Master of Science in Peace and Developmental Work
Faculty of Social Sciences
Course Code: 4FU41E
Linnaeus University

Social Protection in Kenya:
The Use of Cash Transfer Programmes in Progressively Addressing Poverty and Vulnerability

Master Thesis

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Date: June 2015
Acknowledgments

I am grateful for the love and support of my mother who has always been an inspiration to me, and the reason why I took this leap of faith and moved to Sweden to further my education.

I would like to express the deepest appreciation to the government agency, Swedish Institute (SI), for providing me with the scholarship that enabled me to pursue my Master’s Degree.

I wish to express my sincere thanks to my tutor and mentor Jonas Ewald, PhD, for offering his expertise, valuable guidance and continuous encouragement throughout this research process.

I am also grateful to Mattias Rieloff, the Peace and Development Subject Librarian, for his help and support in providing me with guidance in finding relevant databases and sources for my research subject.
Abstract

This research study focuses on the social protection sector in Kenya, with a special emphasis on social assistance programmes. Although Kenya has made strides in terms of economic development and the improvement of access to education and healthcare, 45.9% of the population continues to survive on less than $1.25 a day. It is evident that many challenges lay ahead in tacking the issue of poverty and deprivation in Kenya. However, the state, with support from external actors, has invested in the development of social assistance measures such as cash transfer programmes as a means of providing support to the poorest and most vulnerable households in Kenya. This research study investigated why and how these cash transfer programmes were adopted and delivered in addition to whether social transfer programmes helped the poor and vulnerable to progressively realise their economic, social and cultural rights. Findings showed that social assistance measures such as cash transfer programmes has a positive impact on the well-being of households that took part in programmes. Examples of this include increased households consumption and nutrition, increased access to social services such as health clinics and schools in addition to vulnerable groups feeling empowered and catered for by the state. Although Kenya is far from successfully addressing developmental challenges, the investment in social protection as a tool to address poverty and vulnerability shows remarkable promise. However, it is imperative that the state fully understands its role as a duty bearer and its need to remain accountable to its citizens. Moreover, the state’s point of departure when strengthening its long term social protection strategy and framework should be on the foundation of understanding social protection as a right of which its citizens are entitled. This in turn will progressively translate into more meaningful and tangible results that are universal and accessible by Kenyans who are entitled a decent quality of life.

Key Words: Social Protection, Social Transfer Programmes, Cash Transfer, Human Rights Principles, Progressive Realisation, Capability Approach, Kenya
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<tr>
<td>ASAL</td>
<td>Arid and Semi-Arid Lands</td>
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<td>CT-OVC</td>
<td>Orphans and Vulnerable Children Cash Transfer Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development</td>
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<td>ECOSOC</td>
<td>United Nations Economic and Social Council</td>
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<td>HSNP</td>
<td>Hunger Safety Net Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>IFRC</td>
<td>International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies</td>
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<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organization</td>
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<td>LOCs</td>
<td>Location Orphan and Vulnerable Children Committees</td>
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<td>NSNP</td>
<td>National Safety Net Programme</td>
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<td>KSPP</td>
<td>Kenya Social Protection Policy</td>
<td></td>
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<td>KSPSR</td>
<td>Kenya Social Protection Sector Review</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>MICT</td>
<td>Ministry of Information, Communications and Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>MIS</td>
<td>Management Information System</td>
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<td>MLSSS</td>
<td>Ministry of Labour, Social Security &amp; Services</td>
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<td>NCPWD</td>
<td>National Council for Persons with Disabilities</td>
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<td>NDMA</td>
<td>National Drought Management Authority</td>
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<td>NGEC</td>
<td>National Gender and Equality Commission</td>
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<td>NHIF</td>
<td>National Health Insurance Fund</td>
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<td>NSNP</td>
<td>National Safety Net Programme</td>
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<td>NSSF</td>
<td>National Social Security Fund</td>
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<td>OPCT</td>
<td>Older Persons Cash Transfer Programme</td>
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<td>Orphans and Vulnerable Children</td>
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<td>PWSD-CT</td>
<td>People Living with Severe Disabilities Cash Transfer Programme</td>
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<td>RCs</td>
<td>Rights Committees</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund</td>
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1. Introduction

In a world rich with resources that could cater for the needs of the 7.6 billion people that currently populate nations across the globe, approximately 21,000 people perish each day from hunger and/or illnesses related to malnutrition, with vulnerable groups such as children suffering the brunt of the consequences (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs: Population Division, 2015; Poverty.com, 2015). This reality stems from the fact that 2.2 billion people continue to live in an environment of poverty and deprivation. Despite development measures and efforts put in place to deal with the multi-faceted nature of poverty, 80% of the world’s population continues to lack access to social protection which would support the building of resilience to stresses and shocks and address means of preventing and managing vulnerabilities in an effort to improve quality of life (UNDP, 2014: iv-3). Social protection is a vital instrument as a means to address challenges relating to poverty and vulnerability in addition to managing risks and fostering change in the levels of high inequality. Many states have embraced social protection policies and/or strategies through formulation and implementation of initiatives such as social transfer programmes, which have not only contributed towards key global development goals such as the Millennium Development Goals (MGDs), particularly in relation to education and health, but also enabled governments to provide much needed safety nets for citizens living in poverty with little to no capabilities or opportunities to improve their quality of life (Fiszbein et al, 2014: 167).

In sub-Saharan Africa, the poverty rates are remain incredibly high with 46.8% of the population living on less than $1.25 a day as of 2011 (World Bank, 2015). This in turn finds that people are languishing in poverty are “most vulnerable to shocks and risks such as loss of income through employment, ill health, drought, floods, conflicts and livelihood failure” thus highlighting the necessity for social protection to support the poor (Chitonge, 2012: 333). In the past, donor agencies, civil society and/or non-state actors have supported African governments in the provision of social protection, particularly through provision of humanitarian aid and emergency food relief, but unfortunately the unpredictable nature of support does little for the pervasive causes of vulnerability in the region since relief aid is delivered in times of unpredictable crises (Ellis et al, 2009: 3). In a nutshell, it is merely treating a symptom of a much more complex problem.
At present, the design and development of large scale social transfer programmes have become popular in middle income countries, and increasingly by low income countries, with financial support from government capital which has resulted in providing assistance and/or safety nets for millions living in poverty. (Holmqvist, 2011, 1). Moreover, despite arguments that costs associated with initiating social protection schemes are unmanageable, evidence suggests that “if properly designed, carefully selected from the set of possible social protection approaches and tailored to specific needs, they can represent not only efficient responses to vulnerabilities, but, also an investment for development” (Giovannetti et al, 2011: 439). An example of tailor made initiatives include the formulation of the Ethiopia Productive Safety Net Programme and the Kenya Hunger Safety Net Programme which were born out of the need to address food insecurity in the region which more often than not was seasonal, rather than responding with emergency food aid when shocks such as drought or floods occurred (Garcia et al, 2012:2).

The adoption of social protection can aid in addressing extreme poverty and vulnerability particularly for communities faced by frequent shocks and stresses in addition to improving the opportunities for, and likelihood of, individuals to build resilience (Giovannetti et al, 2011: 440). Social protection also plays an important role not only with regard to poverty and development, but also in relation to realising human rights through meeting basic human requirements and empowering poor and vulnerable communities in understanding that it is their entitlement.

1.1. Kenya as a Case Study

Although Kenya has made strides in terms of economic development and the improvement of access to education, it is evident that many challenges lay ahead with regard to the realisation of rights for all citizens, particularly around efforts to address poverty and reduce vulnerability to political, economic and social stresses and/or shocks through social protection (Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development, 2011: iii).

This falls in line with Article 21 of the Constitution of Kenya that outlines the state’s obligation to progressively realise the rights of Kenyans highlighted in Article 43 (Economic and Social Rights) which includes the following:

(1) Every person has the right—
(a) To the highest attainable standard of health, which includes the right to health care services, including reproductive health care; (b) To accessible and adequate
housing, and to reasonable standards of sanitation; (c) To be free from hunger, and
to have adequate food of acceptable quality; (d) To clean and safe water in
adequate quantities; (e) To social security; and (f) To education.
(2) A person shall not be denied emergency medical treatment.
(3) The State shall provide appropriate social security to persons who are unable
to support themselves and their dependants (Constitution of Kenya, 2010: 31).

1.2. Social Protection in Context
If the state is to support the realisation of rights for citizens to lead dignified and secure lives, it
must strive to translate legislature into meaningful and tangible results that are universal and
accessible by Kenyans. Similar to other African neighbours such as South Africa whose
constitution holds similar progressive realization provisions, the Government of Kenya has to
endeavour to achieve “fulfilment and improvement in the enjoyment of socio-economic rights to
the maximum extent possible, even in the face of resource constraints” (Chenwi, 2013: 743).

With regard to constraints, the concept of progressive realisation argues that despite
challenges in appropriate resources being available to meet economic, social and cultural needs
for citizens, the state is obligated to develop and adopt strategic processes through which it can
improve access and deliver service provision universally as best it can, in addition to ensuring
that the poorest and most vulnerable are taken into account and protected (OCHA, 2008: 13-14).
This is more commonly referred to as the minimum core obligations that a state is required to
meet to:

Ensure the satisfaction of, at the very least, minimum essential levels of each of
the rights is incumbent upon every State party. Thus, for example, a State party in
which any significant number of individuals is deprived of essential foodstuffs, of
essential primary care, of basic shelter and housing or of the most basic forms of
education is prima facie failing to discharge its obligations under the ICESCR
(ICESCR, 1990: General Comment 10).

1 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment 10, UN ESCOR, 1990, UN
The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural rights also alludes to the importance of taking measures to provide social security including social protection schemes that are compliant with the human rights principles of transparency, non-discrimination, accountability and participation of citizens. Social protection systems are found to be a credible tool in supporting the state to comply with the conditions and obligations of the aforementioned policies relating to ensuring rights are realized particularly for marginalized and vulnerable populations living in poverty and uncertainty (Sepulveda et al., 2012: 22-23). Trends show that in various African countries such as Ethiopia, Malawi and Zambia, the investment by the state in social protection transfer programmes finds many communities have realized their right to food, to education, to improved mental and physical health in addition to development of much needed infrastructure (Sepulveda et al., 2012: 24).

With regard to the Kenyan government, various social protection measures have been put in place to support lives and livelihoods from drivers of poverty, reduce levels of vulnerability to shocks, and to protect the rights of the most vulnerable individuals and/or communities (NGEC, 2014: 8). It could be argued that there is a strong interlinkage between social protection and the application of human rights principles in meeting the needs and entitlements of citizens within the state. Furthermore, this has led to the investment in development and expansion or ‘scale up’ of social protection initiatives as a means of protecting the poor and vulnerable with emphasis on the cash transfers as an integral instrument in delivering “a more robust social protection framework” (NGEC, 2014: 7).

