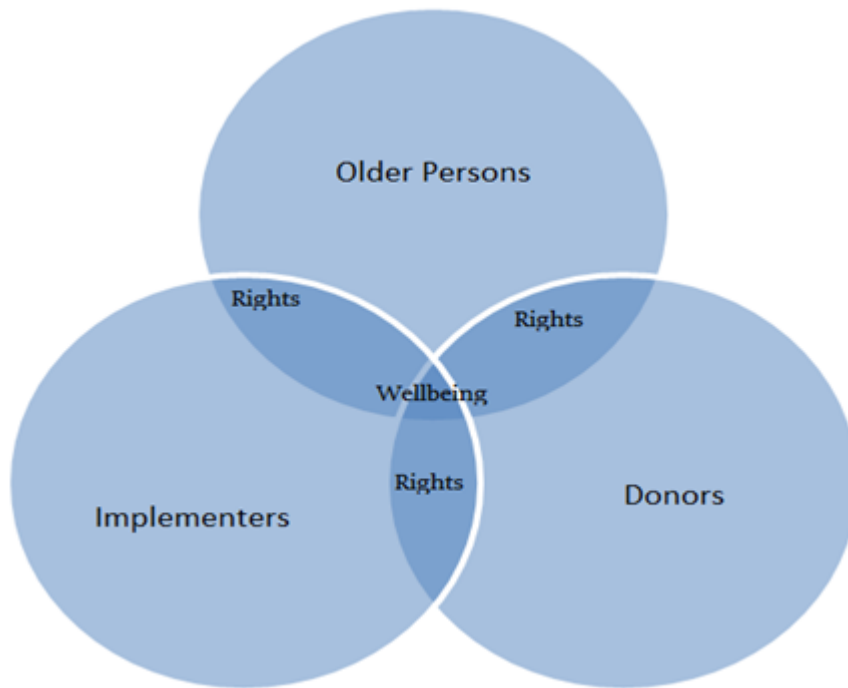


Figure 6.2: Older persons’ wellbeing is minimized

6.1.2.1 An Increased Grant Amount In the Absence of Rights

During the interviews and focus groups, a few respondents suggested improved healthcare, for example setting up a public hospital that particularly catered for elderly patients instead of increasing the grant amount. This was because many elderly spent almost 40% of their grant income on medical care. Other respondents suggested that assistance in investment initiatives was much needed. Nevertheless, the majority of elderly grant beneficiaries suggested that an increase in the grant amount would be the ideal solution to their persistent impoverishment. Consequently, increasing the grant amount amidst disregard of other rights issues such as access to information, health, shelter and education would still reflect one-sided interactions amongst actors. Hence, the increase in wellbeing would be insignificant despite high expectations that increasing the grant amount would increase wellbeing. A conclusion is then drawn that if the rights mentioned above are not in place, an increased grant income or a national roll-out phase of the SCG programme may not lead to future poverty reduction amongst Uganda’s senior citizens.

6.1.3 Ill-being without the Grant (Before SCG Programme/Termination of SCG Programme)

When reflecting on life before implementation of the SCG programme, most elderly grant beneficiaries emphasized that their lives were highly impoverished before the grant, so much so that even a single meal each day was not guaranteed. Similarly,

most beneficiaries could not imagine their lives outside receiving the grant. Losing the grant meant death for some elderly who had neither informal support nor alternative income sources. Therefore, past experiences and future predictions for the majority of elderly beneficiaries signified that, in case absence of formal social assistance is confronted with the presently ruptured indigenous forms of support, in addition to non-existent interactions amongst actors, the outcome would be non-existent rights hence ‘ill-being’ of older persons as illustrated in Figure 6.3 below. According to this study’s analytical approach, it is the realization of older peoples’ rights that dictates the elderlies’ wellbeing or ill-being, therefore policy focus ought to be directed towards realization of older peoples’ rights in order to improve their wellbeing.

