

# The Effective Implementation of Social Protection Programmes Can Reduce Household and Community Poverty in Uganda

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## Abstract

With the introduction and implementation of social protection programmes in Uganda and Katakwi district being one of the beneficiary districts. This paper presents and discusses the role social protection initiatives in the context of transforming and empowering vulnerable households to poverty and explores the opportunities they present for promoting a gender-equality agenda and women's empowerment. The paper begins with a brief introduction on the emergence of social protection (SP) and how it is linked to economic and social policy. Next, it reviews the context, concepts, and definitions relevant to SP policies and identifies gender-specific social and economic risks and corresponding SP instruments, drawing on country-level experiences. The thrust of the paper is to explore how SP instruments can help or hinder the process of altering rigid gendered roles, and offers a critical evaluation of SP interventions from the standpoint of women's inclusion in economic life. Conditional cash transfers and employment guarantee programs are discussed in detail.

**Key words:** Social Protection, household and community poverty, poverty and vulnerability

## Introduction and background

The emergence of social protection policies as a strategic component in the policy agenda in developing countries cannot be ignored in isolation. The challenges sought to be addressed by currently discussed social protection framework are not novel. Yet, a shift in focus is in evidence. In the past, especially in the context of many developing countries, social protection schemes were introduced as a "safety net" in periods of heightened risks due to rapid deterioration of living standards of households and individuals in (or near) poverty. Such cases of heightened risks and vulnerabilities have included, for instance, the aftermaths of wars and conflicts stresses and natural disasters, sudden food and fuel price spikes, episodic financial and economic crises, and the damaging social and economic consequences of structural adjustment policies and austerity programmes. Analyses of household vulnerability to poverty are becoming more increasingly prominent in the social development literature. To a greater extent, this has reflected the emerging understanding of the role of social protection in reducing household and community vulnerability to poverty. Policy and decision makers need information on both the current rate and the magnitude of the threat of poverty on households, measured *ex-ante* (Calvo, et al., 2005). Such a perspective absolutely recognises that poverty is a stochastic phenomenon that needs diverse approaches. To that end, while the current rate of poverty is a critical indicator of household wellbeing, it provides limited foresight into future poverty. Rather, whether a household is likely to fall into poverty in the future is also determined by household exposure to a variety of different manmade shocks as well as its ability to effectively cope in the face of shocks (Calvo, et al., 2005). In this context, we define social protection as a collection of public programmes that are aimed at reducing household and community vulnerability to inequalities and risks to multidimensional poverty through a system of transfers in cash or in kind. This paper argues that social protection if well implemented and has social, cultural and political commitment can be the best model and a key element for reducing household and community poverty.

## Taxonomy of Concepts

Although relative, household poverty in this paper is understood to be lack of food, shelter and clothing. It's a situation where household head cannot afford to meet or provide educational needs to the family members such as school fees, and other scholastic materials to the children, and that has constraints to access clean and safe drinking water and health facilities. This paper delves to define a household head as a person who currently manages, supervises and provides/looks after the entire family. It can be an adult woman or man in respect of their characteristics (working or not working); single parent adult woman or man ((window not windowed) or orphaned child headed households if both adult parents passed on. While community poverty in this paper, is defined in the context of lack and or access to social and economic services. In otherworld's, it is a situation

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where a group of households are living in a particular geographical location, sharing and practicing the same values, norms, speaking same language at a given period of time, but all have limited or no access to social protection services or infrastructures are in sorry-state such as very old school and health buildings and if they do exist, they lack human resource to run such facilities. Normally they have to walk for longer distances to access those services like drinking water points, immunization programme, antenatal care, and distant learning point with poor road networks, no banking facilities and electricity among others. In this case, social protection can be understood as the set of all initiatives, both formal and informal that offer: social assistance to extremely very poor individual households in various communities. Social services to groups who need special care or would otherwise be denied access to basic services; social insurance to protect people against the risks and consequences of livelihood shocks; and social equity to protect people against social risks such as discrimination or abuse. The key objective of social protection is to reduce the poverty and vulnerability of the poor households with the full range of measures that includes: direct income transfers to vulnerable poor in a family, safety nets in case of collapses in livelihoods in communities and regulatory change aimed at protecting the rights of socially and economically destitute poor.