1.3. Research Problem and Relevance

This in turn leads me to the purpose of this research study which will focus on current social assistance in Kenya, primarily on the use of cash transfer programmes and its role in addressing poverty and vulnerability. Over the past few decades, Kenya has become one of the fastest growing economies in the region experiencing positive growth in various sectors such as education, infrastructure and technology. However, it remains a lower income state that suffers from high rates of poverty and vulnerability and faces challenges like natural seasonal disasters such as floods and droughts, insecurity, terrorism, corruption, poor governance and capacity to name a few.
This research study will aim to take an in-depth look at the interrelationship between the state’s obligations to ensure the rights of Kenyan citizens are progressively realized and the use of social transfer programmes as a tool to meet the minimum core requirements with the aim of improving the quality of life for Kenyans universally over time — but with a keen focus on ensuring the current measures in place prioritize the needs of the poor and vulnerable populations. Moreover, the research will give insight on whether the use of social assistance is deemed an appropriate and/or feasible means to support poverty alleviation and vulnerability in Kenya.

1.4. Research Objective

In this respect, the objective of my research will be undertaking a qualitative desk study with the aim of reviewing the current four national cash transfer programmes in Kenya in order to understand why these types of programmes have been adopted and how these programmes have been delivered to Kenyans. This shall be evaluated through use of different criteria such as accessibility and coverage, effectiveness of delivery, political implications, affordability and/or cost, issues around sustainability in addition to more operational measures such as eligibility, targeting and registration of beneficiaries who participate in these social protection activities.

Moreover, this research shall investigate if these programmes have been a useful tool towards the progressively realization of the economic, social and cultural rights of citizens through addressing poverty and vulnerability issues that continue to plague Kenya decades after independence. Research findings will also be analysed with a social protection conceptual framework and the capability approach pioneered by economist Amartya Sen. In summation, the study will also endeavour to identify possible lessons learned, good practices and/or recommendations on how social assistance programmes could more effectively benefit those in need of them in an effort to progressively realize economic, social and cultural rights with regard to the right to food, education, health, security and insurance, adequate housing, water and sanitation, work under favourable conditions, participation in cultural life and an overall adequate standard of living (ECOSOC: 1966).
1.5. Research Questions

- In what ways have the four Kenya national cash transfer programmes been adopted and how are they delivered?
  - What are the intended and unintended effects of these programmes?
  - What are the operational measures in delivery of these programmes?
  - Are there any major challenges highlighted?

- Do these programmes contribute to the *progressively realization* of the economic, social and cultural rights of citizens?

- Are there any considerations for the future on how cash transfer programmes could more effectively benefit those in need?

1.6. Delimitations and Limitations

With regard to limitations, there was an inability to afford to travel and undertake any field work that could have generated qualitative input from government officials, non-profit workers and beneficiaries who could have given insight into the practicalities on the ground in relation to the different type of social transfer programmes that citizens are engaged in. This was fully understood prior to settling on this particular research problem to tackle, but with the understanding that there is sufficient literature and sources that will allow for meaningful research. Therefore, in this sense, a desk study shall suffice in tackling the research problem aforementioned in this report.

Furthermore, this study will limit itself in tackling policy issues heavily as this is an area that has been well researched and moreover, this research does not focus on policy analysis, but rather the practical applications of social protection initiatives, particularly social assistance programmes (cash transfer programmes) that are already well into implementation.

1.7. Ethical Considerations

Due to the choice of undertaking a desk study, it is unlikely that there will be any ethical issues and/or considerations that will need to be taken into account. In instances whereby approval to cite particular articles and reports is needed, permission will be sought from the author(s).
1.8. Thesis Guide

This thesis is structured and spread across seven chapters. The first chapter introduces the research topic and its relation to development studies. This section touches on the subject of social protection not only in Kenya, but at a regional and global level. Moreover, it sheds light on the research problem, relevance and questions that will be investigated, how the research will be embarked on and what type of methodological approach will be utilised. Also, this chapter will highlight the theoretical and conceptual framework that will be used to unpack the research problem and to analyse the findings. Finally, issues relating to ethical considerations and potential limitations will be discussed. In the second chapter, a literature review will be presented with the aim of sharing more detailed information about social protection and engaging with existing literature and debates as a means of building up the credibility of the research and to show why the research objective and questions are relevant and important for investigation.

The third and fourth chapter will unpack the theoretical and analytical framework, and the methodological approach used for the research objective. In chapter five, the research findings shall be presented on the cash transfer programmes that were reviewed in a descriptive rather than analytical style. The sixth and seventh chapter will contain the analysis of findings that have had the theoretical and conceptual framework applied in addition to the conclusion and/or summation of the research study which will feature considerations for the future.
2. Literature Review

The continent of Africa continues to face a myriad of challenges such as high levels of poverty, high incidences of HIV/AIDS and food insecurity. A scoping study undertaken by the International Development Studies Centre for Social Protection, funded by the Ford Foundation highlights these key areas as points of departure in understanding how governments in sub-Saharan Africa have developed and managed social protection policies and strategic frameworks with support from non-state actors in an effort to address the main causes of vulnerability and how these causes relate to individuals in different stages of their lives (Devereux et al., 2009: 1).

The Kenyan social protection policy identifies three main areas of social protection outlining the provision of assistance, health insurance and social security. The International Labour Organization (ILO) distinguishes social protection as promotive, protective and/or preventative measures utilized to address the complex, interrelated and multi-dimensional issues of poverty and vulnerability (Devereux et al., 2004: 4).

As shown in the figure below, social protection measures are interrelated and can have an impact in the lives and livelihoods of an individual or groups of individual when applied (Figure 1). These measures have the ability to deal with issues relating to poverty (and poverty reduction) and to invest in human capital if properly applied. Protective measures (also known as social assistance initiatives) are utilized to support those dealing with poverty and vulnerability and assist in provision of support particularly for those without the means to earn an income or means of subsistence.

Promotive and preventative measures do differ as instruments of social protection, but measures utilized can overlap as initiatives could both prevent an individual from shocks in addition to promoting opportunities for them to find sustainable means to become less vulnerable and more capable to establish and maintain livelihoods (Thakur, 2009: 168).
Figure 1: Differentiation of Social Protection Measures

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) shows that in comparison to other developing nations and the rest of the world, sub-Saharan Africa continues to exhibit high numbers of food insecurity in households over the decades as evidenced by the levels of undernourishment in the region (FAO, 2014: 11).

As shown in the figure here below, the percentage of the population in Eastern, South-Eastern and Central Asia and Latin America have seen a notable decrease in the percentage of households who are undernourished due to food insecurity over a decade later (Figure 2).

This also includes a 9.5% decrease in undernourishment in sub-Saharan Africa which may be promising but may be related to other causalities such as population growth, conflict and insecurity to name a few.
In an effort to gain a snapshot understanding of spending capacity in different regions of the world, the figure below shares the percentage of individuals living below $1.25 a day (current poverty line) and $2.00 a day respectively (Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Populations living below $1.25 a day and $2.00 a day respectively**

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<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>555</td>
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<td>Europe &amp; Central Asia</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>35</td>
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<td>LA &amp; Caribbean</td>
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<td>45</td>
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<td>ME &amp; N. Africa</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>16.9</td>
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<td>59.4</td>
<td>548</td>
<td>596</td>
<td>799</td>
<td>73.9</td>
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<td>China</td>
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<td>835</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>972</td>
<td>36.3</td>
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<td>India</td>
<td>59.8</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>609</td>
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<td>1278</td>
<td>38.6</td>
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Source: African Studies, Vol 71, No. 3, pp. 333; December 2012
India, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa has shown some progress in the numbers of people living in extreme poverty. China shows tremendous growth with regard to the decrease in poverty numbers, particularly having 627 million graduating out of the $1.25 a day group and 499 million graduating out of the $2.00 a day group. The evidence in the figure above suggests that remarkable progress has been made in working towards alleviating the suffering of millions of citizens.

However, sub-Saharan Africa shows a 2.5% decrease in people living with an income of $1.25 or less over the 24 years. However, a review of the number in question shows an increase of 177 million people surviving with an income of $1.25 or less and an additional 264 million people are recorded in 2005 despite the percentage decrease to still be surviving with only $2.00 a day.

Many livelihoods for poor and vulnerable households in Africa revolve around subsistence farming and rural agricultural practices that can be unpredictable and high risk due to shocks and stresses such as recurrent natural disasters like floods and droughts, diseases that can distress cattle, camels or other farm animals in addition to plant diseases and pests that can severely impact output of production and therefore the spending capacity of a household.

A lack of access to services and/or infrastructure such as roads, water, electricity and markets can also have detrimental impact on rural subsistence practices primarily in rural areas. Moreover, the presence of conflict leading to insecurity can find individuals and/or households forced to flee from their homes and lands leaving many without means to survive or support their household’s basic needs. This has been a reality in countries such as Kenya, Sudan and South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya and Somalia, which has seen millions displaced, and a large number of refugees seeking asylum in neighbouring states. Kenya currently has over half a million internally displaced persons, refugees and stateless individuals residing in various camps including many affected by the post-election violence of 2007 – 2008 (UNHCR, 2015).

In an effort to deal with a myriad of challenges aforementioned earlier in the text that are faced by developing countries, the development and implementation of social transfer programs and comprehensive poverty reduction strategy papers have been found to be an effective instrument to deal with issues around poverty and vulnerability in addition to a “shift in anti-poverty policy thinking in the region” (Nino-Zarazua, 2012: 163). It is estimated that between
roughly 750 million to one (1) billion people are reached by transfer programs which has had a noticeable effect on poverty in middle and low income countries, and that could potentially have a significant impact on global poverty reduction as a whole in time (Barrientos, 2012:11). Recent programs in the African region includes:

- **Ethiopia’s Productive Safety Net Programme** which supports 7.64 million people with cash and food transfers (seasonal) in addition to participation in public works projects to rehabilitate roads and water sources in developing communities²
- **Ghana’s Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty** which offers cash transfers and health insurance to up to 70,000 households³ (approximately 280,000 individuals)
- **Malawi’s Mchinji Social Transfer Programme** which supports 100,000 people (up to 30,000 households in 2013) with unconditional cash transfers to ultra-poor homes⁴
- **Kenya’s Hunger Safety Net Programme** which offers regular and predictable cash transfer grants to the poorest and most vulnerable 100,000 households in the four poorest countries in Kenya⁵ (approximately 720,000 people)

Social protection is seen as a vital means to mitigate the suffering of millions of vulnerable populations as the right to social security entitles them in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. It also supports social cohesion through enhancing the capacity of, and opportunities for, individuals to participate and engage in the local economy which in turn promotes inclusion and works towards alleviating high levels of inequality between groups within a state (Chitonge, 2012: 331).

Social protection can also have a positive impact on economic growth within a state as it provides additional income or rather a ‘means’ for poor and vulnerable groups to engage with more favourable economic conditions with stimulated markets, and there are some arguments that find that social protection practices can be affordable for even the lowest of income countries, although this would depend on the context within the country (Shepard et al., 2004: 331-332; Devereux, 2004: 1).