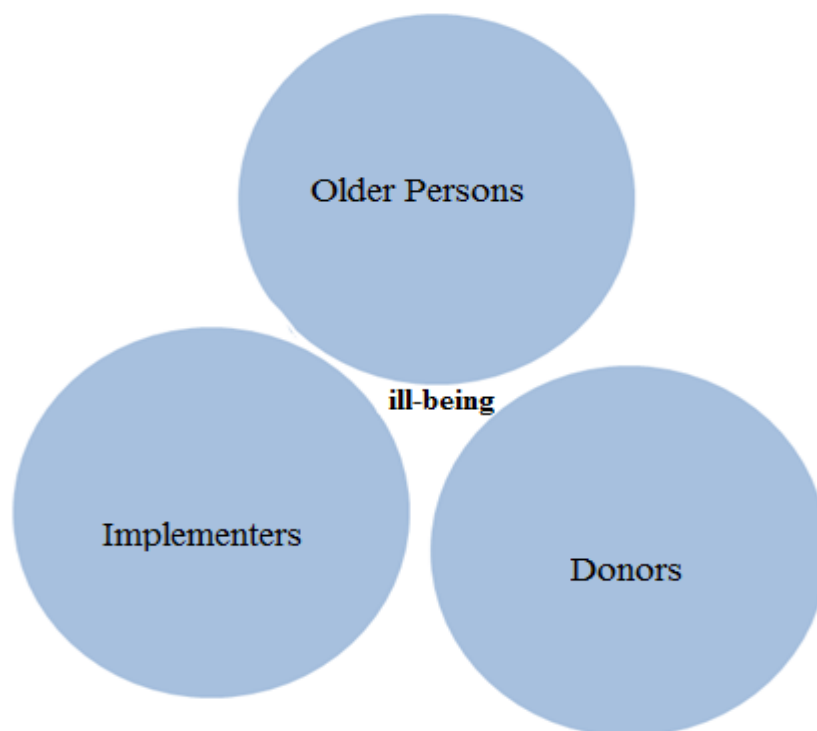


Figure 6.3: Older persons’ ill-being

6.2 Placing the SCG Programme within a Rights Based Approach

In this analysis section, this study will refer to the five *community capacity development strategy steps* to implementing a ‘rights- based approach’. According to Piron (2004:3), rights based approaches, “offer normative standards and principles, analytical tools and operational guidance (Moser & Norton, 2001), which are relevant in justifying, designing, implementing and evaluating social protection measures”. As

mentioned in the theory chapter, applying these five steps to SCG programme implementation is relevant in responding to research question three of this thesis. These also further explain the wellbeing outcomes illustrated in the three interface circles above.

6.2.1 Identifying Basic Impoverishment Causes

Identified basic impoverishments faced by the elderly included: health concerns and crop failure among others. A 90-year-old male grant beneficiary in Kibiga lived alone. His deceased son used to cultivate the relatively large coffee plantation in his backyard. He had therefore lost both his true source of income provided by the coffee and yet he could not till the land on his own. He had even sold the mango tree in his backyard due to desperate need of income. He said, *“All I have known in my life is farming and that is the main way I survived, but old age has made me sick and now my ageing experiences no longer count”*. Before the interview, the male beneficiary was sleeping because he felt sick but had not eaten or gone to the hospital due to lack of money and transportation since his grant income was already used up. Yet, the next grant pay day was three weeks ahead. Also his daughter-in-law who occasionally volunteers to bring him a cooked meal had not yet arrived because she lives far away. Culturally, living in the same house with your father-in-law is considered a taboo in the male beneficiary’s tribe. *“Breaking this taboo results in obukko, a debilitating and potentially fatal illness”* (Bennett, 1963 cited in Williams, 2003:28).

This elderly’s response rehearsed the persistence of high income poverty and high subsistence poverty among many other elderly grant beneficiaries, as highly correlated with limited income sources amidst various basic needs. Therefore, to a certain extent, wellbeing and ill-being are outcomes driven by either the ability or inability to afford essential basic needs such as medical care, food, education and shelter. This is illustrated by the large spent cash transfer percentage in figure 5.1. However, a second study by (Handa, 2002) based on data from Mozambique finds that demand-side interventions, for instance increasing grant amount amidst neglecting inter-related rights issues as illustrated in interface circle B above, is the least cost-effective due to minimal wellbeing outcomes. (Handa & Davis, 2006:517).

Capability poverty was also emphasized since many elderly whose main skill and income source was farming, faced various health complications that accompany old age and could no longer dig as much as in they did in their younger days. For health

care there were three problems: 1) limited knowledge concerning the wellbeing returns due to constant healthcare check-ups or other types of preventative health care; 2) limited income to afford either preventive, regular or emergency health care was a predominant problem; 3) another predominant problem was limited access to the healthcare center due to old age incapacitation and long distance travels. It is obvious that limited access to healthcare worsens elderly's ill-health. Poor health also reduces the capacity of older persons to generate income, curtails their productivity and compels them to depend on other people (Republic of Uganda, 2012:2). Older persons could hardly afford the costs of travelling to Kiboga Hospital located in Kibiga Sub County, where they could access the free comprehensive Uganda National Minimum Health Care Package (UNMHCP) provided by the Health Sector (ibid). Even where the older persons can access the UNMHCP, the package does not treat diseases unique to older persons due to lack of geriatricians (ibid). Moreover, the UNMHCP package does not include all drugs, yet most elderly lacked the money needed to buy drugs from private medical facilities.

More still, "the Uganda Reach the Aged Association Report (2005) indicates that older persons who cannot travel long distances use contaminated water, which puts their health at risk" (Republic of Uganda, 2012:3). Many elderly respondents living alone face difficulty in accessing clean water, and often hired children to fetch water only if they had some spare money or favor in exchange. A 72-year-old female beneficiary in Kibiga Sub County expressed that the water issue affects so many elderly since the water well and borehole are very far, but the situation was much worse for her since she had no grandchild to help her. At times it cost UGX 500 to hire someone to fetch one 20-litre jerry can but this was not enough. She had a small pot on her home veranda to help harvest some rainwater and wished that she could maybe one day purchase a large water tank that could harvest and store more rain water.