### **The study context**

Poverty and vulnerability are enduring problems in most developing countries especially in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Although some countries in SSA have attained significant growth in the past, widespread inequalities in the distribution of income and opportunities have persistently excluded large proportions of the population from the benefits of economic development. Scholars and policy makers attribute these exacerbated problems that arose as a result of the 1980s debt crisis that led to a deep socio-economic recession in the region and during the beginning of the structural adjustment programmes and policies. As a result, income per capita declined in most SSA countries, as governments resorted into cuts in public expenditures. This however, affected the provision of social protection services which saw an increase in poverty and vulnerabilities among the unfortunate poor households that needed such social and economic services. Further still in the recent years, there has been growing national and international attention on the possible role social protection can play in reducing household poverty, vulnerability and risks (Taylor 2008). Today low and middle income countries have adopted and are implementing social protection policies and programmes with the view of addressing demand-side deficits in order to support households to meet their expenditure needs in education and health. Social protection, by definition, encompasses a subset of interventions that seek to address risk, vulnerability and chronic poverty, which can be carried out formally by the state or the private sector or informally through community or household support networks.

The need to understanding the nature of poverty, the sources of risk and vulnerability, and the impacts of shocks in the context of post-conflict scenarios is essential in order to inform an appropriate policy response. To achieve these objectives related to reduction of multidimensionality of poverty and vulnerability, household participation and empowerment on human development capacities needs to be derived from economic growth and equity of the transformation trajectory. These are all the more important in the context of preventing transmission of poverty from one generation to the next by addressing the existing inequalities in consumption and access to education. Positive childhood growth and development have powerful long-term consequences for reducing inequalities amongst adults as well as the transformation of the economy. It can be argued to that poverty reduction strategies in developing economies is possible due to abundance of natural and human resource. It is plausibly possible for households and entire communities to participate and engage in the design and implementation of the pro-poor socio-economic policies and programmes if and only social protection interventions can be adopted as a strategy for promoting growth of one sort or another, with growth being the main single factor of protecting and preventing those not trapped and providing escape roots of those trapped in poverty and vulnerability.

Thus the challenge associated with the design and implementation of social protection policies depends with how such interventions are effective and how poor and vulnerable household's are actively involved and participating in economic growth process (Devereux, et al., 2004). A successful package of social and economic policies must be aligned to generate; firstly, a good rate and prototype of economic growth that reduces household and community vulnerability to poverty; secondly, a well-designed and implemented social protection coordination structures to defend those not trapped and to up lift those trapped in poverty despite the growth achieved; and thirdly, internal consistency between the two broad categories of social policy involved, such that neither cancels out the positive effects of the other (Fernando, et al., 2012). It is particularly crucial that effective implementation of social protection policy should be as consistent as possible with the creation of un-enabling environment that allows poor households to actively participate in the process since it is mainly through their participation that households and communities can earn income and be able to transform their own socio-economic wellbeing that effectually contributes to growth and moving out of poverty (ibid).

Indeed social protection can be an effective tool to prevent household not trapped in poverty from re-entering into multidimensional poverty and to help those trapped in poverty to get alternative solutions of moving out of poverty through social transfers. Social transfers can directly and immediately reduce the household vulnerabilities to shocks and risks of the poor both young and the old and are an effective tool to fight poverty. This is particularly important in communities that are emerging from conflicts and natural disasters where the effects of war and conflict per se has led to a huge increase in the number of orphaned child headed households, leaving older people, predominantly widows, to care for grandchildren with no support. Cash transfers that bring about improvements in household wellbeing in areas of access to health services, clean, safe and drinking water, nutrition and education have long-term effects on productivity and earnings, and thus contribute to breaking the intergenerational and multidimensional poverty cycle. The impact of social transfers on marginalised groups can be even greater when supported by legal measures to combat discrimination in areas such as employment, access to education and healthcare, access to credit facilities, inheritance and land ownership and household active participation (Babajanian, 2012:4). Effective implementation of social protection particularly social transfers can help in reducing household vulnerability to poverty and community vulnerability to shocks. Well-designed social transfer schemes (Arestis. et al., 2013:7) like what is currently being implemented in Uganda<sup>1</sup> can prevent the non-poor from falling into poverty as a result of joint implementation of expanding social protection (ESP) by the state and non-state actors. Since the return of relative peace in conflict affected districts of north eastern Uganda, multi-bilateral agencies and NSAs have continued to increase in number and are providing large-scale cash transfer programmes. Overall, these programmes have made a significant contribution to reducing poverty and vulnerability among the poor and poorest households who are covered by social assistance in the form of cash transfers (Cook. et al., 2014:2).