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2 WFP Fact Sheet on Productive Safety Net Programme: [https://www.wfp.org/sites/default/files/PSNP%20Factsheet.pdf](https://www.wfp.org/sites/default/files/PSNP%20Factsheet.pdf)
4 Malawi’s Social Cash Transfer Scheme: [http://www.cpc.unc.edu/projects/transfer/countries/malawi](http://www.cpc.unc.edu/projects/transfer/countries/malawi)
5 About the Hunger Safety Net Programme: [http://www.hsnp.or.ke/index.php/component/content/article?id=33](http://www.hsnp.or.ke/index.php/component/content/article?id=33)
With the aforementioned arguments for the importance of social protection policy and practice, issues related to political implications of social transfer programmes is a vital element in how successful or unsuccessful protection measures could be in a state. In order for social protection measures and initiatives to reap rewards and improve the quality of the state’s citizens, the state as the duty bearer, must be prepared to commit to the process and prioritize strategies that will provide assistance and long-term support to deal with development challenges (Nino-Zarazua et. al, 2012: 170).

African states have had challenges with social development and the investments made by African governments in social protection strategies and programmes are promising, but evidence from the literature suggests that there are various hindrances that could inhibit governments from effectively delivering social protection to its citizens.

Firstly, there are concerns about fiscal feasibility of implementing social transfer programmes which is worsened by the high levels of dependency of non-state or foreign aid to meet financial gaps in budgeting (Nino-Zarazua et. al, 2012: 171). In some instances, concern arises from where funding can be found as some countries may rely on the capacity of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in order to ascertain affordability (Gentilini, 2011: 331). Moreover, concerns about “labour market distortion in general, and dependency in particular, make governments keen to restrict the scale of cash transfer provision (McCord, 2009: 1). Another key aspect of affordability is the issue of sustainability that can raise concerns if a government is gauging whether to introduce a particular social protection intervention even if targeting of a specific group such as older people, orphans living with HIV/AIDS or persons suffering from chronic illnesses (Nino-Zarazua et. al, 2012: 171).

Secondly, the issue of institutional capacity for the state to deliver social protection programmes is another important factor to consider as it could have huge implications on the effectiveness of the policy and/or programme delivery. Low income states in sub-Saharan Africa may face difficulty with the design, implementation and evaluations of social protection programmes and thus tend to devolve responsibility of programme delivery to actors at a local/community level, however capacity and coordination at these levels is still an issue that needs addressing ((Nino-Zarazua et. al, 2012: 172).

Moreover, since many African governments still rely heavily on donor support both in terms of resources and technical skills, the handover processes from donor agencies to
governments and their respective ministries should be carefully formulated and enacted to ensure that institutional capacity built is not lost during the transition to full state ownership of initiatives (Gentilini, 2011: 334).

Thirdly, political dimensions and their relation to cash transfer programs in Africa are another important dynamic to consider. Formulation of social transfer programmes could have negative effects if introduced around an election period. In some instances, cash transfer programs for example, can be used as instrument in accruing votes from citizens who may believe that their vote could enable them to participate in a programme (Hurrell et al., 2012: 256). Evidence from the Brazil’s Bolsa Familia Cash Transfer Programme suggested that former president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva was able to accrue votes and win the election with support from poorer communities who would be engaged with the programme despite the current state of affairs at the time which exhibited signs of collapse due to high corruption charges (Zucco, 2010: 8). In other scenarios such as in Kenya in 2002, government officials and representatives were lobbied by international and national NGOs⁶ to support various social protection initiatives and/or policies which in turn gave an upper hand to politicians to seek out support on the grassroots or local level (s) in return if communities wanted programmes to be delivered in the region (Ikiara, 2009: 2). An even more serious ramification of political engagement gone wrong is the impact political action (or inaction) can have on national and local levels with regard to the intervention processes undertaken during cash transfer programmes such as registration, targeting, means of delivering payment, transfer values management of grievances and distribution of communities that are eligible (Hurrell et al., 2012: 256). A recent example of this dynamic would be the Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP) Phase II which saw the programme almost come to a halt due to political representatives (county governors and deputies) and their constituents disagreeing with the targeting methodology utilized to identify eligible beneficiaries in various regions. A lack of clarity on distribution of beneficiaries caused political leaders to raise complaints i.e. only receiving a small percentage of beneficiaries in a sub-location in comparison to the surrounding locations. This was in part due to the lack of communication on targeting techniques and a lack of clarity on the financial resources available for cash transfers. (Fitzgibbon, 2014: 7). Regardless, political engagement did have a large

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⁶ NGOs: Non-Governmental Organisation
implication on programme delivery and could have had detrimental effects to the programme with regard to the reputation of the project and the willingness of community members to participate if they felt the process was not fair and valid.

The inclusion of human rights principles could have a positive impact on the design and delivery of cash transfer programmes as it would highlight the element of entitlement and right to protection for communities in need, while laying the groundwork for fairer implementation of initiatives rather than a focus on garnering political power over in time (Hurrell et al., 2012: 269).

With this in mind, the benefits of adopting social protection policies and practices are significant but it is evident that the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of transfer programmes both internally and externally (evaluating unintended effects) is of paramount importance if these programmes are going to make a valuable and sustainable contribution to the fight to reduce poverty and vulnerability in African countries and the developing world as whole.
3. Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

For the purposes of this research study, a theoretical approach and conceptual framework will be utilised to analyse the findings on social protection. A conceptual framework:

…explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied – the key factors, constructs or variables – and the presumed relationships among them. Frameworks can be rudimentary or elaborate, theory-driven or commonsensical, descriptive or causal (Miles et al, 1994: 18).

For a conceptual framework for this research study, the point of departure is a functional approach to social protection which evolves into transformation—specifically a move away from more traditional safety net support for poor and vulnerable individuals towards “building a case for stronger role of social protection in terms of empowering the poor and transforming the conditions in which they struggle to construct viable livelihoods” (Devereux et al., 2004: 26).

**Figure 4: Conceptual Framework for Social Protection Activities**

![Conceptual Framework](image-url)
The figure above outlines the conceptual framework developed by the Devereux et al. that shows the relationship between the different levels of social protection and the measures or modalities utilised to provide support (Figure 4). The conceptual framework proposed by Devereux et al. is deemed quite positive, holistic and proactive as it touches on initiatives that address issues around prevention (social insurance), promotion (livelihood promotion) and provision (social assistance) with the aim of transforming the drivers of poverty and vulnerability (Devereux et al., 2004: 11). It is important to reiterate that this research study will focus on safety nets which falls under the category of social assistance (shown in orange) such as cash transfer programmes. The framework shown above also introduces a fourth measure that focuses on transformative action which addresses issues relating to social exclusion and equity promotion through advocating for special vulnerable groups by supporting awareness and sensitisation of individuals and/or communities which will positively impact the societal attitudes and/or behaviours (Devereux et al., 2004: 10).

This particular measure seeks to empower and promote social justice and equity through building up the level of empowerment of vulnerable groups and ensuring that social protection is understood as a right and entitlement. An example of a transformative action would be development of a campaign to deal with anti-discrimination issues related to people living with HIV/AIDS in a particular region as it focuses specifically on dealing with a social issues and/or need rather than on an economic challenge faced by a vulnerable group. A transformative intervention of this nature can relate to various other social protection measures such as protective or promotive, as well as being a transformative measure in it of itself (Devereux et al., 2004: 25).

As noted in the conceptual framework above, there is either a direct or indirect relationship between the different measures of social protection. It is important to understand how the different social protection activities relate to each other. As shown above, a school feeding programme to provide meals for children who are attending school is presented above (Figure 4). Such an initiative would have not only protective benefits as the children are more likely to attend school to receive a free meal, but additional productive benefits as there is now an added incentive to coerce parents to allow children to attend rather than engaging in other income earning activities such as herding cattle. Another example is the use of microfinance as both a preventative and promotive measure of social protection. A household could join a micro-
finance scheme or engage in crop diversification activities which would serve as a means of both preventing the household from falling back into poverty due to unexpected shocks or selling assets to pay for medicine or hospital stays; it could also assist in building up capital and strengthening livelihoods within a household (Ellis, 2009: 7).

The researcher shall adopt the definition of social protection as outlined in the Kenya National Social Protection Policy which defines it as:

Policies and actions, including legislative measures, that enhance the capacity of and opportunities for the poor and vulnerable to improve and sustain their lives, livelihoods, and welfare, that enable income-earners and their dependants to maintain a reasonable level of income through decent work, and that ensure access to affordable healthcare, social security, and social assistance (Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development, 2011: v).

With regard to poverty, this study shall adopt an alternative approach that is multidimensional in nature, and that focuses on “failures…of human life—hunger, unemployment, homelessness, illness, and health care, powerlessness and victimisation, and social injustice; they all add up to an assault on human dignity” (UNDP, 2006: 7). Additionally, this study shall also adopt the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies’ definition of vulnerability to refer to the “diminished capacity of an individual or group to anticipate, cope with, resist and recover from the impact of a natural or man-made hazard” (IFRC, 2015). This relates closely to Devereux and Ellis’ understanding of vulnerability that focuses less on poverty and/or food insecurity, but rather on the possibility of facing risks that could have dangerous ramifications with regard to a household or individual’s livelihood (Ellis et al, 2009: 23). For the purpose of this research, vulnerable groups will include children, women, older people, people with disability, people with chronic illnesses and marginalised communities such as ethnic minorities. The focus on these vulnerable groups is directly corresponds to the special groups highlighted by the National Gender and Equality Commission of Kenya in an effort to curb discrimination and promote freedom and equality of citizens (NGEC, 2014: 8).

Moreover, the gender dimension will also be taken into account when analysing the findings as the relationship between vulnerability and gender continues to persist in Kenya. Gender will be referred to as a social construct that focuses on socio-cultural distinctions between men and women rather than a focus of difference in sex (Heywood, 2014: 423). The fact
remains that despite the formulation and implementation of policies and interventions that tackle a multitude of development issues in Kenya, there is still a need to work towards fully integrating women issues and needs when designing and implementation development initiatives such as social protection programmes. In addition to mainstreaming gender to ensure that all people have equal access and opportunity to engage in the society in which they exist, it raises an additional perspective relating to equity. This can in turn be linked to Amartya Sen’s argument around basic needs and the provision of support such as resources. In this respect, just because support is being provided does not mean that it would fulfil or meet the needs of an individual or community. Sen’s well known example of a bicycle as a means of providing transportation may not assist in improving a person’s well-being. It may be useful to a young farm worker who would save time and costs when travelling to and from work, but if given to a person with a physical disability, the bicycle is rendered useless (Wells, 2015).

Amartya Sen, an Indian philosopher, economist and winner of the Nobel Prize in 1998, made significant contributions to development studies with his work on capabilities and freedom to choose as a means of understanding development, rather than focusing on economic models. This contribution had a great impact in the formulation of the Human Development Index (HDI) which focuses on individuals and their capabilities as a means of measuring development in a state, rather than relying on evidence provided from assessing the economic growth of a country (Heywood, 2014: 384). The human development index focuses on indicators such as life expectancy, level of education and income per capita as a means of ascertain the level of development in a particular state (UNDP, 2014: 33).

