

Impact case study (REF3)

Institution: University of Southampton		
Unit of Assessment: 20 Social Work and Social Policy		
Title of case study: 20-02 Improving the lives of older people in Kenya		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2006 - 2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Prof Maria Evandrou	Professor of Gerontology, Director, Department of Gerontology, & Centre for Research on Ageing	February 2005 – present
Prof Jane Falkingham	Professor of Demography and Social Policy, Faculty of Social Sciences	September 2002 – present
Dr Gloria Langat (aka Chepngeno-Langat)	Associate Professor in Gerontology, Department of Gerontology, & Centre for Research on Ageing	April 2009 – present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: August 2013 – December 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		

1. Summary of the impact

University of Southampton (UoS) research into ageing and the well-being of older people in Kenya has influenced policy debate and practice within Kenya and across sub-Saharan Africa more widely. This has been achieved in three key ways:

1. ESRC-DFID funded research into the impact of social pensions (2016-2018) provided the first comprehensive evaluation of the Kenyan Older Persons Cash Transfer Programme (OPCT). This generated unique insights into the efficiency and effectiveness of the targeting mechanism used within the National Safety Net Programme, known as *Inua Jamii*. The resultant improvements in the targeting and delivery of benefits positively impacted on the operation of all four of the programmes running under Inua Jamii, ensuring the designated benefits get to the entitled beneficiaries in a timely fashion. Together, Inua Jamii covers 1.33 million households with an annual budget of 320 million USD.
2. UoS research also highlighted the important role of cash transfers in alleviating poverty amongst older people *and* their wider family networks. In particular, the direct evidence of a spill over effect provided important supporting evidence for the expansion of the cash transfer programme for older people to incorporate a universal benefit for all people age 70 in 2018, positively impacting the lives of 833,000 Kenyan older people and their families. The project was selected as a case study by the DFID Impact Initiative, providing a resource for advocacy for universal social pensions throughout sub-Saharan Africa.
3. The wider corpus of the UoS research on the health and well-being of older people (since 2006), has had significant conceptual impact beyond Kenya, putting older people on the policy agenda across sub-Saharan Africa. Supported by an ESRC IAA grant (2016-2017), the research team engaged with the African Union, ensuring our research informed the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the *Rights of Older Persons In Africa* (2017) and the on-going African Union Policy Framework and Plan of Action on Ageing (AUPFPAA).

2. Underpinning research

This case study is underpinned by 15 years of leading-edge UoS research on ageing in the slum settlements of Nairobi and elsewhere in Kenya. Professor Jane Falkingham was the UK PI for the Wellcome Trust funded '*Urbanisation, Poverty and Health Research*' (UPHD) project conducted 2004-2009 in collaboration with the Africa Population & Health Research Centre (APHRC) in Nairobi [G1]. The UoS team led the research investigating the socio-economic position of older people, their living arrangements and social support networks. The research sought to understand the determinants of health and health-seeking behaviour, migration dynamics, and patterns of care and support in later life and how this was affected by developing issues such as HIV and AIDS. This was the first study of older people living in urban informal settlements in sub-Saharan Africa.

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The research revealed that the majority of older people living in the slums of Nairobi (77%) had migrated directly from rural areas earlier in their life course and had aged 'in situ', suggesting that informal settlements are likely to become permanent homes for significant numbers of older people in the future [3.1]. The research confirmed that a socio-economic gradient in health outcomes exists, even among older people living in a seemingly homogenous slum settlement [3.2], drawing attention to the need to target resources towards the most vulnerable.

Despite the harsh conditions, the research also pointed to a minority of older people living in slums with (relatively) positive wellbeing outcomes. To better understand the factors contributing to this 'resilience', Professor Maria Evandrou (PI), Dr Gloria Langat and Prof Jane Falkingham (Co-Is) secured an ESRC-DFID grant [G2]. The original sample of older people, first interviewed in Nairobi in 2006, were re-interviewed in 2009 and 2011. This unique longitudinal data facilitated examination of how older people cope with stresses and shocks, such as ill health and bereavement, and how some are able to emerge with better outcomes and overall wellbeing relative to other older people living in the same context. [3.3].