6.2.2 Social and Political Relationships between Right Holders and Duty Bearers

"Social Protection is not a matter of charity or generosity, but a basic responsibility of the state" (Piron, 2004:6). A few elderly attached receiving the grant as a deserved reward and their right for their patriotism over the years like promptly paying tax and serving in the 1981-1986 Uganda Bush War. These elderly correspond with Piron's statement. However, some elderly referred to the grant as a gift. They attached the

implementation of the SCG programme by a government agency (MGLSD) to the current president being the sole provider of the grant, even though the government was currently only attached to implementation but not entirely responsible for funding of the programme. The implication is that the grant indirectly acts as a political tool in favor of the duty bearer when right holders are unaware of their rights. An 82-year old male beneficiary in support of the current government stated, “*this grant keeps us safe, so we the elderly must keep our giver the president safe*”.

Piron (2004:4) states that one of the ways to operationalize a human rights approach to policies is through participation. However, the participation of elderly was minimal in the design and implementation of the SCG programme. Hence *passive participation* among beneficiaries took place since the elderly are typically told what has already been decided by programme implementers and donors (Cornwall, 2008). Respondents claimed that, their details such as age were recorded without being told what was the reason behind the registration. In an interview with one of the key informants in my study, the SAGE secretariat responsible for overseeing implementation of the SCG programme in the current pilot districts communicated that, the anonymous registration was to help minimise falsification of details by community members who did not qualify for the grant. However, to a larger extent, the lack of older people’s participation has been maintained even in the implementation of the SCG programme, which has somehow kept some elderly beneficiaries’ viewing the grant as a gift and SCG implementers are seen as superior. As stated in the methodology chapter, Bukuluki & Watson (2012) reveal that some beneficiaries fear to complain even when they have a genuine reason since they view and hear rumours that complaining may annoy duty bearers thus due to fear of losing the grant, some elderly stay silent. Other beneficiaries’ participation is a futile attempt since they rarely get feedback although they raise their concerns about the programme (ibid). However, not all participation attempts by the elderly beneficiaries were futile. For instance, the change from monthly to than bi-monthly grant payments was in response to solving the movement difficulties and high transport costs communicated by beneficiaries.

Statements put forward by Apt (2002:43) draw attention to the social exclusion and misrepresentation of the elderly. “Older people are frequently regarded as an economically non-productive group, and their needs and potential are ignored in socio-economic analyses. Owing to a lack of information, they are often not or insufficiently aware of existing services. This type of social exclusion is closely linked to poverty and seriously threatens older people’s self-sufficiency and independence”. Apt (2002) also warns about social policies not taking account of the enormous diversity within the ageing population and are thus often not flexible or responsive to different material and social requirements, including gender-based issues. Furthermore, social policy does not account for the fact that, in all societies, older people both want to and do contribute economically and socially well into old age. Hence by depicting older people as victims, objects of pity and a burden, the normative values sought for the elderly within implemented policies and programmes may not apply.

Therefore, it is important to recognize that funding social policy efforts solely focuses on the identification of old age vulnerabilities, without specific attention being given to old age capabilities and how policy programmes can particularly re-enforce a change and enhance the elderly’s creativity. To give an example: A productive relationship would materialize with SCG implementers paying attention to elderly beneficiaries’ successful use on indigenous knowledge in pig rearing and finding ways to incorporate and promote this practice as an alternative solution to other elderly beneficiaries who may not be able to afford commercially available fertilizers and medicines. It is worth noting how Cornelius & Caspi (1987) refutes biased vulnerability representation of the elderly by affirming that, strengths are indeed present in old age and that an examination of age differences revealed that performance on the everyday problem increased with age.

6.2.3 Capacity Gaps that Prevent Duty Bearers

The SCG programme piloted in only 14 rural districts out of a total of about 111 districts in Uganda. At the time of the research, there were also deserving elderly non-beneficiaries in both Kibiga and Bukomero Sub County. This limitation in scope of the SCG programme reflects one of the constraints duty bearers are faced with because the SCG programme had so far reached a limited number of elderly beneficiaries. Regardless of the proposed SCG programme national roll-out phase; Oduro (2010:13) warns that progress in extending the coverage and the scope of publicly-provided social protection still experiences some challenges. Because often times “the information-gathering systems of most cash transfer programmes are not

designed to incorporate new beneficiaries at short notice (Handa & Davis, 2006:519). Calder & Nakafeero (2012:37) discovered that among those elderly who were misclassified as ineligible, only 2-3% managed to be enrolled in the SCG programme through formal written appeals due to problematic civil registration. Thus, large numbers of elderly non-beneficiaries lived without support.

The inadequacy of SCG programme information-gathering systems was revealed in an interview with a deserving female 72-year-old non-beneficiary widow in Kibiga Sub County. Even though she had registered her details, she was not aware why her name was excluded in the first round of beneficiaries. Her deceased husband had qualified as a beneficiary but unfortunately lost his grant pay card three months before his death. However, the grant income forewent during the months the card was lost in addition to the 4 months grant lump sum entitled to family members upon death of a beneficiary had not yet been received two months after her husband's death. Inability to replace lost beneficiary pay cards was one of the main issues discussed during the Agenda Quarterly district SAGE meeting on 24th June 2015.