### **The implementation context**

Uganda has made a great deal of progress in recent years in terms of analysing poverty, including the adoption and implementation of the highly rated and considered social protection programmes. Uganda over the past decades has in addition compiled poverty eradication strategies that have served as a model for poverty reduction strategy across the globe. Despite these innovative methodologies and strategy documents, certain gaps in understanding and strategising remain including targeting. On the analysis side, poverty in Uganda is understood in rather static terms, even though there are dynamic processes at work such as latent conflicts or insecurities that are influencing poverty headcounts and trends to a highly significant degree. This suggests the need for an analysis of vulnerability and risk to complement the standard quantitative and qualitative understanding of household and community poverty in Uganda. The need to address extreme household vulnerability to poverty, rising income inequality, and risk, has led to an expansion set of series and instruments broadly classified under social protection. By social protection in this paper means, an assortment of programmes designed to address household vulnerability to poverty and inequality through a system of cash transfers. The last decade has seen a dramatic adoption and expansion of social protection interventions by in developing countries that have established relatively large cash transfer programmes focused on low income and excluded groups of society (Hanlon, et al. 2010).

The expansion and effective implementation of social protection initiatives are important enabler's progress that can defend and uplift those trapped in cycles of poverty. The national development goals should not be based on conditional cash transfer programmes alone, but it should also be based on unconditional transfers that have played a significant role in the achievements of the national development goals especially in the areas of access to health and education. The implementation of social protection safety nets and the creation of the enabling environment to a greater extent have positively impacted on household poverty and reduced on the community crises on accessing social protection services (health and education). The growing evidence on impact of social safety net and the overlaps of programmes are particularly strong in the cases of CCTs (Fiszbein, et al., 2009).

From the perspective of planning for poverty and income reduction, the dynamic nature of vulnerability in the Ugandan context suggests the need for implementing basic social protection policies to protect the poor against the adverse economic and social consequences of this vulnerability and to help those trapped in poverty to move out of poverty. To date, much attention has focused on a set of conventional 'vulnerable groups' in Uganda, including orphaned children, child headed households, elderly citizen persons, people with disabilities (PWD), internally displaced persons (IDP) in camps, and widows among other vulnerable households. There are a large number of social protection interventions and programmes that provide vital assistance to these groups, but these interventions are patchy and uncoordinated, and are not located within a broader conceptual or policy framework for addressing the needs and roots causes of poverty and vulnerability of Ugandan households. According to Amartya Sen (1981), the root cause of poverty is an inequality of rights. When some households

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<sup>1</sup> Expanding social protection in Uganda for the vulnerable household poor (ESP)

have too much to eat while some others are starving and languishing in poverty and income equality, famine takes place (Martin Ravallion 1997). Poverty and inequality have been defined differently by various scholars and the level and distribution of household with income or without any transfers from the state. The level of individual household consumption or the level of private plus public consumption including publicly provided social protection conditional cash transfers on education and health. The most useful definition involves both private and publicly based incomes transfers from the state or direct publicly support provided on the areas of health and education. To eliminate famine therefore, decision and policy implementers should first eliminate purposive discrimination and marginalization of certain household through empowering households with cash transfers. Amartya Sen believes that for a poor person to live a decent life, the government needs to empower households trapped in poverty in many aspects such as involving them in planning, and in implementation processes and by providing social transfers.

However, it must be noted that there are many different interpretations of what exactly constitute social protection. At the risk of oversimplifying these differences one can identify the contest between two different visions of social protection. One is a narrow vision: social protection is a means of providing short term assistance to individuals and households to cope with shocks while they are temporarily finding new economic opportunities that will rapidly allow them to improve their situation. The other is a broader vision that sees social protection as having both short term and long term roles in poverty reduction: helping rural people to conserve and accumulate assets and to transform their socio-economic relationships so that they are not constrained from seizing opportunities by bonding or clientelism. In cases where people are dependent on others, because of age, infirmity or disability, then this broader vision envisages long term forms of social assistance such as grants and non-contributory pensions. The narrow vision sees a clear distinction between social protection and livelihood promotion, while the broad vision sees them as being closely related (for an example see Martin and Hulme (2003). According to Wang (2012), the fundamental experience of China's success in poverty reduction is empowering the poor, including through the property rights brought by land reform and the social rights brought by population flow. Thus, the core of "teaching a man to fish" is empowering people and developing their capabilities. When social protection programmes are effectively implemented collectively, they contribute to the reduction of household and community poverty.