Sen’s capability approach centres on the idea of positive freedom whereby he argues that poverty resulting in hunger, for example, is not a result of a lack of food, but rather that individuals in a society lack access to opportunities and/or capabilities to be able to do something about it. This could be due to lack of services, income or relevant resources. Positive freedom is defined as “self-realisation and the development of human capacities;” in short, “freedom to be or do something” (Heywood, 2014: 361).

The capability approach is useful for the purposes of this research study as it allows the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomena around poverty and vulnerability and its relationship to the well-being of individuals and/or communities in Kenya.
Figure 5: Equality or Equity?

The figure above shows the difference between equality and equity through provision of a box ladder to help a group of boys watch a baseball match. It could be ascertained that even though one provides a support measure to each of the boys watching the baseball match, not all of the boys will be able to reap the benefit of the box ladder equally. Therefore, only those who are in a particular stage or position in society could benefit and have their well-being improved while others who are vulnerable continue to suffer, or not enjoy the baseball game for instance.

In summation, the utilisation of Amartya Sen’s capability approach as a theoretical frame in addition to the conceptual framework on social protection developed by Devereux et al. (2004) will enable the researcher to comprehensively analyse the findings on social assistance programmes in Kenya bearing in mind the importance of quality of life and the freedom to realise, albeit progressively, a better state of being. Moreover, the researcher will take into account notions of inclusivity by ensuring to prioritise issues related to equality and equity in addition to taking into account issues related to mainstreaming within social protection initiatives in Kenya.
4. Research Methodology

4.1. Approach

The choice of methodology for this research will be a qualitative desk study that focuses on analysis of the social assistance cash transfer programmes currently implemented in Kenya. These programmes are: the Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP), the Orphans and Vulnerable Children Cash Transfer Programme (CT-OVC), the Older Persons Cash Transfer Programme (OPCT), and the People living with Severe Disability Cash Transfer Programme (PWSD-CT).

Abductive reasoning shall be applied when analysing the research findings in an effort to explain patterns or trends that emerge from the data collected so as to ascertain the best logical explanation for the trends and/or patterns found from sources (Robson, 2011:37). The use of abductive reasoning presents an opportunity for the researcher to identify and analyse concepts and themes that emerge in an effort to form an “explanatory hypothesis” or rather interpretation of the best explanation (Walton, 2004: 8).

4.2. Research Outline and Sources

Prior to unpacking the methodological plan, the researcher developed a research tree in an effort to gain an overview of the research process for this particular study. The figure here below outlines the process of identifying the research problem, objective, relevance and questions of the research study (Figure 5).
This methodological approach included a review of literature from secondary sources including data collected from existing research from the Government of Kenya and non-state actors such as international and bi-lateral donors, international non-governmental bodies and implementing agencies operating in the East African region such as civil society organisations, NGOs\(^8\) and the private sector. This began with searching and reviewing literature that contained information that related to the research problem that was being investigated. It was essential to focus on ensuring relevant secondary sources were identified rather than aiming for comprehensiveness as “relevant works are those that have important implications for design, conduct, or interpretation of the study, not simply those that deal with the topic, or in the defined field, or substantive area, of the research” (Maxwell, 2006: 28).

The first step in searching for literature to review was meeting with Mattias Rieloff, the Peace and Development Work subject librarian at Linnaeus University in Vaxjo, Sweden who shared information about the different types of potential sources one could utilise when undertaking research. Robson (2011) cites this as an important strategy when commencing

\(^8\) Non-Governmental Organisations
research as the subject librarian is an invaluable resource that could assist in identifying various print and electronic resources that are available, and potentially paid for by the university which improves the level of access a researcher can have to sources such as electronic journals (Robson, 2011: 52). Moreover, the subject librarian was able to share information on how to request for additional literature that was not available online or in the University catalogue, but rather available through interlibrary loans from other local libraries and from the Linnaeus University campus in Kalmar.

The next step involved identifying various electronic databases using key terms that included, but are not limited to, *social protection, Kenya, social transfers, cash transfers, social policy, social assistance, social protection policies/practices, social protection rights and social protection frameworks* to name a few. Databases utilised for research included: Google Scholar, One Search, Academic Search Elite (EBSCO), JSTOR, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), Wiley Online Library, Worldwide Political Science (ProQuest) and the Nordic Africa Institute.

Moreover, relevant statistical information related to the research objective and problem was collected through researching data compiled by various United Nations bodies, the World Bank, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in addition to available data sets by various donor agencies such as the Department for International Development (DFID), independent think tanks such as the Oversees Development Institute (ODI), and academic and research publications from universities such as the International Development Studies (IDS) department at the University of Sussex.

The variety of databases allowed the researcher to have access to a different publications and articles, and although there were overlaps in terms of materials found, it was important not to limit oneself to one database because it would not provide assurance that the information was sufficient (Robson, 2011: 53).

### 4.3 Validity and Reliability

Although some literature discusses validity and reliability almost interchangeably, it is important to note that although closely connected, validity refers to “the issue of whether an indicator … devised to gauge a concept really measures a concept,” while reliability refers to “the consistency of a measure of a concept” (Bryman, 2008: 149-151). Validity and reliability are key
in terms of assessing the quality of research and the potential it may have for broader investigation in the future (furthering the research). Validity focuses on measuring and/or investigating what a researcher indicated that they are planning to investigate while reliability focuses on the precision and dependability of research methods, tools and techniques to undertake a scientific study (Mason, 2002: 39).

The tools used to measure variables relating to the social protection initiatives in Kenya are accurately and consistently used throughout this research study. Moreover, the research study findings, analysis and conclusion were found to be valid and legitimate in developing valuable scientific results in relation to the research problem and aim of the study.

In summation, there are aspects of this research, particularly in terms of considerations for the future which is found in the conclusion chapter that can be termed as generalizable. Although the considerations will primarily relate to claims and/or outcomes on good practices and lessons learned from the findings and analysis of the four national cash transfers in Kenya, there will be generalizable assertions made in relation to the wider broader debate on cash transfers in the region and other developing nations that strive to develop comprehensive social protection policies and practices.
5. Research Findings

5.1. Background and Historical Context

Since the end of colonization and the beginning of independence in 1963, the Republic of Kenya has been taking steps towards improving the quality of life for Kenyan citizens through putting in place various development policies and frameworks that aim to reduce poverty and promote social cohesion (Ministry of State for Planning and National Development, 2012: 11). A fundamental step in making this goal a reality has been the development of the ‘new’ Constitution of Kenya that was drafted and ratified in 2010 after a successful referendum process in which millions of Kenyans participated. The development and adoption of a new Constitution, to replace the previous Constitution put in place after Kenya became an independent nation from British Colonial power, was a positive step forward to work towards ending “the political manipulation of perceptions of marginalization and exclusion that has contributed to interethnic strife in Kenya” (ICTJ, 2014: 7).

Since independence, Kenya has faced a myriad of human rights violations such as ethnic clashes, unlawful torture and arrests, corruption, impunity and misuse of office in addition to violations against vulnerable groups such as women and children to name a few (U.S. Department of State, 2011). The most recent example of these violations was the 2007 to 2008 Post Election Violence in Kenya that saw 1,100 people lose their lives in addition to approximately 660,000 individuals become displaced many of which have yet to be resettled or to receive remuneration from the government (Amnesty, 2014). Since then, many citizens have perceived the current constitution of Kenya as a means of improving accountability of the state in an effort to make amends for past human rights violations through reparation for citizens who experienced injustices and paving a way forward in terms of ensuring such injustices do not become a recurrence (ICTJ, 2014: 3).

After the referendum process, Kenyans rallied around a spirit of hope not only because the voting process was free of violence and/or injustice, but also because citizens were now collectively focused on building a brighter future to overcome challenges relating to poverty and beyond (Gettleman, 2010). Moreover, the Constitution of Kenya has integrated agreements that the Republic of Kenya had ratified such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights (1981), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) among others, in an effort to operate within a
framework that was robust, comprehensive and holistic and that addressed gaps deemed important particularly by Kenyans and generally by the international community as a whole.

Over the past few decades, the pervasive issue of poverty and vulnerability continues to afflict this relatively new democratic nation despite efforts by the state to “ensure that all Kenyans live in dignity and exploit their human capabilities for their own social and economic development” (Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development, 2011: v). World Bank data indicates that 45.9% of Kenya’s total population of 44.3 million citizens still languish in poverty which sharply contrasts its immediate neighbours, Uganda and Tanzania that have 16.4% and 28.2% of the population living in poverty respectively (World Bank, 2015). Moreover, Kenya possesses a low score on the Human Development Index, specifically ranking 147 out of 187 countries in terms of life expectancy, education and standard of living (HDR, 2015).

5.2. Social Protection Categories in Kenya

Social Protection is divided into three (3) main and/or formal categories in Kenya, namely: social security, health insurance and social assistance. Social security and health insurance fall under the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) and the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF) respectively. The NSSF mandate is to offer services to individuals or families from the formal and informal sector with regard to receipt and management of contributions for financial security (NSSF, 2015). The Government of Kenya is currently working to pass legislature to improve the current pension plan by making it more robust and improving coverage to better serve its citizens as coverage and minimum contribution fees is found to be low in addition to leaving out a large percentage of the population (Dau, 2003: 29). Similarly, the NHIF also has low contributions with the highest acceptable contribution being approximately $4 a month towards savings (Dau, 2003: 29). Moreover, the state has faced negative media with regard to health insurance provision in recent years due to misappropriation of funds to ‘non-existent clinics’ which has seen NHIF officials face charges (Standard Media, 2012). Efforts are being made to reform the health corporation.

Social assistance includes national cash transfers, food distribution, public works and grants (one off payments). There are five national cash transfers programmes in Kenya: the Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP), the Orphans and Vulnerable Children Cash Transfer
Programme (CT-OVC), the Older Persons Cash Transfer Programme (OPCT), People living with Severe Disabilities Cash Transfer Programme (PWSD-CT) and the Urban Food Subsidy Cash Transfer Programme (UFSCT)\(^9\) (World Bank, 2013a). These programmes have been supported in terms of funding and implementation with the assistance of international development partners such as the World Bank, the Department for International Development (DFID), and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) with close cooperation with the state through its relevant government structures such as the Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Services, Education, Health, Devolution and Planning, and the Interior and Coordination of National Government (Ikiara, 2007:3; MICT, 2014). Food distributions and one off grants have also benefitted hundreds of thousands of Kenyans through emergency food relief and school feeding programmes, and absorption of the youth into the job market respectively (Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development, 2011: 10).

Social Protection is not a new concept in Kenya, although were traditionally recognized as coping mechanisms. Informal support within communities also falls into the assistance category as a key coping mechanism facilitated through development and maintenance of networks between family/community members or through membership of a local association such as a cooperative or self-help groups i.e. Chamas or merry go rounds\(^10\) (Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development, 2011: 11). From a historical standpoint, the family and community/village support has been the backbone of social protection not only within Kenya, but across many African nations such as Ethiopia, Ghana, Eritrea and South Africa, whereby the responsibility for individuals is spread throughout the community rather than the obligation of the individual’s household (Oduro, 2010: 15). This family and community support included caring for children, the elderly or the sick, raising funds for medication and hospital costs and support with school fees or burial fees (Oduro, 2010: 15-17).