“Evidence from countries implementing direct income support reveals that actively the duty linking direct income support beneficiaries to other government and non-government services and interventions further strengthens impacts and cost-effectiveness” (UNICEF, 2004 cited in Onapa & Ssebunya, 2014:1). When duty bearers properly execute linkages, duplication is reduced due to increase in efficiency in service delivery (Onapa & Ssebunya, 2014). Limited linkages was evident among elderly grant beneficiaries in Kiboga district. For example, most beneficiaries testified to not fully utilizing some government programme present in Kiboga, like the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS). Some elderly who made an effort were still inconsistent in applying say herbicides. Language barrier and costs attached to the advisory services were some of the reasons for inconsistency. Other reasons identified for the low beneficiary participation in NAADS include: lack of information on how beneficiaries are selected, beneficiaries who are not in groups cannot afford to pay membership fees, self-exclusion by beneficiaries, NAADS selection criterion excludes most of the older persons who are largely engaged in non-market-oriented subsistence farming (Onapa & Ssebunya, 2014:28).

6.2.4 Candidate Actions to Equip Right Holders

First of all, a cost-effective assessment between demand-side and supply-side factors would be relevant when considering candidate actions. In order to equip right holders duty bearers need to evaluate whether more impoverishment is reduced by increasing grant amount or rolling-out the grant versus tackling the underlying rights issues for instance healthcare access, agricultural initiatives, information access and grand children's education. While the SCG programme cannot necessarily be held accountable for say: health attendance and school learning outcomes, the effectiveness of investing in cash transfers is seriously undermined if wellbeing is not improved because of poor health among the elderly. Handa & Davis's (2006:516) study experience of six conditional cash transfer programmes paused a similar concern by expressing that, even if both supply-side and demand-side factors are shown to be important, the question remains as to which is the more cost-effective option to pursue. Supply side factors relevant to this study factors encompass: health care and education services, transportation facilities, farming initiatives and information systems. Dominant demand-side factors include: grant income, household renovation and basic food items.

6.2.5 Priority Actions Tailored to the Lived Realities of Older Persons in Kiboga

It is crucial to emphasize the importance of priority actions that are sensitive to the level of society at which each action is being undertaken. To determine which candidate actions qualify to be priority actions, the following quote comes to mind: "Livelihood is never just a matter of finding or making shelter, transacting money, getting food to put on the family table or to exchange on the market place. It is equally a matter of ownership and circulation of information, the management of skills and relationships, and the affirmation of personal significance [involving issues of self-esteem] and group identity. The tasks of meeting obligations, of security, identity and status, and organizing time are as crucial to livelihood as bread and shelter" (Wallman 1982: 5 cited in Long, 2001:54).

Based on the above quote, priority actions include certain supply-side factors such as information circulation and skills management of the elderly. 'Pro-poor' access to justice reform so that institutions better accommodate vulnerabilities and specific requirements (e.g. vernacular language used in court) is also identified as a priority (Piron, 2004:21). In line with this, the elderly ought to be made aware of their rights

and ably access where to report in case of violation or when in need of clarification. (Atim, n.d:8) emphasizes this point when he highlights that economic and social rights are relegated to the section of National objectives and considered more of guidelines thus lacking the legal capacity, for example, the right to health in Uganda, which without the legal framework limits health users (right holders) from holding health workers (duty bearers) accountable for their actions such as negligence leading to maternal deaths. Ultimately, improved information should lead to superficial forms of participation being replaced with deeper forms of local participation and local knowledge in the development and implementation of SCG policies (Poteete, 2002:4). This is mainly because rural residents benefit when development projects are appropriate to local conditions; and policy analysts repeatedly attribute disappointing developmental outcomes to insufficient citizen involvement in the design and implementation of projects (Poteete, 2002:3; Kottak 1985 cited in Poteete, 2002:2).

Many programme designers are convinced that conditional transfer schemes are more acceptable to policy-makers and to taxpayers than unconditional schemes (Schubert & Slater, 2006:573). This perception is not only linked with a desire to see poverty reduced through higher consumption of particular goods or services (demand-side factors), but also reflects a deeply rooted fear that poor people behave irresponsibly and need close supervision (ibid). Piron (2004:18) adds that, “the middle-classes may not wish to see national resources used for ‘unproductive’ support to the ‘undeserving’ poor”. Currently, there are no conditionalities attached to the senior citizens grant expenditure. Nonetheless, there are clear perceptions that conditional cash transfers are both feasible and desirable (Schubert & Slater, 2006:573). For instance, in a simulation study of the likely costs and benefits of conditional cash transfers in Africa, it is concluded that in Africa ‘school or any other human capability-enhancing institution and conditionality should be part of any cash transfer programme aiming at a sustainable reduction in poverty’ (ibid). To emphasize the importance of enhancing elderly grant beneficiaries capability, Oduro articulates that the poor must contribute to the development as well as benefit from it, because the rationale for social protection is not always only framed for improving living conditions of the vulnerable (Oduro, 2010:10).