Intuition suggests that social protection policies should have a lot to offer people who are persistently poor. A range of studies has identified risk and vulnerability as a determining factor in poverty, and chronic poverty. In a meta-analysis of 27 studies from developed and developing countries, Yaqub finds that economic insecurity, understood as the exposure to transitory fluctuations in income, is one of three key factors explaining downward mobility among households (Yaqub 2002). Similarly, a review of literature on vulnerability, Dercon asserts that "persistence in poverty is caused by the presence of risk and its consequences" (Dercon 2001:11). If the poor are more exposed to shocks than other groups, if they have fewer buffers to protect themselves against the realisation of these shocks, and if to achieve short term security they are forced to adopt low return livelihood strategies which further increase their vulnerability over time, then risk and vulnerability will contribute to trapping individuals and households in poverty. In addition, to manage risk poor people may take on socio-economic relationships, particularly patron-client ties, which improve their security but block off ways of accumulating assets and overcoming poverty. To stay secure they 'stay poor' (Wood 2003). Social protection interventions helping the chronic poor reduce risk, ameliorate the impact on their consumption of the realisation of risk, and facilitate long term investment in human and physical capital, could be effective in reducing chronic poverty.

Yet, social protection, especially when narrowly focused, appears to be orthogonal to chronic poverty. This emerges clearly in two commonly stated, but quite different, views on the scope and effectiveness of different anti-poverty policies. Firstly, a narrow definition of social protection heavily discounts the effectiveness of social protection in tackling chronic poverty. If the scope of social protection is limited to smoothing out consumption or income fluctuations, then it would be effective against transient poverty, but less effective against chronic poverty. Put differently, to the extent that social protection focuses on interventions designed to prevent the non-poor and transient poor descending into persistent poverty, it may help limit the growth of chronic poverty but will do little to help those already there. Secondly, and from the opposite perspective, social protection may be ineffective in dealing with chronic poverty because it fails to act upon its real causes. To the extent that the factors behind chronic poverty extend beyond risk and vulnerability, and include adverse structural factors, social protection focusing exclusively on risk and vulnerability will constitute at best only a partial response to chronic poverty.

### **Application of social protection**

To incorporate a more ambitious time frame for reducing multidimensional poverty in the context of rising inequalities between households, and to extended or incorporate the short term and long term consequences of income risk, anti-poverty actors need to adopt and implement social protection as a way of addressing



multidimensional poverty at various levels. Thus, most research scholars base their arguments on a multidimensional perspective on poverty which helps in making and clarifying the complex root causes of poverty. Therefore, multidimensional poverty measurement methods include fuzzy set (FS), totally fuzzy and relative (TFR) Alkire Foster (AF) among others (Alkire, et al., 2015) chapter 3 and 4 of their survey. In eliminating poverty, and addressing the rising inequality and households vulnerability will need to be a major focus for national development agendas, and that social protection should be the key instrument used to address these challenges confronting them from escaping poverty. In particular, we will present quantitative estimates for the impact of social protection programmes on poverty and inequality, which in turn depends on their efficiency and the adequacy of resources devoted to them.

Various policy and research scholars have used the AF approach in building the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) system, but with big data set differences in the poverty dimensions they use, especially with respect to whether the poverty dimensions of MPI should include an income dimension or not. However, the income dimension and other non-monetary dimensions are closely related to the context of state transfers to poor households. In the process of building the multidimensional poverty index (MPI) system, the linkages and discrepancies between income poverty and multidimensional poverty measurement cannot be ignored. How adequate are social protection transfers? Do they provide sufficient resources to the recipients to alleviate their multidimensional poverty and avoid detrimental coping strategies? Hence their real impact on poverty and inequality is also likely to vary a lot and the scale and coverage of social protection particularly cash transfers also differs across households and communities.