The importance of informal support within family or community structures also relates to the fact that a large percentage of individuals rely heavily on establishing livelihoods outside the formal economy which excludes them from taking part in formal protection schemes such as

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\(^9\) The Urban Food Subsidy Cash Transfer Programme has been discontinued as of late 2014

\(^{10}\) A micro-finance scheme whereby members contribute a sum of money e.g. $1 at a Chama meeting (held weekly/bi-weekly or monthly) and at the end of the meeting, the sum is presented to one of the member’s on a rotating schedule. The receiving member rotates and sees each member receive the sum at varying meetings.
social security and/or health insurance contributory schemes more commonly utilised by those in the formal sector (Sudharshan, 2001: 3). Some argue that a scale up of more formal social protection measures will erode informal social protection support, but evidence suggests that improvement of formal social protection could increase the welfare and flexibility in providing support to dependents in addition to increasing inclusivity ensuring those in need are targeted for protection support for the most vulnerable including groups such as women, people living with HIV and AIDS, people suffering from chronic illnesses, orphans and vulnerable children and people with disabilities (Oduro, 2010: 19-20). This would be especially effective in communities that may not take needs of the vulnerable into account due to discrimination and/or stigma.

5.3. Funding

Social protection is the responsibility of the state, however across sub-Saharan Africa, humanitarian relief and aid (i.e. food aid and social transfer programmes) are largely financed by non-state actors such as donor agencies, international development organisations, and the private sector to name a few (Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development, 2011:ix).

As shown in the figure here below, this reality is not the case in Kenya as the “government is the largest source of financing to social protection (55 percent), followed by financing support from development partners (22 percent) and members of contributory schemes (22 percent)” (Ministry of State for Planning and National Development, 2012: viii).

Figure 7: Funding Sources for the Social Protection in Kenya [2005-2010]
Although government ownership shows promise, concerns about the sustainability of social protection initiatives, primarily of non-state actors remains a challenge. This is evidenced by the shift in sub-Saharan African from emergency and disaster relief to increased investment in longer-term development programmes which is heavily dependent on donor funding and technical support (Barrientos et al., 2009: 446)

Similar to informal social protection, it is evident that formal social protection initiatives have been developed by the state and non-state actors over the past few decades, but unfortunately remain fragmented. However, since the approval of the National Social Protection Policy in 2011, an important step has been taken towards developing a more comprehensive and integrated approach to meeting the expectations outlined in social protection policies and frameworks. This is especially important due to the continually high incidence of poverty in Kenya, despite the rise in economic growth (5.4% in 2014), that exacerbates vulnerability which contributes to an inability to manage internal shocks such as defencelessness and external shocks such as natural disasters and stresses (World Bank, 2015; Ministry of State for Planning and National Development, 2012: 9).

It could be argued after undertaking the literature review that there is a dissonance between the development of a national social protection policy and plan, and its relationship to the reality on the ground. Albeit an important contribution from the Government and relevant stakeholders, the fact remains that the inability to translate legislation into practical and sustainable results may be detrimental for Kenyans, particularly the poor and vulnerable, who need the bulk of government support.

5.4. Operational Cycle of a Cash Transfer Programme

In summation, the next sections shall present the detailed findings on the four current national cash transfer programmes of Kenya with the aim of understanding how these programmes were adopted and how they are being delivered to citizens at present. Before unpacking the cash transfers, it would be important to have a brief overview of what a typical cash transfer programme operational cycle is like. The figure here below shows a basic design scheme of the processes involved in a cash transfer programme with an emphasis of the four core administrative processes which include:
- **Registration** of the community and/or individuals
- **Enrolment** of eligible beneficiaries onto the programme
- **Payment delivery** of grant to beneficiaries through a relevant payment method i.e. a payment token
- **Grievance and redress mechanisms** to allow beneficiaries to register any complaints they may face i.e. a lost payment token (Barrett et al, 2015: 2)

**Figure 8: Basic Cash Transfer Operational Cycle**

The figure above outlines the process of registration through to payments of recipients (eligible beneficiaries) in addition to highlighting the importance of public communications as a means of sharing information and sensitising the beneficiaries or targeted community with knowledge on the aim and purpose of the programme and how each of the core processes will be delivered. This could include information about days to come and register, what identification documents to carry, what targeting criteria will be utilised to identify eligible households, and/or what day (s) payment will be delivered (Barrett et al, 2015: 2-11).

All households registered including eligible beneficiary households and non-eligible beneficiary households have their data entered into a management information system (MIS)
which links to a broader *single registry system* operated and managed at a national level. This system linkage is beneficial in allowing operational personnel to link to the larger single registry which contains data on the other cash transfer programmes in the country (Garcia, 2012: 194). Social protection MISs can perform a range of functions that include but are not limited to:

- Identification of applicants and beneficiaries through targeting and registration
- Management of appeals and grievance processes
- Exit and graduation of beneficiaries
- Production of payment lists
- Reconciliation of payments (Chirchir et al, 2011:3).

Another important factor is the use of a complaints and grievance system as an accountability mechanism to enable beneficiaries to register grievances such as appeals against exclusion from the programme, long distances to the payment point or loss of a payment token to name a few. In the recent years, the adoption of grievance mechanisms for cash transfer programmes has supported a rights based approach to cash transfers whereby participants feel empowered and safe to raise concerns without fear that their beneficiary status would be in jeopardy. This also engrains the concept on entitlement to social assistance support rather than viewing cash grants as a gift (Oversees Development Institute, 2013: 4; Barrett et al, 2015: 9).

With this basic operational scheme in mind, the next sub-sections will unpack the current social assistance programmes in Kenya.

5.5. **The Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP)**

The Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP) is an unconditional cash transfer programme that delivers regular grants to households that are living in extreme poverty and food insecurity in Northern Kenya. The Hunger Safety Net Programme is one of the four national cash transfers programmes that collectively make up the Kenya National Safety Net Programme which is government-led. This programme offers support to poor and vulnerable households in the four poorest counties in Kenya which are Turkana, Marsabit, Wajir and Mandera.

These counties are also the most arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL) in the country (see Annex 1). These four counties have extremely high poverty rates. As of 2005/6, Turkana had 94.3% poverty rate which affected 481,442 people, Marsabit had a 91.7% poverty rate which affected 118,786 people, Wajir had a 84% poverty rate which affected 301,422 people and
Mandera had a 87.8% poverty rate which affected 225,812 people (KIHBS 2005/06; Kenya Open Source Data, 2015). Also, populations residing in the Northern Kenya region have faced historical marginalisation from the rest of Kenya in addition to being prone to drought and famine (National Drought Management Authority, 2015).

The programme was designed in two (2) phases: HSNP Phase I which operated from 2007 until 2012 and HSNP Phase II which commenced in 2013 and will be handed over to the Government of Kenya at the end of 2017. The overall goal of this programme is to contribute towards the reduction of poverty, vulnerability and food insecurity through the delivery of cash to households that are deemed to be extremely poor. The programme currently delivers cash to eligible households, also known as beneficiaries, every two months in the sum of Kenya Shillings (KES) 4,900 which roughly translated to $50\textsuperscript{11}. In the previous phase, the cash grant was approximately half of the current amount delivered today (Merttens, 2013:1).

The main objectives of the programme include ensuring that the most poor and vulnerable households in Kenya are supported through safety nets, specifically cash transfer programmes with an emphasis on effective targeting, delivery and scale up. It is funded by the Government of Kenya, the Department for International Development (DFID) and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID). The Hunger Safety Net Programme is implemented by the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) and falls under the Kenya’s Ministry of Devolution and Planning (National Drought Management Authority, 2015).

5.5.1. Registration and Targeting

The first phase of the HSNP focuses on registering households and identifying 60,000 households (approximately 300,000 beneficiaries) that fit the criteria to get on the programme. The second phase was a scale up of the first phase which aimed to get 100,000 households (approximately 720,000 beneficiaries) onto the programme with support from the Government of Kenya (Garcia, 2012: 261; Pinney, 2013: 4). The registration of beneficiaries was undertaken by NGOs namely, Oxfam, CARE International and Save the Children UK due to the presence the organisations had in the arid and semi-arid regions (Garcia, 2012: 262). In the first phase of the

\textsuperscript{11} Currency Conversion through Oanda: http://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/; USD 1 equates to approximately KES 98.95 thus USD 49.5 equates to approximately KES 4,900
HSNP, the NGOs Oxfam, CARE International and Save the Children UK took part in the targeting process but in the second phase, the targeting was undertaken by the Government of Kenya through the National Drought Management Authority and its representatives at the local level (Pinney, 2013:6). The aim was to register households across the four counties followed by utilising targeting criteria to establish which households were eligible to get onto the programme.

In the first phase, the targeting methodology included the use of community-based targeting (CBT), dependency ratio and/or social pension (SP). The community based targeting methodology encompassed the bringing together of a community in a particular location or sub-location and allowing the households within that community to rank themselves by order of need. This meant that households would identify the poorest households at the bottom of the list, and the well-off households at the top of the list. The dependency ratio methodology looked at the structure of the household and identified those which had a high number of dependants particularly members under the age of 18 years or over 55 years in addition to households that had members suffering from chronic illnesses and/or living with a disability. The idea behind this methodology was the fact that many dependants put a large strain on the household to support members who were unable to contribute toward the household survival i.e. unable to gain an income or take part in livelihood activities. The social pension methodology was relatively straightforward as it identified an individual (s) over the age of 55 years as eligible for the cash transfer programme (Merttens, 2013:1).

In the second phase, an evaluation was undertaken to identify which of the three (3) targeting methodologies utilised in the first phase was most effective in identifying the poorest households in the four counties of Northern Kenya. The community based targeting was found to be the best measure because community participation in the process was high and the likelihood of households to raise grievances about being excluded were rare since they personally took part in the ranking process as a community. However, the donor agencies advocated for the use of the proxy means test in addition to the community based targeting (Pinney, 2013: 7).

The proxy means test is a means of ascertaining poor households in developing countries through estimating the income of a household by administering a questionnaire that collects information using various indicators or proxies such as:

- Demographic information for instance the number, age and sex of members in the household;
- Human capital for instance the number of years of schooling members have completed;
- Household assets for instance a bicycle, radio or television;
- Productive assets for instance camels, goats, land for small scale farming;
- Characteristics of a household’s physical home for instance the type of roofing or flooring in the home i.e. a thatched roof and a mud floor in comparison to a corrugated roof and cement flooring (Australian Aid, 2011: 1).