Moreover, conditionality is important since social protection financing is now to be

included in Uganda's National Budget according to the Quarterly meeting attended while in the field. The focus of this study is on a type of conditionality that does not impose foreign ideas but one that is sensitive to the lived realities of elderly beneficiaries in Kiboga. For instance, conditionality's influencing beneficiary actions into investing more in their already present capabilities and indigenous knowledge practices such as: paying hired labour collectively towards hired farming labour rather than into the elderly individually hiring their own labour, broadening the scale of elderlies' farming initiatives. Additionally, creating collective markets for the farm produce of the elderly is another way to reduce transport costs. Because, getting cash transfers right means ensuring linkages with wider programmes and investments in other factors for example markets, roads and the availability of services (Farrington & Slater, 2006:506). Without these the positive impacts of cash transfers are severely constrained (ibid). Such constraint is because the effect of income is often small when other factors through which income could produce its effects are controlled (Diener, 1984 cited in Easterlin, 1995). Finally, conditionality requires implementers to first of all pay attention to main expenditure, vulnerabilities and capabilities of beneficiaries so as to assist the elderlies' effectiveness.

6.3 Rights-Based Approach to Development Cooperation versus Rights-Based Approach to Public Policy

In correspondence to the key distinction drawn between a *rights-based approach to public policy* at the local level, and a *rights-based approach to development cooperation* by Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi (2004:1420). I assess which one of the two right based approaches was most displayed by the SCG programme implementation at the time of the study. With reference to the findings presented throughout this thesis, the SCG programme displayed a rights-based approach to development cooperation. This interpretation is based on the realization that actors dominating knowledge, design and implementation of the SCG programme (donors, implementers) are the same ones that hold power over resources access (grant) provision and distribution even though multiple actors' (including the elderly, local community) knowledge, actions and contributions are relevant to political and social change (Munoz-Erickson, 2014:189). Therefore, much of what is included and excluded in the SCG programme is filtered by the values, beliefs, and ideologies of implementers and donors that control grant resources (ibid).

In addition, moral superiority of the donors and implementers over the local people exists regarding what would be in the best interests of the elderly grant beneficiaries' wellbeing (Cornwall & Nyamu-Musembi, 2004). Participation of the elderly often meant asking for information or opinions and informing the elderly about planned government activities regarding the SCG programme, thus involved no substantial growth in elderly beneficiaries' decision-making authority (Poteete, 2002:7). Therefore, a well designed public policy approach within the SCG programme is still required, so that policy choices depend on local contexts.

The above chapters five and six have presented detailed analysis of the research findings, next I will present my final concluding discussion.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

This thesis has attempted to contribute an increased understanding about how the Senior Citizens Grant (SCG) programme impacts wellbeing of elderly grant beneficiaries. Below, I discuss certain final conclusions followed by cited recommendations.

7.1 Conclusions

Formal social assistance in Sub Saharan Africa is a new type of approach to development where initiatives target vulnerable groups that are often times excluded from the development process. Ordinarily, donors in the Global North grant specific funds towards social assistance while distribution of the grants to targeted beneficiaries is implemented in the Global South. In this case study, the SCG programme has shown the complexity in development initiatives providing formal social assistance to elderly grant beneficiaries, who lack a full set of rights and may therefore fail at improving elderly beneficiaries' wellbeing.

With focus on wellbeing within elderly households, rights issues and the gap concerning indigenous practices versus expatriate practices, this thesis has examined how the impact of grants on elderly beneficiaries' wellbeing is limited by certain constraints such as health complications, weather vagaries, market access, social exclusion and self-exclusion. The aim of this thesis was also to identify how these constraints on older persons' wellbeing are further framed by their interactions with donors and implementers of the Senior Citizens Grant Programme (SCG). This thesis therefore confirms an argument stated by Diener (1984), and cited by Easterlin (1995) that states, the effect of income is often small when other factors through which income could produce its effects are controlled. Additionally, Williams (2003) spells out three types of poverty faced by the ageing in Uganda. In line with this, my study has established the inter-relation between the three poverty types. For instance, income poverty causes subsistence poverty among the elderly, which are both intensified and caused, by capability poverty. Possible reasons for this have been discussed in relation to structural vulnerability and individual vulnerability within three living arrangements among elderly households. For example elderly headed households where elderly grant beneficiaries mainly live with children face high structural vulnerability due to many vulnerable and dependent children under their care. Likewise, elderlies' wellbeing outcomes embed in certain forms of indigenous

support that have been studied (see chapter 5.2.2). Hence, certain informal support systems contribute to older persons wellbeing especially when linked with formal support provided by the SCG programme.

However, indigenous forms of support within the family are still arguably a crucial source of assistance to older persons. Single headed households where elderly grant beneficiaries live alone are negatively impacted due to lack of family support even though their wellbeing is not far worse off when compared to foster grandparents living with many dependent children. An explanation for this finding is that absence of children's support needed in performing household tasks like fetching water, subsistence farming means requires weak older persons to hire labour despite their limited income. Unfortunately, the burdens that accompany living with many dependent children may outweigh the benefits as discussed under relational wellbeing due to a large cohort size where both the ageing and the young are two vulnerable groups living together and both facing the negative impacts of having limited rights. Regarding mixed households, although some elderly grant beneficiaries' were still transformed into benefactors, the wellbeing outcome was generally more favorable due to decrease in capability poverty. This was witnessed in the field where the grant boosted alternative income sources for those elderly and living with adults alongside children.