In the context of advocating for exact transfers on poverty targeting and building a well-off society, the implementation of social protection interventions in reducing multidimensional poverty is of great practical significance. However, the implement of multidimensional poverty reduction strategies with a two poverty measures that is income and multidimensional complementing each other, or give income a certain weight and implement a unified multidimensional poverty line including the dimension of income? It is not only a basic issue for the study of multidimensional poverty, but rather, a premise and the key for developing a unified standardised MPI. On this basis, this paper attempts to study this issue from an empirical perspective through statistical analysis using the Alkire and Foster (2007, 2011) methodological approach for the establishment of a national multidimensional poverty reduction strategy and its policy implications on how can the impact of social protection on poverty and inequality can be estimated? As discussed, social protection if well executed can improve on household well-being through three main channels with specific impact on; direct reduction of income poverty through transfer of purchasing power to the beneficiaries, but also two other less direct channels, namely insurance/protection against risk and shocks (where the longer-term poverty consequences of a shock often decrease the "lifetime" poverty of the beneficiaries allowing them to recover better from these shocks); and on "investment income" as additional returns or income from their engagement in productive investment, and employment generated through the participation in social protection programmes.

Obviously, these three channels are co-existent, and any designed and implemented social protection programme has an effect on household poverty and inequality reduction along all the three channels. For instance, income security due to the receipt of regular transfers encourages poor household beneficiaries to invest in higher risk but also higher return activities which will enable them to overcome their failures by allowing them to invest in their human capital. There is in addition, mounting empirical evidence on the precise role and magnitude that social protection policies such as transfers has on indirect impacts for the long-term income growth of the beneficiaries (Alderman, et al., 2013). In this case, social protection programmes are flexible because it can protect poor and vulnerable households and communities from shocks before they occur through predictable transfers, building community assets, and other programmes that help them cope and by scaling up to respond to extreme events when they are hit. Special care is also needed to ensure that social protection rehabilitating and empowerment programmes are implemented in such a way to avoid having adverse impact on the poor households or create perverse incentives and thus result into miscuing. This means that any social protection interventions can be adopted and implemented as long as in its design and implementation it takes into account possible current and future risks of households. Therefore, social protection measures should include pro-poor sensitive programs that support vulnerable poorest households and communities to build their elasticity to multidimensional poverty and other shocks and aim to reduce unfavorable impact on the household coping strategies.

### **The methodological approach**

There are different types of social protection programs depending on their objectives and the risks they cover. Classifications abound, and we follow the most widespread typology that is accepted for the developing world. Using the UNDP's Human Development Report to measure MPI, is the most mature and most widely used method for multidimensional poverty measurement. The multidimensional poverty measurement in this paper is mainly based on the AF identification, aggregation, and decomposition methods. First, we set the deprivation

line for each indicator and identify the deprivations of each unit usually a person or household; secondly, we work out the MPI based on dimensions of poverty, weights, and a poverty cutoff; and thirdly, we break the MPI down by indicators and partial indices, and disaggregate by groups. To approach the above three sets of issues across comparability and comprehensiveness, we limit our attention to just the first, direct, channel of transfer impact on the current wellbeing of beneficiaries. To assist in further analysis, this paper explores and presents the linkages and discrepancies between multidimensional poverty and income poverty measures and explicitly explains how social protection can be used to reduce poverty at household and community level.

We adopt the FS and TFR method that has worldly been often used by UNDP in measuring global multidimensional poverty. The FS and TFR is adopted in this paper because it is simple and easy to operate and in making persuasive policy conclusion for decision makers (Yu 2008, Wang and Alkire 2009, Zou and Fang 2011, Guo and Wu 2012, and Wang 2013). The measurement of the global MPI includes three dimensions namely; education, health, and living standards which are focus of this paper (Wang 2012, Alkire and Santos 2010, 2014) as discussed below;

$$y_i^j = \beta_0^j + \beta_1^j \ln(X_i + \beta_2^j + \mu_i^j) \dots\dots\dots(1)$$

$$y_i^m = \beta_0^m + \beta_1^m \ln(X_i) + \beta_2^m Z + \mu_i^m \dots\dots\dots(2)$$

Where,  $y_i^j$  in formula (1) represents rural household i's deprivation in the dimension j,  $i = 1, 2, \dots, n$ ;

$j=1, 2, \dots, d$ . When rural household i is deprived in the dimension j,  $y_i^j = 1$ , otherwise, it is zero.  $y_i^m$  In formula (2) refers to multidimensional poverty. If C,  $C=1, 2, \dots, d$  refers to the total (weighted) dimensions of deprivation of rural household i,  $c_i = C/d$ , is the percentage of dimensions. If the poverty threshold k is  $k=1/3$ , then when  $c_i > 1/3$ ,  $y_i^m = 1$ , otherwise, it is zero.

