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Exploring Efficacy of Social Protection Programs in Jinja and Kampala

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**INTRODUCTION**

With roughly 24.5% of Ugandans living on a mere $1.25 each day in 2009, poverty in Uganda is a serious problem (Central Intelligence Agency, 2013). To address this problem, most of the current poverty policies focus on people living with AIDS (PLWA), people with disabilities (PWD), internally displaced persons (IDP), widows and the elderly (Devereux, Lwanga Ntale & Sabates-Wheeler, 2002). While there are formal supports in place, there are many private agencies in Jinja & Kampala that aim to alleviate poverty in more specific domains, often focusing on those same groups of individuals including other vulnerable groups such as women and children. My research will focus on the role of and services provided by private social protection agencies. I will be interviewing directors of social protection agencies to gain information on different Ugandan social protection agencies such as existing benefits, accessibility of benefits, types and effectiveness of benefits, and population groups reached by these benefits. I am interested in understanding who these specific programs serve, their mission, programmatic goals, as well as the effectiveness of the programs.

**STUDY AREA**

This research will be conducted in various areas of Uganda including Jinja, Lingira Island, and Kampala. I have contacted several social protection organizations in the area including Women’s Rights Initiative (WORI), Shepherd’s Heart International Ministry (SHIM), Clemency Uganda, First African Bicycle Information Organization (FABIO), and Uganda Development Health Associates (UDHA) in order to have in-country contacts. I will be traveling with other members of Tawi from May 20th-June 24th, 2013.

**MENTOR AND COURSE CREDIT**

I will be mentored by Professor Marah Curtis in the School of Social Work. My project, a 20-page report, will be to obtain 3 credits as a Social Work elective in Fall 2013. Professor Curtis and I have met three times and will check in one final time before I leave for Uganda. I will secure an approved proposal before I depart and a draft outline for my report. Once I return, I will compile all of my interview data and produce a revised outline for the report I will produce based on my approved proposal and outline. Additionally, I will prepare a presentation about my project to be presented at a Tawi general meeting in September, 2013.

**METHODOLOGY**

I will be administering an in-person semi-structured interview with [directors and staff] at the social protection agencies in order to conduct exploratory qualitative research. The findings will be analyzed through grounded theory as I will not be forming a hypothesis prior to my study but potentially generating one after conducting the research interviews. The questions will be a combination of formal and specific short-answer questions such as “how many individuals does your agency serve” and “what benefits do you provide for poverty alleviation” as well as broader more in-depth questions including “what is the mission of the agency” and “how effective do you feel the agency is at reaching its goals.”

**Sampling**

To find social protection agencies in Jinja and Kampala I used a convenience sample. Primarily using the Uganda National NGO Forum (UNNGOF) online at www.ngoforum.or.ug, I looked for agency descriptions containing discussion of social protection, poverty, or anything regarding aid from poverty to disadvantaged or vulnerable individuals. From here I contacted agencies with valid e-mail addresses including a description of Tawi, my research plans, and a request for an interview while I am in Uganda. Of the 21 agencies I contacted, one was returned as undeliverable and I have gotten seven responses from agencies thus far who are willing to allow me to conduct an interview. While I am in Uganda I will contact the agencies again and interview those who are able to arrange a meeting. From here I will include snowball sampling by asking individuals to put me in touch with other social protection agencies.

**LIMITATIONS AND VALIDITY**

The research design for this project does not control for most threats to internal and external validity and reliability due to its exploratory nature. As the study is using a nonprobability convenience sample and lacks random selection, it is subject to a selection bias in that there may be inherent differences between the agencies who responded to me and those that did not. Regarding external validity, the results will not be very generalizable to the population as the study is exploratory and non-experimental. Reliability will be limited as I will not be utilizing an existing survey or obtaining IRB approval for this project. If I continue with this research I will be seeking IRB approval to improve validity and gain permission to publish.

**REFERENCES**

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Devereux, S., Ntale, C. L., & Sabates-Wheeler, R. (2002). Social Protection in Uganda: Study to   
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 Eradication Action Plan. Phase I Report: Vulnerability Assessment and Review of Initiatives.   
 Kampala: Ministry of Gender. Labour and Social Development.

**SURVEY QUESTIONS**

These questions are to be used as prompts in semi-structured interviews with individuals working at social protection agencies in Jinja and Kampala.

1. What is the mission of your agency?
2. How is your agency funded?
3. Does the Ugandan government help provide benefits in this area as well?
4. What benefits does your agency provide?
5. Are there other benefits that you wish your agency could provide?
6. Who does your agency view as “vulnerable” or “in need” of  
   services?
7. Why do you think these individuals/groups are more vulnerable to poverty than other individuals/groups?
8. What are some factors that prevent poverty for Ugandans? i.e. strong social network, family, certain kind of job, no children, etc.
9. What does poverty look like in Uganda?
10. How does poverty look different in the rural and urban areas?
11. Do you think the universal measure of poverty at living on less than $1.25/day (translated into shillings?) is enough?
12. Who does your agency serve?
13. How many individuals does your agency serve?
14. Do you feel that there is a lot of unmet need in your area of concentration? How does/would your agency approach that issue?
15. How well do you think your agency meets its goals?
16. What would help your agency better meet its goals?
17. Does your agency aim to serve individuals or groups?
18. Why do you believe individuals become poor?
19. How do you think individuals can get out of poverty?
20. What do you think is the largest barrier for getting out of poverty?
21. How do non-poor individuals view individuals who are poor?
22. Do you have any additional thoughts on Ugandan poverty?
23. Could you give me contact information for other social protection areas in Jinja or Kampala that may be interested in allowing me to conduct an interview?