Given the rupture of several indigenous support systems, the elderly are forced to rely more on limited income sources for their daily sustenance in terms of food, healthcare and other obligations. With this, cash transfers particularly the SCG programme serves as an important income source. Hence, formal social assistance is essential for the elderlies' wellbeing. However, the prevailing disconnect between the SCG programme and other existing formal associations such as NGO's, i.e. NAADS, leads to a series of linked issues such as duplication and marginal productivity and dependency hence negatively affecting older persons' wellbeing.

This study agrees that both government planners and their critics regard the current system as flawed, due to capacity gaps that wrongly exclude potential beneficiaries whose documentations are not in order (Ferguson, 2007). More flaws evidenced in the field included, a prolonged period before replacement of lost beneficiary pay cards, delayed transition grant payment to bereaved household members of dead

beneficiaries on top of excluded non-beneficiaries within Kiboga. There is also widespread concern that the current SCG programme rests on a process that over-emphasizes the vulnerability of older persons while neglecting the elderly's capabilities. In my study, this neglect is reflected by the gap between indigenous and expatriate knowledge within the SCG programme implementation. The effect of such a gap on older persons' wellbeing is illustrated by the interactions between three actors, and rights issues play a determinant role in older persons' wellbeing. To give an example, a limited set of rights for the elderly signifies less interaction between actors hence ill-being, whereas a fuller set of rights signifies more interaction amongst actors hence ultimately maximizes elderly grant beneficiaries' wellbeing.

To reach the objective of this thesis, which is to unpack place and people centered issues by recognizing old age vulnerabilities and acknowledging older persons' capabilities, so as to empower the elderly towards self-sustenance rather than promote deeper dependence, the case study approach that focused on elderly grant beneficiaries within two Sub Counties in Kiboga district was useful. First of all, this approach enabled the research questions to be answered. Conducting household interviews in Kibiga Sub County and focus groups in Bukomero Sub County alongside follow up interviews increased data validity, because this allowed varied responses from different participants while at the same time confirmed findings when similar responses were given. Secondly, classifying households with older persons based on three levels of resource endowments and putting into formation the critical points of interaction capturing both the theoretical concepts i.e. rights, wellbeing and significant actors made the analysis of this study's findings possible. There are certain limitations associated with this thesis. It should be noted that even though resources obtained from other sources such as hired labour, remittances from family members were considered useful, this thesis does not detail how such resources impact wellbeing of the elderly.

7.2 Final Considerations and Recommendations

There are no easy solutions, but recognizing the impoverishment triggers that eventually impact older persons' wellbeing is one way to push this conversation forward. Bearing in mind the limitations mentioned in the analysis chapters, three major recommendations emerge from the study. Starting off, in order to significantly

reduce impoverishment and provide better life chances for the elderly, any cash transfer programme will need to recognize and aim towards enhancing older peoples' capabilities. This recommendation is based on the standpoint emphasizing that livelihood of older persons is never just a matter of shelter, transacting money, getting food on the family table nor exchange on the market place, but equally a matter of ownership and circulation of information, the management of skills and relationships, and the affirmation of personal significance [involving issues of self-esteem] and group identity (Wallman's, 1982 cited in Long, 2001).

Next, recognizing older persons' capabilities may require introducing cash transfer programmes aimed at stimulating capability driven grant expenditures among the elderly. For instance, subsidized prices on farming investments using grant income, i.e. purchase of piglets or herbicides, and collective reduced hired labour costs for the elderly on their coffee plantation, which would save from high individual hired labour costs. Handa & Davis (2006:518) underline that there would be some merit in considering how to maximize the indirect productive effect of conditional cash transfers and minimize constraints, when designing programmes. Therefore, tailoring the SCG programme to the lived realities of the elderly, such as the economic and social contexts within which older people operate could maximize poverty alleviation and improve the wellbeing of the elderly hence reducing inequalities and leading to higher development.

Finally, since rights evidently impact wellbeing, realization of these rights would avoid situations where the elderly are forced into being solely dependent on grant income. This is because human rights are 'inter-related' and 'inter-dependent' (Piron, 2004:11). Protecting or promoting a basic right will ensure that other rights are also better protected and promoted (ibid). "Social protection thus needs to be seen as much more than a transfer of resources or greater access to basic services" (Piron, 2004:20). For example, respect for the rights to adequate food and health services is also a strategy to ensure improved capabilities through greater strength for the elderly to practice subsistence farming, better yet, obtain surpluses that are traded for income. This ultimately leads to better wellbeing not just for the elderly grant beneficiaries but also their household members, particularly foster children in the care of the elderly, whose affordability to pay school fees and meet daily nutrition needs are enhanced by

maximized wellbeing of their foster grandparents. Therefore social protection policies and programmes, in this case social assistance cash transfers through the Senior Citizen Grant programme, should aim at contributing to the realization of not some but all human rights while upholding programme affordability by empowering beneficiaries into self-sustenance rather than dependency. The human rights approach to development means empowering people to take their own decisions rather than being the passive objects of choices made on their behalf (Piron, 2004:4).

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APPENDIX I: Consent Form

Research Purpose and Procedures:

Good morning /Good afternoon. My name is Rebecca Nalwanga. I am conducting a research for my Master's Thesis in MPhil Development Studies to examine the impact of Senior Citizen's Grants on the elderly's wellbeing and hopefully contribute vital research knowledge on how implementations of social assistance programmes can be made more self-sustaining.