$X_i$  represents the per capita annual disposable income of household i. Z is a vector of the family's characteristic variables, including the number of family members of the households and the entire communities to which they belong. It should be noted that, this paper investigated the design and implementation process of social protection in addressing multidimensional household and community poverty. The interventions such as cash transfers have been used to address household vulnerability to poverty and empowerment. By establishing the linkages and discrepancy between income and multidimensional poverty at household and community levels; we are not therefore, reporting and analysing the multidimensional poverty index (MPI) separately or in detail, but rather, we focus on the identification of who are the poor households and communities, how has social protection interventions helped them to escape poverty and overcome vulnerability. As the explained variables in formula (1) and (2) which are both binary variables with a logit model being used for the regression analysis?

### Household and Community poverty

The global commitments to poverty reduction, more specifically government's commitment to halve between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose incomes are less than US\$1 a day, have focused more attention on the extent and persistence poverty levels. Hulme and Shepherd (2003) underline the benefits flowing from the previous MDGs, but caution against a simplistic view that the poor are a homogeneous group whose primary problem is low income. Instead, they argue for the need to acknowledge that poverty is for many a persistent factor in their lives, and often the result of multiple deprivations. It follows that effective poverty reduction needs to address the plight of the 300 to 420 million chronically poor people in the world (see, Chronic Poverty Research Centre 2004), and develop comprehensive, cohesive, and sustained interventions that support them in overcoming their condition. From the previous discussions, there appears significant regional variation of multidimensional poverty measurements. One commonly heard view is that the poor households are roughly equally poor of the poorest within their communities where they belong, and there are so many of them and resources are so limited, that anti-poverty policies and programmes are a non-starter.

However, while the extent of poverty and the resource limitations are both clear enough and available to them. Using the field data and review of available national statistics, we now well established from household data that the poor are in the poorest communities. The differences in levels of living amongst the poor can be sizable.<sup>1</sup> A high incidence of poverty does not necessarily diminish the equity case for targeting the limited transfer resources to the poorest and vulnerable households. As such, we regard the rural households who have been marginalised and are deprived in one third of the multidimensional poverty as poor (see, Alkire, et al., 2007 & 2011, Wang, et al., 2009). We further divide the multidimensionality poor into the ordinary and extreme

<sup>1</sup> For example, Smith and Subbarao (2002) give data for low-income countries indicating that the consumption of the poorest decile is generally 30-40% lower than the next poorest.

multidimensionally poor using a second cutoff of 2/3, and define those with deprivations of more than 0 and less than 1/3 as the vulnerable poor who are not multidimensionally poor at the moment but can or will easily fall into multidimensional poverty if there is a slight decline in their circumstances or they are faced with disaster risks and shocks. These four types can be defined by the following formula;

$$y_i^k = \sum_{j=1}^d y_i^j = y_i^1 + y_i^2 + \dots + y_i^d \dots \dots \dots (3)$$

Where;  $y_i^k$  represents the sum of total deprivations of rural household i, When a poor household i is deprived in the dimension j,  $y_i^j = 1$ , otherwise, it is zero. Thus,  $0 \leq y_i^k \leq d$ . The specific definitions of the four types of poverty are as follows:

When  $y_i^k = 0$ , i is not multidimensionally poor; but when  $0 < y_i^k < 1/3$ , i is a vulnerable poor household; when  $1/3 \leq y_i^k < 2/3$ , i is multidimensionally poor, but its poverty dimension does not exceed 2/3, we define such groups as ordinary multidimensionally poor households; when  $y_i^k \geq 2/3$ , household i is in extreme multidimensional poverty.