Each proxy is given a particular weight to understand the impact it has on household expenditure which helps statisticians assess household welfare and to give each household a score. Households are then scored and compiled into groups that reflect the very poor (score of 1), the poor (score of 2), the middle (score of 3) and the better off (score of 4). Once a score has been determined, ranking of the households by the community and the ranking from the proxy means testing are compared to ensure that there are no large discrepancies between the two. If large discrepancies appear, the lists are returned to the location or sub-location for investigation through verifying the community’s choice and re-administering the proxy means test questionnaire a second time. Moreover, once the list has been finalised, the targeted beneficiary list is then checked against the single registry to ensure that beneficiaries are not also registered on other social protection programmes such as the Orphans and Vulnerable Children Cash Transfer Programme (CT-OVC), the Older Persons Cash Transfer Programme (OPCT), or the People living with severe disability cash transfer programme (PWSD-CT) as this would be deemed duplication of support (Pinney, 2013: 4-9).

5.5.2. Programme Delivery

Once beneficiary lists have been finalised, the next step entails enrolment into the programme. The unconditional cash grant is delivered with support from the private sector, specifically through Financial Sector Deepening (FSD) Kenya who contracted Equity Bank, a provider of financial services with headquarters in Nairobi and over 135 branches across the country in addition to several new branches in the arid and semi-arid areas in Northern Kenya to support payment delivery to poor and vulnerable beneficiaries (National Drought Management

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12 Source: [www.equitybank.co.ke/](http://www.equitybank.co.ke/)
Authority, 2014:3; Equity Bank, 2015). In areas where infrastructure is lacking and bank branches are inaccessible, Equity Bank engaged the support of agents who owned local businesses or stores who served as point-of-sale locations where beneficiaries could access their cash grants. Equity Bank was responsible for opening bank accounts and issuing payment tokens (MasterCard) for eligible households and collected identity card information and biometric data which would enable a beneficiary to receive their cash at any time with a valid identity card and matching fingerprint. These agents utilised point-of-sale devices which could operate offline and that required a fingerprint verification to ensure that the actual beneficiary received the cash. Once beneficiaries had been paid during a payment cycle, the agent would go to an Equity bank branch where he/she would have their point-of-sale devices placed online to ascertain how much money in total had been paid out to beneficiaries, at which point, the total would be credited back into the agent’s bank account (Equity, 2015; Garcia, 2012: 263).

As an incentive for agents to participate in the programme, a transaction commission of USD 0.64 was paid to agents for each successful transaction made. Local agents also benefitted from engaging in the programme as beneficiaries residing in the area would more often than not purchase items such as food stuffs at the same shopkeepers and traders who delivered their payments thus having a positive impact on the local economy. Also, in an effort to curb overcrowding at local businesses that had point-of-sale devices, the beneficiaries were put on a rotating schedule if needed to lessen the possibility that the agent may not have enough liquid cash to pay many beneficiaries at once. Moreover, the fact that grants were linked to a bank account allowed beneficiaries the freedom collect cash on their own volition in addition to letting beneficiaries collect the amount they needed rather than withdrawing the full cash payment (Ellis et al, 2009:61).

5.5.3. Rights Component of the Hunger Safety Net Programme

The social protection rights component of the HSNP was managed by HelpAge International\(^\text{13}\), an international NGO which champions the rights of older people across the globe. The rights component focuses on the notion of rights and responsibilities of those engaged in the programme. The rights component strives to ensure that the rights of the beneficiaries are

\(^{13}\) Source: [http://www.helpage.org/who-we-are/](http://www.helpage.org/who-we-are/)
protected and that they are aware of the accountability mechanism available to them if they should feel the need to raise complaints or grievances. HelpAge ensures that the HSNP is governed on the principles of non-discrimination, accountability, participation, empowerment and equality (Barrett, 2008: 320). In layman’s terms, HelpAge acts as a beneficiary advocate mandated to collect and facilitate action on grievances from beneficiaries with the help of a complaints and grievances management information system (C&G MIS) which is linked to the overall HSNP MIS managed at the national level. HelpAge operates at both the national and local level as follows:

- **National Level:** HelpAge International Regional Office houses the HSNP Social Protection Rights Manager, Programme Officer and Assistant in addition to support staff such as the M&E advisor and the grants and contracts accountant. Staff at this level engage with donors and ministries regularly and manage field staff in the four counties in Northern Kenya.

- **County Level:** HelpAge directly implements the programme in Turkana County (largest county with the number of beneficiaries in the programme). In Marsabit, Wajir and Mandera, HelpAge has contracted implementing partners Pastoralist Integrated Support Programme (PISP), District Pastoralist Association (DPA), Horn of Africa Women Empowerment Network – Kenyan Agency (HAWENKA) and Rural Agency for Community Development and Assistance (RACIDA) to implement the programme on its behalf (National Drought Management Authority, 2015).

As the arid and semi-arid lands that the programme covers are rather vast with difficult terrain, HelpAge International formulated groups called Rights Committees (RCs) who are individuals living in a particular community who volunteer to act as representatives of the community members in a sub-location. Rights Committee members are volunteers who HelpAge works through to deliver important messaging about the programme to community members in addition to collecting complaints and grievances on behalf of HelpAge and its partners. Rights Committee members are chosen by the community to represent them and are regularly sensitised on issues relating to resolving complaints, referring complaints in addition to broader issues relating to human rights as well. A rights committee could contain between 8-12 members of a community. In some instances if a complaint is received that can be resolved by a Rights
Committee group or member, then the complaint is registered and resolved immediately. An example would be a member of the household complaining that the cash transfer is not being utilised for the good of the household (National Drought Management Authority, 2014: 10).

In other instances, complaints need to be escalated for actioning either at the county or national level. Complaints of this nature include but are not limited to: A lost or stolen payment token, an agent refusing to pay out the full cash grant amount, excessive distance to the pay point, or death of a beneficiary. These types of complaints would need actioning at a higher level such as the Equity Bank branch at county level or the National Drought Management Authority at the national level (Barrett, 2015: 9-11).

Complaints are collected regularly by the field staff of HelpAge and its partner organisations and entered into the complaints and grievance management information system where they can be accessed and forwarded immediately. HelpAge is able to track the progress of each case and refer updates to field staff who can relay it back to beneficiaries though relevant Rights Committee members (National Drought Management Authority, 2014: 10).

The rights component also serves as an accountability mechanism for beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries as a means of raising wider rights complaints. HelpAge works in conjunction with the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights to deal with wider rights complaints with remit beyond the programme (National Drought Management Authority, 2015).

Currently, the HSNP is the only programme within the National Safety Net Programme in Kenya that has a comprehensive complaints and grievance mechanism to ensure accountability, although evaluation recommendations of the other cash transfer programmes advocate for the development and strengthening of mechanisms to support complaints and grievance management (World Bank, 2013b: 13).

5.5.4. Overall Results

The Hunger Safety Net Programme is a unique social protection initiative that targets some of the poorest and most vulnerable people in the Northern Kenya region. Over the past five years, independent research has been conducted to gain a deeper understanding of intended and unintended impacts of the cash transfer programme in the ASAL region. Evidence suggests that the HSNP has decreased the levels of food insecurity and poverty in the four counties through an improvement on food expenditure and malnutrition rates, a lessened dependence on emergency
food aid and an increase in the accrual and retention assets rather than selling off assets when faced with unexpected shocks and stresses which showed increased resilience. Moreover, households were found to be more engaged in accessing services relating to health and education while various communities experienced an improvement in the local markets due to the injection of cash in the area. This improved the variety of goods and services provided in the region. More women were reported as being more empowered and open to engaging in the public sphere such as taking part in the Rights Committee(s). Moreover, vulnerable groups such as children and older people were noted to have had an improvement in their well-being since the programme was rolled out. Some unintended impacts of the HSNP included dependency on the regular cash grants, an increase in cost of various key commodities and issues relating to conflict and insecurity particularly which led some households to move to safer areas (Sabates-Wheeler et al, 2012: 8).

5.6. The Orphans and Vulnerable Children Cash Transfer Programme (CT-OVC)

The Orphans and Vulnerable Children Cash Transfer programme (CT-OVC) is a Government-led and implemented initiative with support from the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the Department for International Development (DFID) and the World Bank. It is termed as Kenya’s flagship social protection programme. The CT-OVC programme targets households with orphans and vulnerable children with a particular emphasis on providing support for carers who are guardians and protectors of children in their homes. The CT-OVC programme goal was “to strengthen the capacity of the poor to care for and protect orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), to encourage their fostering and retention within their families and communities, and to promote their human capital development” (FAO, 2013: 1). The overall premise of the development of the CT-OVC programme stemmed from the Government of Kenya’s prioritisation of children facing vulnerabilities due to intergenerational poverty and HIV/AIDS. The idea was not to focus primarily on poverty reduction as a main programme goal, but rather to focus on the investment in the well-being and potential development of children, orphans and members in the household. The programme was conceived on the foundation of human rights whereby in a setting “where HIV/AIDS and poverty converge,
all children risk being denied their basic human rights to such necessities as shelter, food, clean water, health care, and education (Bryant, 2009: 66).

The design and implementation of the CT-OVC programme commenced in 2004 with the development of pilot programmes for assessment and Cabinet approval. Thereafter, the programme was embedded into the national budget and successfully rolled out. It gained ground rapidly and by 2011, the CT-OVC programme had a coverage of 130,000 beneficiary households and 260,000 orphans and vulnerable children taking part in the programme. (The Kenya CT-OVC Evaluation Team, 2012: 10). Specific objectives under this programme included:

- Food Security improvement due to the additional cash grant which in turn could translate into improved nutrition of household members;
- Education with regard to improvement in schooling of children between the ages of six (6) and 17 years of age with an emphasis on increased enrolment, attendance and retention;
- Health with regard to an improvement in the well-being of children in the household with an emphasis on reductions in mortality and morbidity rates of small children (five (5) years or less) through adoption of positive health practices such as food supplements and vaccinations for children;
- Capacity in the Households with regard to training on issues relating to health and nutrition in addition to support for members of the household living with HIV/AIDS;
- Civil Registration in terms of advocacy for identity cards for carers once they are enrolled onto the programme, and for birth certificates and/or identity cards for the children that they care for (Ward et al, 2010: 1).

As of 2014, the CT-OVC programme had 259,000 beneficiary households taking part in the programme (Mwasiaji, 2015).

5.6.1. Registration and Targeting

The registration and targeting processes took place from 2004 to 2007 where households underwent an eligibility test to ensure that only households that had at least one (1) orphan and/or vulnerable child as a member were targeted. In this particular instance, children are identified as members of the household who are under the age of 18 years. Eligible households would contain: children who were either living with a chronic illness or caring for a guardian
who is living with a chronic illness; children who are orphaned with either one or both parents deceased; and/or children who are living in a child-headed household as either a member or as the head of the household (Ward et al, 2010: 12).

Prior to undergoing the beneficiary selection process to identify eligible households, volunteer committees were set up to identify which geographical regions would be eligible for inclusion into the programme. This was based on national level data from the government that highlighted poverty rates and the pervasiveness of HIV/AIDS when directly linked to children and orphans (The Kenya CT-OVC Evaluation Team, 2012: 12).

The next step was commencing the beneficiary selection process which began with support from Location OVC Committees (LOCs) who were members from the local community such as elders and village heads, who were mandated to develop a list of households that were eligible based on a certain set of criteria relating to poverty and vulnerability indicators. The LOCs are knowledgeable of the populations in their location and thus are mandated to identify households that had households with orphans and vulnerable children and that were deemed poor according to their community. These households would also not be participating in other social protection initiatives that would be providing cash grants or in-kind benefits (Ward et al, 2010: 13).