You have been selected to participate in this study to generate qualitative evidence to support study findings. I will use qualitative methods involving an interview session or focus group discussion where you answer the asked questions, any additions information regarding the topic is also highly appreciated. This process may last 20 to 60 minutes. I would also like to clarify that this interview is entirely voluntary and you have the right to **withdraw** at any point without any consequence.

At this time, do you have any questions? Are you willing to participate in this study?

YES 1) Thank you very much, proceeds.

NO 2) Thank any participants that object and ALLOW THEM TO LEAVE.

Identification and Recording consent:

I will need your name, age and household members if any in order to categorize the participants. I also have a recorder and camera that will help me to capture the discussion and observations to ensure that I do not miss anything. Participants will be kept anonymous if they wish. Only beneficiaries' gender, age and focus group date and location will be revealed in the final report. Facial revealing images will only be included in the final report if a beneficiary provides verbal consent both at the beginning and end of the interview.

May I use the above details in the final report? [Moderator seeks consent]. May I begin the discussion now?

YES 1) Continue with the discussion.

NO 2) STOP HERE.

Standard Background Information:

- Date Location
- Type of participant (beneficiaries/non-beneficiaries)
- Numbers of participants (at beginning): (at end):
- Initials, ages, gender, and marital status of each participant:
- Time start: Time end:
- Researcher:
- Research assistant:
- Language of exercise:

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APPENDIX II: Interview/Focus Group Guide for Primary Informants

A. Background questions

1.a. Why do you think the programme was put in place?

Probe for:

- Where do you think this cash comes from? The government? Which level? Other?
- - Do you think it is a gift, charity, right/entitlement, or compensation, any other?
- If an entitlement, does this make you feel more like a citizen? If so, in which way? (*Trying to get at issues of rights/entitlements, state/citizen compact or other*)

2. a. How long have you been participating in the programme?

(Note, responses may vary from different participants *Category: new and old beneficiaries*)

b. How long did it take you after being registered to get the money?

(Please specify on length of time period between registration & first grant received)

3. a. How has the community or yourself as an individual been involved in SCG design and implementation?

Probe for:

- Participation in selection or informing of individuals to receive the money? If yes, what is your role?
- How is your involvement in both SCG selection process and inclusion as a beneficiary constrained/problems experienced?

(*i.e.* much of the formal information is written in English, distance of payment points, communication of payment days: what hardships do you face also what assistance is given and how can it be improved?)

b. Effects of participation in the SCG selection process and inclusion as a beneficiary

Probe for:

- Any social conflicts created that may threaten the effectiveness of SCG programme or make community life difficult? Please explain. (*i.e. beneficiaries versus non-beneficiaries*)

c. How has the introduction of SCG scheme affected your relationship with politicians and other District/Sub County officials?

How is this affecting your participation in SCG programme?

Probe for:

- Political tensions or ease emanating from SCG programme

B. To what extent are cash grants perceived to provide and improve both wellbeing and opportunities for income improvement among the targeted beneficiaries and the general communities in the pilot districts?

4. a. What are the main human needs on which beneficiaries utilize grants?

Probe evidence with illustrations:

- *Participatory tree diagram*
- Rank expenditure by level of importance

b. What are the underlying causes of such expenditure?

c. Who benefits from such expenditure and how?

(Different levels i.e. sole beneficiary, dependents and community)

d. Do you save some of the grant money by the end of 2 months payment period?

Have you ever postponed collecting of the money so as to collect a bigger amount on the next payment day?

5. a. What are the main income generating activities of most beneficiaries and this community? How has the SCG affected such income generating/economic activities?

Probe evidence for:

- New income generating projects known to have been started
- Expansion of existing income generating activities
- Closure of some income generating activities
- Shifting of income generating activities (inwardly or outwardly)

b. What are your personal goals, has SCG helped you realize your goals?

c. How has SCG affected social activities and informal support at the community level?

Probe evidence for:

- Savings and credit associations formed (strengthened/expanded)
- Community level information exchange
- Collective labor (syndicate) arrangements
- Social identity formation, also multi-ethnicity aspect

6. a. Examine benefits accruing to beneficiaries as a result of SCG grant programme?
i.e. past situation without the grant, present situation with the grant, future situation with or without the grant.

Probe evidence for:

- Subsistence needs (clothing, clean water, food, shelter, healthcare)
- Change in consumption patterns/ habit formation
- Asset accumulation
- Level of indebtedness and creditworthiness
- Social benefits (reduced discrimination, social obligations)

b. Examine further the stated benefits above

Probe for:

- Psychological wellbeing as per actual and ideal self evaluation i.e. ideal benefits expected from the SCG grant and how many of those expectations have been actually accomplished?
- Adaptation to SCG benefits i.e. inflation impacts, have SCG benefits affected material norms on which judgments of wellbeing are based?

C. How does SCG tie in with the overall/existing social assistance strategies/mechanisms?

7. How has SCG improved your access to social services?

Probe for:

- Health center services (improved mobility, ability to pay for services, new community health initiatives, etc.)
- Information services (access to i.e. new farming, saving information)
- Family support (assistance from relatives i.e. improvement versus decline)
- Community support alternatives e.g. Collective labor (syndicate farming)

8. a. How is the local government institutional framework providing the necessary support? Do other policies in the community acknowledge elderlies' vulnerability and capability?