### Discussion of findings

At the household level, these effects have resulted in a number of adverse effects on the poor, especially as formal support to help households cope has been limited. Food insecurity for instance, has increased as food price rises have resulted in growing food insecurity (particularly in urban areas), which has been linked to sustained declines in food production as well as reduced household budget allocations towards food. For some, food and fuel shocks have led to the alteration of spending, including the purchase of cheaper and less nutritious food staple substitutes, cutting back on meals especially during dry seasons and cattle raiding by the neighbouring Karamojong tribe and, in dire circumstances, scavenging and/or going hungry. The costs of staple food items have also increased as a result of household confinement in IDP camps, long spells of droughts and other shocks, mainly via a rise in transport costs, with both net food consumers and producers negatively being affected.

The effects of social transfers on health and access to health care and education by vulnerable poor households spread all over post-conflict communities are also of a key concerns: while high costs and low utilisation of medical services predate the crisis, the crisis has exacerbated this. Diminishing household purchasing power (DHPP) has in some cases led to an inability to pay for increasing drug and treatment costs. Household vulnerability to multidimensional income poverty also play an important role in health care access, with transport costs deterring more women from going for antenatal care facilities. Windowed women, orphaned children, child mother, child headed household and elderly persons living alone are unable to pay for essential medication services because they are not included in the government social protection cash transfers programmes and have no or lack alternative adequate income sources. Generally health problems amongst the household poor in Katakwi district are associated with malnutrition which is also reportedly on the rise. Likewise, in terms of education, rises in school dropouts, early girl child marriage and absenteeism are resulting from growing difficulties of meeting school educational costs, especially in rural areas. In most of sub-counties, children are seen as an essential workforce, and the opportunity costs of education for poor families are high in this context of increasing financial hardship. In contrast, household heads prefer more of their girls getting married soon so as to reduce on dependence -related consumption costs which experience sees severe and increased rate of girl child drop out from school and their retention is always low especially when they start going through their monthly periods.

Traditional views with regard to children's roles in assisting with family income, as well as expectations according to gender and age, also affect education. A strong gender bias has been evidenced across communities, with girls often withdrawn from school to ensure boys or younger sibling's education. Quantitative evidence suggests that being a girl increases the probability of early dropout. At the intra-household level, the impacts of the crisis have implications for gender roles, women's rights and children's development which affects both households and communities in particular. Evidence shows that financial stress is reshaping gender and intra-household relations, with women (and often children) assuming increased responsibility for the household wealth, with resultant challenges to traditionally patriarchal household decision making. Changes in the consumption of varied and necessary amounts of food are also disproportionately affecting children's nutritional and health status, and changes in the provision of health care and consumption capacity have particularly affected maternal and child health. As we have seen, the crisis has also compounded educational deprivations among girls and rural children especially, with evidence of school withdrawals and increased child

work. The quality and availability of care for children have been diminishing in Katakwi district as there are few girls that complete primary education. At the community level, the existing traditional informal social protection support have also been eroding and now being replaced by the formal social protection approaches, with some community-based infrastructures being disbanded, and their accessibility is even proving to be more problematic especially to the vulnerable poor households who cannot afford to meet transport, medical care cost and transport fees.

### **The policy implication of social protection cash transfers on household and community poverty**

The proportion and indicators of a country's national MPI are habitually set according to the country's national social, cultural-geographical location and economic development comparative theater and the level of economic and social welfare developed to protect, prevent, promote and transform its relevant policies and programmes for fostering national development strategies. Further, the growing consensus on social protection makes it the best candidate that constitutes an effective response to reducing poverty and vulnerability among poor rural households. While chronically poor rural households are found in all parts of Katakwi district, the largest numbers of them are found and live in boarder cattle rustling districts of Moroto, Nakapiripirit, Katido and Napak districts of Karamoja. The highest incidences of poor rural households are located in sub-counties of Ngariam, Usuk, Omagoro, Ongongonja and Toroma in Katakwi, where 30–40% can afford to spend utmost USD1 in one or two days. The multidimensionally poor are mainly those vulnerable to multidimensional poverty and the ordinary multidimensionally poor, involving few in extreme multidimensional poverty. Among them, 390 belong to the vulnerable groups, accounting for 36.75% of the total sample population 197 (31.65%) were ordinary multidimensionally poor households; and only 59 (1.56%) were extremely poor in at least four dimensions.