This methodology could be deemed a brand of community based targeting that allows community leaders and representatives within the LOCs to decide on which households fit the eligibility criteria best. Once all members of the LOC compiled, analysed and agreed on the formation beneficiary list from a particular area, the information was then sent to Nairobi. The next step entailed the sending out of enumerators to visit all of the potential beneficiary households on the list. Additional information is then collected by enumerators with regard to detailed data on the household composition, characteristics of household members including the guardian of the orphan (s) and vulnerable children and income status of the household to ascertain poverty ranking according to proxy indicators. This methodology is exercised through administering a proxy means test. Since the programme is unable to cater to all households that are eligible to get on the programme, the proxy means test is rather helpful in identifying the ultra-poor households that are extremely vulnerable and that need support from the programme first (The Kenya CT-OVC Evaluation Team, 2012: 13).
It is important to note that the ideology behind serving the most vulnerable first while taking steps to progressively reach other eligible households could support the notion that the government’s obligation towards the progressive realisation of rights reinforces the idea that poor and vulnerable households and/or individuals will have their entitlements met when adequate financial resources are available to scale up and include additional beneficiary households.

In a particular location, if it is evident that resources cannot cater for all eligible households, a process of prioritising certain households is undertaken. First priority is given to child-headed and eldest headed households where in the former the child is younger than 18 years of age (the younger the child, the higher the priority) and where with regard to the latter, the care giver is over the age of 18 years (where the older the caregiver, the higher the priority). The second priority is given to households with a large number of orphan and vulnerable children who are dependent on the household head. The third and last priority is given to the remaining households who fit the overall eligibility criteria aforementioned in this section (Bryant, 2009: 69).

The prioritised list or targeted households is then sent an OVC sub-committee and a children’s officer (government representative at the local level dealing with children’s issues) at the district or county level for validation. The process of validation entails verifying the list in the presence of the community in the location through presentation at a public baraza\(^{14}\) to ensure that the community is satisfied with the process. As additional resources become available, households that are eligible but did not meet the first and second priority list criteria can then become enrolled. One key challenge emerged that highlighted the possibility that the elected LOC members could miss out households that they did not know existed, although this issue of exclusion could be raised when the validation process is undertaken at the local level with the community members (Ward et al, 2010: 14).

\(^{14}\) Baraza is a commonly known word in Kenya for community gatherings and/or meetings to discuss issues or share information
The figure above outlines the government’s plan for the scale up of the CT-OVC programme. It is evident that the growth in terms of coverage has increased greatly since the inception period of 2004 – 2006. Currently, the programme is at full-scale and is supporting a large proportion of the 2.4 million orphans and vulnerable children residing in various districts across Kenya. By 2009, government funding rose from the USD 800,000 originally apportioned in 2004 to USD 9,000,000 for the CT-OVC programme and funding has gradually increased ever since with a reported USD 8 billion appropriated for the programme in 2013/2014 (NGEC, 2014: 10).

### 5.6.2. Programme Delivery

Once the targeting list has been finalised and information on enrolled beneficiary households is updated in the programme management information system, a representative of the household (usually the guardian or head of household) is then issued with a programme beneficiary identity card and trained about the different processes such as how and where to collect a cash payments. Moreover, a local community volunteer working with the programme committee at the local level would visit beneficiary households three (3) times a year to regularly sensitise household members on issues such as collection of cash grants, conditionality compliance and any other potential concerns arising with respect to the programme. The idea of conditionality was not enforced on all programme beneficiaries. During the early stages of implementation, it was decided that some households would be subjected to conditionalities that had to be met in order for the household to receive the cash transfer. These conditionalities
included school attendance for children within the household who were of age (for primary school in particular) and attendance of children at the health clinic for immunisations and relevant health checks and/or interventions (for young children in particular). These conditions were administered to various households especially those which had access to educational and health facilities. Households in rural areas that did not have easy access to the aforementioned social services received the cash transfers without any conditionalities attached (Bryant, 2009: 70).

The CT-OVC programme currently provides enrolled households with a cash grant amounting to KES 4,000 at a regular interval every two (2) months with the support of a payment service provider which is Equity Bank and the Postal Corporation of Kenya (PCK). Equity Bank worked to deliver the cash to the Postal Office where the staff were mandated to provide cash transfers to the beneficiaries. The household representative would arrive at the Postal Office in their location and present the staff with the programme beneficiary identity card to receive payment. With regard to exiting the programme, there are several reasons as to why a household would no longer be eligible as a beneficiary household. These include if the household no longer contains orphans and vulnerable children because they are over the age of 18 years or if they meet their demise, or if the guardian of the household does not collect the cash grant from the Postal Office for three (3) consecutive cycles which would amount to inactivity of six (6) months. For enrolled households that are required to adhere to conditionalities, a lack of compliance for three (3) consecutive cycles would result in the household being exited from the CT-OVC programme (NGEC, 2014: 11).

5.6.3. **Overall Results**

The CT-OVC programme has been deemed quite successful with regard to its contribution towards the reduction of poverty in the households who have benefitted from the cash transfers. This improved the household consumption of both food and non-food items in addition to a reduction of 13% of the total number of enrolled households surviving on less than $1.25 a day. Furthermore, the programme allowed beneficiary households to diversify their livelihood activities such as the moving away from more traditional agricultural work in rural areas to engagement in informal casual wage labour, particularly for men, which highlights an impact on economic activities. A decrease in the number of children engaged in agricultural
labour such as farm work was reported. Also, smaller female headed households were reported to produce and consume more dairy (eggs/milk), protein (fish/meat) and/or fruits which would positively impact the nutritional intake of the household members. Illnesses related to malnutrition or contaminated food decreased as the enrolled households had access to health services including training on health preventative measures. Education was another key achievement that found orphans and vulnerable children from beneficiary households were more likely to be enrolled in school than those from non-beneficiary households (FAO, 2015: 2).

5.7. The Older Persons Cash Transfer Programme (OPCT) and the People living with Severe Disabilities Cash Transfer Programme (PWSD-CT)

The Older Persons Cash Transfer Programme and the People living with Severe Disabilities Cash Transfer Programme were both developed and rolled out in 2006. The Older Persons Cash Transfer Programme was formulated for the support of older people who are not engaged in any formal employment, nor are they pensionable citizens. It is important to note that older people who worked in formal employment are covered by the health insurance and social security schemes mentioned earlier in this research study, namely the national hospital insurance fund and the national social security fund respectively. The Older Persons Cash Transfer Programme’s main focus is on supporting poverty reduction of older persons in addition to enhancing the capacity of older people to improve their lives and livelihoods with the assistance of cash grants to eligible households (Mathiu, 2012:6).

The People living with Severe Disabilities Cash Transfer Programme focused on individuals who needed permanent care with regard to support with everyday activities such as being fed, being helped with washing and using sanitation facilities, protection from risks and danger in the surrounding environs and/or from other people who may wish them harm. Those living with disabilities are in need of full time care and comprehensive support from family members and/or guardians which can have a detrimental effect on the carer to be able to engage in other income generating activities outside the household. This was the point of departure with regard to developing a social protection initiative to support disability households through enhancing the capacity of guardians to take care of the household with augmentation from the cash transfers. The main goal of the programme was to improve the lives and livelihoods of people living with severe disabilities through the delivery of regular cash transfers with a
particular emphasis on households that were extremely poor and burdened with the responsibility of providing and caring for the disabled household members (NCPWD, 2015).

5.7.1. Registration and Targeting

The registration and targeting process for the Older Persons Cash Transfer Programme and the People living with Severe Disabilities Cash Transfer Programme does not differ greatly from the processes outlined in the Orphans and Vulnerable Children Cash Transfer Programme as all three (3) of these initiatives are implemented by the Government of Kenya’s Ministry of Labour and Social Services. The criteria for targeting households that are eligible to get on the OPCT or the PWSD-CT programme requires that at least one (1) or more member of the household is an older person or a person living with severe disabilities. The main objective is to offer social protection through the provision of cash transfers that could improve the well-being and access to relevant services of the vulnerable member(s) in the household (Mwasiaji, 2015).

Similar to the Orphans and Vulnerable Children Cash Transfer Programme, the Older Persons cash transfer utilises the location committees (LOCs) who are formed to sensitise the community about the programme in addition to disseminating information about when registration is likely to begin (NGEC, 2014: 10). Moreover, location committee members also formulate a list of beneficiaries who meet the targeting criteria which includes information regarding the poverty status of the households and the presence of an older person or people within the household structure. Also, priority can be given to potential beneficiary households based on the age of the older person or people residing in the household (the older, the higher the priority), followed by the poverty rank of the household and if applicable, a third priority level would be the number of orphans and vulnerable children residing in the household. The fourth and fifth priority would be given to a household based on the number of people living with disabilities or chronic illnesses in the household. Once the potential beneficiary list has been compiled, a public baraza would then take place to ensure that the beneficiary list was validated in the presence of community members (World Bank, 2013b: 7).

The People living with Severe Disabilities Cash Transfer Programme is supported by the District Gender and Social Development (DGSD) staff who work under the Ministry of Labour and Social Services but at the local level. The DGSD officers establish committees are mandated to undertake similar responsibilities to the location committees (LOCs) featured in the OPCT and
the OVC-CT programme with respect to the identification of households that fit the eligibility criteria to get onto the programme (Gitau, 2015). The officers with support from development assistants at the local level work to sensitise the community on the programme objectives and guidelines which promotes a better understanding of why the programme is being undertaken in addition to what criteria will be used to target households in the community. These community assistants work closely with the National Council for Persons with Disabilities who help in organising and coordinating efforts at the local level (World Bank, 2013b: 5-7). There are several criteria that a household must meet in order to be targeted and enrolled in the People living with Severe Disabilities Cash Transfer Programme. The requirements include identification documents such as a national identity card which is usually held by the guardian within the household if they are over the age of 18 years, a full colour photograph of the person living with severe disabilities, a need to register with the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD) and proof that the targeting criteria were met by the household (NCPWD, 2015).

5.7.2. Programme Delivery

There appears to be limited documentation developed that unpacks the process of payments delivery for the Older Persons Cash Transfer Programme and the People living with Severe Disabilities Cash Transfer Programme. Since inception, both programmes utilised the existing systems and infrastructure in place through working with the Postal Corporation of Kenya to deliver cash grants. Although similar to the Orphans and Vulnerable Children cash transfer programme, the link with the private sector, specifically Equity Bank does not apply for the PWSD-CT and the OPCT programmes, thus the Postal Office is the payment delivery point where beneficiaries collect cash grants when the payment cycle is begins (Parker, 2014: 9; Mathiu, 2012: 7).