The Kenyan Older Person Cash Transfer Programme (OPCTP), providing a means-tested cash benefit to the most vulnerable older people, was piloted in the study slum communities in 2006-2007, informed by CRA's and APHRC's research, and then gradually rolled out nationwide. Langat (post-doctoral researcher on G1 and Co-I on G2), secured her first research grant as PI in 2016 to better understand the impact of the cash transfer on the beneficiaries and their families, working with the Kenyan Ministry of Labour & Social Protection as a partner [G3]. This new research has shed light on the extent to which the means-tested cash transfer programme for older people had been effective (or not) in reaching the targeted most vulnerable older people, informing the design and refinement of the targeting mechanism and other operational aspects of the programmes [3.4].

It has also provided new evidence on how the cash transfer programme benefits a wider group of beneficiaries than just the older persons themselves, via reallocation of resources within the household and family; 40% of beneficiaries were found to re-allocate some or all of the cash received, with the majority of secondary beneficiaries being either grandchildren or children of the primary beneficiary [3.5]. The research also highlighted that receipt of the benefit improved the living standards of the most vulnerable older people by providing regular and predictable cash transfer; 50% of beneficiaries felt that they had at least some money to meet basic needs compared to just over 36% of non-beneficiaries [3.6].

3. References to the research

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- 3.1** Falkingham, J. Chepnengo-Langat, G. & Evandrou, M. (2012) Outward migration from large cities: are older migrants in Nairobi 'returning'? *Population, Space and Place*, 18, (3), 327-43, <https://doi.org/10.1002/psp.678>
- 3.2** Falkingham, J. Chepnengo-Langat, G. Kyobutungi, C. Ezeh, E. and Evandrou, M. (2011) Does socio-economic inequality in health persist among older people living in resource-poor urban slums? *Journal of Urban Health* 88 (2): 235-255, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11524-011-9559-4>
- 3.3** Bennett R. Chepnengo-Langat G. Evandrou M. Falkingham J. (2015) Resilience in the face of the Kenyan post-election violence: the mediating role of social networks for wellbeing of older people in the Korogocho slum, Nairobi. *Social Science & Medicine* 128: 159-167, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2015.01.033>
- 3.4** Chepnengo-Langat, G., Evandrou, M., Falkingham, J., Van Der Wielen, N., & Aboderin, I. (2019) The Cash Transfer Project: Impacts of social pensions on multiple dimensions of poverty, subjective wellbeing and solidarity across generations - Summary of key findings and emerging implications. <https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/445068/>
- 3.5** Chepnengo-Langat, G., Van Der Wielen, N., Evandrou, M., & Falkingham, J. (2019). Unravelling the wider benefits of social pensions: Secondary beneficiaries of the older persons cash transfer program in the slums of Nairobi. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 51, [100818]. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2019.100818>
- 3.6** Chepnengo-Langat, G., Van Der Wielen, N., Falkingham, J., & Evandrou, M. (Accepted/In press 2020). Targeting cash transfers on the 'poorest of the poor' in the slums: how well did the Kenya's Older Persons Cash Transfer Programme perform? *Journal of Aging & Social Policy*. Available on request [delayed output].

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Grants

G1. E. Zulu (PI), J.Falkingham (Co-I; UK, PI), N. Madise (Co-I), A. Ezech (Co-I), J. Cleland (Co-I), J-C. Fotso (Co-I) and Z. Woubalem (Co-I) (2004-2009) 'Urbanization, Poverty and Health Dynamics in Sub-Saharan Africa' Wellcome Trust **USD3.8 million, (GBP108,904 went to UoS)**

G2. M. Evandrou (PI), J. Falkingham (Co-I), I. Aboderin (Co-I), G. Langat (Co-I) (2013-2015) Measuring wellbeing in later life in a low resource setting: Understanding health and socio-economic resilience among older people in Nairobi slums, Kenya ESRC-DFID **GBP348,024.20**

G3. G. Langat (PI); M. Evandrou (Co-I); I. Aboderin (Co-I) (2016-2018) Impacts of social pensions on multiple dimensions of poverty, subjective wellbeing and solidarity across generations ESRC-DFID **GBP404,129.20** (ES/NO014510/1).