Probe for:

- Subsidized costs, free services for the elderly
- Ignored hardships faced by the elderly that limit SCG benefits and wellbeing?

D. Examining effects on Wellbeing and Capability

Wellbeing

9. a. What are some of the things/activities that satisfy your life and/or make you **feel?**

Happy, Sad

b. Do you think of your self as happy?

10. a. What are the standards you use to determine a good life?

b. Do you see yourself as having a good life?

11. Around what period is the grant used up? How does this affect your personal life?(*i.e. basic household needs*)

12. Mention effects of social contact on wellbeing

Probe for: *Pros and cons*

- Marriage vs. widow/divorced elderly
- Elderly living alone verses elderly living with adults or children

Capability

13. a. What are your major skills?

Probe for:

- How would you utilize these previous skills in current old age?
- In case of new involvement in activities that require new skills, how did you develop such new skills even in old age?

b. What limitations hinder your ability to use such skills?

Probe for:

- Compare former youthfulness with current old age capability
- Compare resources (*i.e. climate, land, information*)

14. What do you do to help you stay positive/happy even with all the hardships such as health complications you are facing?

Probe for:

- Religious attachment
- Personality

15. Any effects of gender, tribalism, policies on wellbeing and capability?

Probe for:

- Prohibitive regulation *i.e. regarding forest farming*
- Resource access *i.e. landlessness*
- Gender inequality/Cultural norms

Concluding remarks

- Why do you think you've been able to live long? (*diet, exercise*)
- Where were you born? (*home birth, hospital, migrant*). Implication of this on age verification required during SCG enrollment.

APPENDIX III: Interview Guide for Key Informants

A. Background and setting of SCG programme

1. How did the design of this programme come about?

Probe for:

- What were its origins, who designed it (local or imported design), extent of government ownership in the process?
- What was the rationale for a focus on older people?
- What key vulnerabilities do older people face and how does the programme address these vulnerabilities?

2. How does the programme fit within broader social protection and assistance mechanisms in Uganda?

Probe for:

- Complementary services: If any, how are other private initiatives & government programmes for example NAADS, GCCA, (Agriculture adaptation to climate change) contributing towards elderly assistance and linked to the SCG programme?
- How has the Social protection sub committee's having 40 members representing all core government ministries been helpful in developing social protection guidelines? (i.e. academia, development partners, civil society orgs)

B. Design and implementation

3. Targeting concerns:

- Has the programme encountered administrative challenges, and errors of inclusion/exclusion?
- Any criteria in place to categorize beneficiaries i.e. ranking from most to least deserving incases of exclusion

4. Grant amount concerns:

- Is the amount of cash appropriate for standard of living
- How often is the grant amount annually revised as proposed in the plan since 2011? Also consider various economic and social changes i.e. inflation
- The grant amount represents is stated to represent at least 20% of monthly household consumption of the poorest of Uganda's population. Any comments about the outstanding 80% expenditure?

5. Grant Payment concerns:

- Any technical or administrative challenges i.e. efficiency of payment service providers, loss of beneficiary pay cards

6. Enrollment concerns:

- Comments about the computerized selection from the national civil registry who collects births and death challenge of most births in earlier years being home births?
- Pros and cons about the beneficiaries' use of new national i.e. would loss of this card mean lengthy replacement period
- What about enrollment of new elderly beneficiaries in July each year?

7. Beneficiaries participation

Probe for:

- Views on existing means on how senior citizens voice their concerns.
- What approaches in place strengthen dialogue between implementers, donors and elderly grant beneficiaries'?
- Please mention some of the implementation changes made as a response of feedback from such dialogue

8. Grievances and appeals management systems

C. Effects of the SCG programme (positive/negative)

8. What are the main achievements so far?

- Economic and demographic impacts i.e. poverty struggles, life expectancy
- Social impacts i.e. does the SCG programme replace or compliment solidarity networks and intergenerational transfers?

9. Any spillover unintended changes (evidence of such effects)

Probe for:

- Positive effects i.e. orphans living with SCG beneficiaries
- Negative effects of the programme i.e. alcoholism, excessive debts

D. Roll-out phase / Future programming:

10. What is the way forward after the SCG pilot phase ends?

Probe for:

- How about financial sustainability as addressed by international donors?
- Any steps taken to fund social assistance by domestic sources? i.e. embedding national social protection as a core element of Uganda's national planning and budgeting process.

- Any binding agreement that guarantees/entitles SCG beneficiaries to the grant for the rest of their lives?

11. Rationale for SCG roll-out phase

b. What improvements and changes need to be made, if any? i.e. will the roll-out phase be similar to the pilot phase?

Probe for:

- Enrollment concerns i.e. registration frequency, how many more districts expected for phase 2
- Targeting i.e. sensitivity to gender issues, disability and age (oldest old versus younger old)
- Grant Amount and Payment concerns
- Complementary programmes i.e. linkage of SCG with informal social protection and support systems

Concluding remarks

- Any other cash transfer programmes targeting the programmes known to you? i.e. pensions/retirement benefits