The cash transfer value for both of the aforementioned programmes is KES 2,000 each month (or KES 4,000 every two months) which is equal in value to the Orphans and Vulnerable Children Cash Transfer programme which receives payment every two months which is the equivalent of a payment cycle (Mwasiaji, 2015; Maina, 2011; Gitau, 2015).
5.7.3. **Overall Results**

Both the PWSD-CT and the OPCT programmes have had a positive impact on the lives of poor and vulnerable communities across Kenya, although the question of coverage has come up as a gap that may need addressing. Additional sentiments on this can be found in the section that raises the issue of coverage as an aspect for consideration.

Beneficiary households enrolled in the Older Persons Cash Transfer Programme have experienced positive results which include a reduction in poverty and an improvement in the livelihood assets as a means of investment. Moreover, households were found to have increased access to social services in relation to health and education in addition to access to markets. Overall, beneficiaries living with severe disabilities felt more empowered and confident particularly amongst their peers (Mathiu, 2012: 12; Ministry of State for Planning and National Development, 2012: 18).

With regard to the People living with Severe Disabilities Cash Transfer Programme, evaluations of the initiative have highlighted several positive outcomes of the programme in relation to the well-being of the disabled person (s) and the household as a whole. These include access to various social services concerning education and health in addition to access to better housing. The cash transfers also had impact on the nutrition of the beneficiary households. In relation to the social sphere, beneficiary households, and in particular members living with severe disabilities, benefitted from being better regarded and esteemed by the community which encouraged involvement and participation in community issues. This important shift in perception allowed for beneficiaries to feel part and parcel of the community rather than being overlooked and disregarded (Gitau, 2015).

5.7.3.1. **For Consideration**

In this section, findings on the Older Persons Cash Transfer Programme and the People living with Severe Disabilities Cash Transfer Programme will be presented side by side due to the limitations of the secondary sources relating to these two (2) programmes. A possible justification for the limited amount of documentation for these programmes might relate to the percentage of the population of older people and people living with severe disabilities in Kenya. The percentage of the population made up of older people is 4.2% which translates into roughly 1,688,000 older people to date while the percentage of the population made up of people living
with severe disabilities is 3.5% which is approximately 1,300,000 people with disabilities (HelpAge, 2015; NGEC, 2014:9).

Although older people and people living with severe disabilities face different sets of challenges that could make them more susceptible to vulnerability, it could be argued that due to the large percentage of youth and adults in Kenya, social protection initiatives in the country may have been a priority in terms of improving effectiveness and coverage of poor and vulnerable communities which in term requires strengthened monitoring and evaluation of programmes in an effort to learn how better to deliver them to Kenyans.
6. Analysis

Despite the design, implementation and delivery of social protection programmes and practices put in place to support the reduction and/or alleviation of poverty and vulnerability in Kenya, a lot remains to be accomplished with regard to developing and managing a social protection strategic framework that aims to make meaningful and sustainable impact in the lives and livelihoods of citizens, especially those trapped in the poverty cycle.

The point of departure of this research study was to gain an in-depth look at what social assistance programmes and initiatives were currently being delivered to Kenyans with the hope of gaining a better understanding of the level of safety net support vulnerable groups had access to in different regions across the country. Earlier in the literature review chapter of this thesis, the researcher unpacked the different categories of social protection measures\(^{15}\) that have been applied to different groups of the population based on need. These included assistance as a protective measure and health insurance and social security as preventative and/or promotive measures. The conceptual framework\(^{16}\) put forth by Devereux et al. (2004) highlighted the interrelated and interconnected nature of social protection measures which in turn advocates for the need for a state to prioritise the development of social protection policies and practices in a manner that is both comprehensive, complementary and well aligned (Devereux et al, 2004: 10; Ministry of State for Planning and National Development, 2012: 110).

In the case of Kenya, the government has put in place a national social protection policy (2011) which is a positive indicator of the state’s commitment to developing a platform for addressing poverty and vulnerability as a means to progressively realise the rights of Kenyans with regard to their rights to basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing in addition to access to services such as water and sanitation, security, freedom to participate in the social and cultural sphere and the opportunity to engage in the economic sector through facilitating financial inclusion. However, there are shortcomings that need to be addressed with regard to translating social protection policy in to practice by ensuring that attention is paid to the design, implementation/operations and management of social protection programmes. In layman’s terms, just because there is a presence of a social protection policy and framework in a state does not automatically translate into the effective and efficient delivery of initiatives that will support

\(^{15}\) See Figure 1
\(^{16}\) See Figure 4
meaningful and inclusive development impacts and growth. Implementation, particularly of large scale social protection programmes, may make a positive contribution in the short term to poor and vulnerable communities. Poor design, operations and delivery can result in being more detrimental to these communities who may face various challenges while participating in programmes. These could include, but are not limited to: being paid the wrong cash transfer value; not knowing when to go and collect payments because of a lack of information and awareness; not factoring in the distance and/or transportation costs to the point-of-sale locations; not developing mechanisms for communities to raise complaints; and/or not factoring in access to markets or social services which renders the cash grant less impactful.

As outlined in the theoretical approach chapter in this thesis, there needs to be an appreciation for the capability approach that Amartya Sen advocates for with regard to looking beyond delivering resources as a means of support, but rather investing in the capacity of, and opportunity for, poor and vulnerable communities to engage in development initiatives in a holistic manner and depending on what stage of the life cycle an individual is in. For example, a child could receive nutritional support such as taking part in a district school feeding programme which would relieve some of the strain on the households to provide a meal for the child in addition to promoting education since the child\textsuperscript{17} will be enrolled and participating at school. After support from these social protection development measures, the child will have a better opportunity and freedom to engage in activities that would improve his/her well-being and the reduce of being subject to poverty, including intergenerational poverty.

This focus on capability and development as freedom also correlates to the concept of transformative social protection measures that champion the rights and social justice agenda “through mobilisation to claim entitlements and rights from the state” in which case Kenyan citizens could be categorised as ‘claim holders’ and the government as ‘duty bearers’ (Devereux et al, 2009: 26).

Furthermore, the transformative approach advocates for development on a foundation that prioritises social inclusion and integration which allows for poor and vulnerable communities to feel protected on the basis of accountability, transparency, non-discrimination and equality, and participation. This approach also highlights the importance not only of gender

\textsuperscript{17} Under the age of 18 years
equality, but also the need to promote equity in an effort to improve quality of life. Just as Amartya Sen promotes the idea of positive freedom, so must states move away from the thinking behind economy for development, but rather focus on investing in equity promoting initiatives of protection that would provide Kenyan citizens, especially the poor and vulnerable, with the means to improve their capability and capacity to make meaningful changes in their lives.

Currently, the government of Kenya has taken a significant step forward through their development of the National Safety Net Programme (NSNP), the umbrella under which all government-led cash transfer programmes operate. However, there is still fragmentation as three (3) of the total programmes namely the CT-OVC, the OPCT and the PWSD-CT are delivered under the Ministry of Labour and Social Services, while the HSNP is delivered under the Ministry of Devolution and Planning. There is still a need to streamline the operational framework of programmes to reduce fragmentation and promote efficiency of delivery.

Also, alignment of current cash transfer programmes would improve complementarity and serve as a good basis when planning for long-term social protection reform. There is also a need for the state to adopt both a top-down and bottom-up approach to ensure that social protection initiatives reflect what poor and vulnerable communities actually need in terms of support, rather than implementing blue-print programmes from abroad that may not take into account contextual factors. Adopting a broad framework that has been highlighted as a best practice design and then manipulating or adjusting it to fit the needs and necessities of the local community and context may be a way to gain from experiences of other programmes and actors, while ensuring that the participation and engagement of communities in taken into account.

This also relates to the need to invest in institutional learning and knowledge management to ensure that lessons learned and best practices in terms of how to deliver different social protection measures are identified and analysed to gain a better understanding of how and when social transfers are appropriate. With the high level of resources being invested in cash transfer programmes, it would be an oversight to not take into account knowledge management, including monitoring and evaluation systems, as a means of promoting ongoing learning which would translate into more effective programme delivery.

There are certain areas that are deemed a challenge in social protection provision in Kenya which need addressing. Firstly, there is a need to improve coordination and information sharing between the actors engaged in social protection delivery in Kenya such as the state and its
relevant ministries, non-state actors and the private sector. The improvement of information sharing between actors would improve coordination of activities in addition to curbing the possibility of duplication of efforts. Likewise, there is a need to make the registration, targeting and payment delivery more robust although actions have already began with the development of the single registry at the national level, and the push from the government to require all programmes to develop more comprehensive management information systems (including grievance management systems) that in time will be linked to the national single registry.

Another key area focuses on the need to build on the work the government is doing by strengthening the technical capacity of civil servants who deliver the programme at the national and local levels. This could be done more formally through training and information sharing at learning forums and/or meetings, or international technical assistance could be sought on a short-term period to build capacity of institutions after which management would shift back to government implementers. While different approaches can be adopted to strengthen government delivery, it is rather dependent on realities and gaps on the ground that will determine what technical support is needed.
7. Conclusion

Overall, there is a need for the Kenyan government as a duty bearer to step up and live up to its commitment to support the progressive realisation of rights and to improve the quality of life for its citizens especially those who face extreme poverty, vulnerability and risk. In March of 2008 at the African Union Intergovernmental Regional Workshop on Social Protection in Livingstone, Zambia, the African Union Commissioner for Social Affairs at the time, Bience Gawanas, stated the following during the key note address:

In most African countries social development continues to raise grave concern as the majority of the population is afflicted by lack of social welfare services, social marginalization, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, ill-health, poverty, unemployment, lack of education and training, lack of food and nutrition, low life expectancy, an increase in child and infant mortality and morbidity, and increase of women’s death in child birth. (HelpAge, 2006:2)

Correspondingly, the findings and the existing debates on social protection found for this research study, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, suggests that despite the adoption of initiatives to support formal and/or informal social protection measures, many communities and/or individuals continue to languish in poverty, work in low wage jobs, exhibit low life expectancy rates and face a lack of access to basic services such as adequate clean water, sanitation facilities and health care (Chitonge, 2012: 341).

Despite, the on-going challenges African nations, including Kenya, continue to face, this research study highlighted the fact that policies and strategic frameworks have been put in place to deliver social protection programmes and initiatives which is promising although according to context might need improvement and strengthening to improve efficiency, effectiveness and appropriateness of interventions. Additionally, the adoption of the concept of minimum core obligations as the basic level of social protection the state should provide is of paramount importance. Moreover, there is a need to invest in the empowerment of claim holders in a state to promote human rights and human rights principles. Acknowledging social protection as a right and “as an enforceable claim requires the transfer of certain powers from those who deliver benefits such as social grants to those who receive them (Devereux, 2013: 22). It is imperative that social protection is not understood as a gift or benefit, but rather a basic human right. African states need to recognise their role as duty bearers and to commit to, and own the process
of, developing and/or strengthening social protection in their countries in order to deal with the myriad of development challenges and to make meaningful and sustainable impact on the quality of life of their citizens.
References


8. Appendices

Annex 1: Arid and Semi-Arid Areas in Kenya

Source: IDS Knowledge, Technology and Society Blog: http://knotsids.blogspot.se/2013/09/has-policy-space-for-pastoralism-been.html