G4. I. Aboderin (PI), G. Langat and M. Evandrou (2016-2017) Harnessing sub-Saharan Africa's older population for realising a first demographic dividend in the region. ESRC/University of Southampton ESRC Impact Acceleration Account (IAA) **GBP10,000.00**

4. Details of the impact

The research conducted in Kenya since 2006 by UoS has had both **instrumental** and **conceptual** impact during the assessment period. The impact has been achieved through a sustained programme of collaborative working with a range of in-country stakeholder groups, including HelpAge Kenya, Nairobi County government and local community groups, and, most importantly, the Kenyan Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (**MLSP**).

Instrumental impact

The OPCT was first piloted in 2006 in the two slum sites where the UoS collaboration with the APHRC demographic surveillance system was based, providing a data platform for ready evaluation. Research under [**G1**] (2004-2009) provided early evidence of the value of cash transfers for older person well-being, and the OPCT was gradually rolled out nationwide. At the dissemination event for the first ESRC-DFID project [**G2**] (funded 2013-2015), the MLSP expressed interest in better understanding of the role of cash transfers in poverty alleviation across wider kinship networks. The subsequent DFID-ESRC funded project on "The impact of social pensions on multiple dimensions of poverty, subjective wellbeing and solidarity across generations" [**G3**] (funded 2016-2018) was co-designed with the MLSP.

"The National Social Protection Secretariat has been engaged with the research team throughout the research progress, facilitating our input into the research design and highlighting areas where the Ministry would benefit from further insights. This co-production of knowledge has increased the utility and impact of the research". (Head NSPS, Kenya) [5.1]

The mixed methods research design facilitated the **first comprehensive evaluation of the OPCT in Kenya [5.1]** leading to **improvements in both the design and delivery of the benefit** as follows.

Impact 1a: Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the means-tested OPCT 2018-2020

From its inception, the OPCT has been targeted on extremely poor and vulnerable households with a member aged 65 and over, with eligible households identified through a two-stage process which included community-based selection and proxy means-testing. Such targeting can result in both errors of inclusion and exclusion. UoS quantitative analysis of the 2015/16 *Kenya Integrated Household Budget Survey* provided the **first national level evidence of the magnitude of these targeting errors**, with preliminary results presented to the NSPS Conference in March 2018 [5.2] and discussed with key staff within the MLSP.

Further in-depth insights into the points in the administrative process where the targeting errors might have occurred were then gained by the qualitative research with older people living in two slum settlements. These included issues such as faulty fingerprint reading, inequitable transport costs and ad hoc information on payment schedules. Again, this evidence was shared with the MLSP both during the research process at regular team meetings and at a joint dissemination organised by the MLSP on 15th June 2019 [5.3] [5.4]. This evidence fed into the MLSP's on-going reform of the targeting methodology used to determine eligibility and informed improvements in service delivery.

"The research from the ESRC/ DFID project directly fed into our discussions around how to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of this targeting mechanism, helping to confirm where errors of exclusion and inclusion might arise, including reliance on grassroots organisations and validation by local committees as well as the weights used in the PMT. The research also shed

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light on operational issues including issues around manual data entry and valid IDs, ad hoc information of payment schedules, faulty fingerprint reading and multifactor verification and issues around proximity, and associated travel costs, to payment centres to collect benefits.”

[5.5]

Impact 1b: Improving the targeting and delivery of the wider set of cash transfers within the Kenyan National Safety Net programme

Although the UoS research focussed on older people, the targeting mechanism employed within the MLSP for identifying eligibility for cash transfers is common across all the programmes running under the National Safety Net programme – known as *Inua Jamii* – including the cash benefits for people with severe disabilities (PWSD) and orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). The same targeting methodology is also used by the DFID supported Hunger Safety Net Programme. As the ESRC-DFID project [G3] (2016-2018) identified specific points in the administrative process where targeting errors can occur, **the reach of the impact extended beyond the OPCT to benefit all other means-tested cash transfers.**

“Improvements in both the targeting and delivery systems have positively impacted on the operation of all the programmes running under the national safety net programme, ensuring the designated benefits get to the entitled beneficiaries on time.