However, only 136 (30.04%) households were not poor measured by these multidimensional poverty standards, far below the 86.92% of rural households living above the income poverty line. Most poor and vulnerable households and communities are trapped in poverty due to persistent ethnic conflicts mainly resulting from cattle rustlers the Karimojong tribe. Within households and communities there are often distinct geographies of chronic poverty, with concentrations in remote and low-potential rural areas within Katakwi district. Further, Katakwi district has been politically and centrally marginalised district despite its total political support to the seating government and is one of the poorest districts in Teso sub-regions. Over decades, most areas in the district have not seen electricity, piped water, banking services and or well connected to recent technologies and markets. There are also concentrations of chronically poor people in particular internally displaced peoples camp (IDPs) and in neighbouring towns as well hundreds of homeless people sleeping in streets, stations, parks and burial grounds. The causes of multidimensional poverty are complex and usually involve sets of overlaying factors. Sometimes they are the same as the causes of poverty, only more intense, wide-spread and lasting. In other cases, there is a qualitative difference between the causes of transitory and chronic poverty.

While there is an emerging consensus from the household's respondents around the view that social protection can provide a more appropriate framework for addressing their rising multidimensional poverty and vulnerability in the context of their current conditions, there are also debates about whether a narrow or a broad vision of social protection should shape other social policy. These debates have a technical dimension, about affordability, priorities and the degree to which 'moral hazard' should be a major concern in policy design and implementation. They also have an ideological dimension, about whether people have a set of agreed rights (and, thus must be afforded social protection to secure those rights) or whether individuals and households should largely take responsibility for their own welfare. Thus, there is a big difference in the identification of income poverty and multidimensional poverty in Katakwi district. It also shows that the elimination of income poverty is not necessarily equal to the end of poverty although income growths received inform of transfers can help reduce household and community multidimensional poverty. Multidimensional poverty in households as well as deprivations in education, access to health services, safe, clean and drinking water are, however, a result of the undersupply of public goods by the central government to the communities. Simple income growth will not necessarily improve the situation of deprivation in these aspects.

Thus, while eliminating income poverty, we should also eliminate household multidimensional poverty and deprivation by providing more public social and economic services through engaging the rural populations in productive activities and in planning, decision making and implementation processes. It is a premise of this paper, however, that a distinction be drawn between a 'narrow' perspective on social protection focusing on short term assistance to households affected by shocks, and a 'broader' perspective on social protection focusing on entire communities both in short and long term interventions for protecting the consumption of individuals and households, but also their investment and asset accumulation. A narrow perspective on social protection associates social protection solely with transient poverty and chronic poverty with asset deficiency, suggesting a bifurcation of anti-poverty policy. Thus, the state, development partners and communities are both required to



provide their expertise and commit their skills and experiences if multidimensional poverty and vulnerability is to be reduced with the focus on public goods and public services such as education and health care. This paper believes that, setting and building up strong social protection structures with functioning institutions that examines the income poverty measure and MPI separately in order to measure the economic and social aspects of poverty will help in the development of a more comprehensive pro-poor strategy and policy system.

### Conclusion

In summary, this paper advocates for the implementation of social protection programmes for addressing poverty and vulnerability with income measures and multidimensional poverty measures complementing each other. It will not only circumvent the shortcomings of income poverty measurement, but also reflect on the comprehensiveness and complexity of poverty. This will not only help relevant poverty alleviation actors achieve exact poverty targeting more effectively, but also improve the level of income, education, health, and quality of life of the poor. In addition, the paper notes the emergence of a consensus around the view that social protection provides an effective response to rising incomes gaps and in reducing multidimensional poverty and vulnerability. This however, has implications for our understanding of the factors leading to multidimensional poverty, and the policies that could tackle them. Based on the existing literatures that we reviewed, this paper summarizes household and community poverty as not the mere lack of income and limited access to social services, but the deprivation of basic human capabilities, covering both monetary and non-monetary poverty. The income poverty line well captures the monetary aspects of poverty but cannot accurately reflect on the non-monetary aspects of poverty. Under normal circumstances, with an increase in people's income due to transfers and with good social protection policies, both households and community well-being will be improved if social protection policies and programmes are effectively and accurately implemented with the population being at the centre.

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