Together the four programmes under the Inua Jamii Cash Transfer Programs in Kenya (OPCT, PWSD, OVC and HSNP) have a coverage of 1.33 million households and an annual budget of 320 million USD [GBP239,000,000]”. [5.5]

Wider conceptual impact

Impact 2: Influencing the introduction of a universal social pension in Kenya

The ESRC-DFID project [G3] inception workshop in Nairobi in 2017 was attended by regional representatives of the ILO, World Bank, World Food Programme, and the African Platform for Social Protection, with the specific aim of ensuring the research would be relevant to and inform on-going national and regional discussions around social pensions and social protection more broadly [5.6]. As a direct result of these discussions, the project’s research design included a component investigating the wider benefits of the OPCT for other age groups. This provided the first empirical evidence in Kenya of the extent to which the benefit was shared across wider kinship networks and what it was used for, including supporting grandchildren to remain in education [3.5].

In 2018, the means-tested OPCT aimed at vulnerable people aged 65 was supplemented **by the introduction of a universal benefit for all older people aged 70 and over – known as “Inua Jamii 70+”**, with the means-tested element continuing for those aged 65-69 already registered. Although the decision to introduce the universal scheme for those 70 plus predates the final dissemination of the project’s results in June 2019, according to the Head of the National Social Protection Secretariat, by providing empirical evidence of the importance of the benefit to the well-being of the recipients and their extended families, the UoS research:

“... provided valuable evidence to support the extension of the OPCT programme to the Inua Jamii universal scheme targeting all senior citizens 70 years and above, which has extended the number of OPCT beneficiaries to 833,000 older people receiving an estimated 6,586 million [KES] [GBP52,000,000] in 2018/19”. (Head NSPS, Kenya) [5.1]

Extending the reach beyond Kenya

Impact 3a: Influencing the case for social pensions for older people in sub-Saharan Africa

Beyond their relevance for, and impact within Kenya, the research findings have directly contributed to the building of a policy evidence base on the potential role of social pensions as a vehicle for broad poverty alleviation in sub-Saharan Africa, as evidenced by HelpAge International, the leading older person’s advocacy international NGO.

“The [research] will be very helpful in supporting our advocacy work on the value of social pensions for ensuring the well-being of older people and their wider households.

The findings on the administrative barriers will assist our work on empowering older people to claim their rights”. (Regional Manager, HelpAge International Africa, Tanzania) [5.7]

The UoS team were invited to participate in a three-day event entitled ‘Power of Partnership: Research to Alleviate Poverty’ hosted by the ESRC-DFID Strategic Partnership, which took place in

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New Delhi, India, 3rd to 5th December 2018 [5.8]. The project was subsequently selected as a case study by the DFID Impact Initiative and showcased on their website [5.9] with the Policy & Practice Briefing Paper [5.10], providing a resource for advocacy for universal social pensions throughout sub-Saharan Africa. As of 7th December 2020, the Briefing Paper has had 1,297 downloads, making it ranked #5 in the list of most popular works by the Impact Initiative [5.10]. The data can be accessed via the IDS OpenDocs [5.11].

Impact 3b: Putting ageing on the African policy agenda – informing the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Older Persons In Africa, and the African Union Policy Framework and Plan of Action on Ageing to implement this.

The wider corpus of the UoS research on the health and well-being of older people (since 2006), has had significant conceptual impact. During the period 2016-2017, the research team benefitted from an ESRC Impact Acceleration Account Project ‘Harnessing sub-Saharan Africa’s older population for realising a first demographic dividend in the region’ [G4]. This facilitated the UoS team to work directly with colleagues in the World Economic Forum (WEF) Global Agenda Council on Ageing and to strengthen our policy networks.

Results of our research were presented by our APHRC partner during the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development Labour and Employment in April 2017 [5.12]. This helped ensure that UoS research from [G1] and [G2] fed into the drafting of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa (2017). Findings from the most recent research project [G3] have informed on-going revisions to the African Union Policy Framework and Plan of Action on Ageing (AUPFPAA), co-ordinated by the African Union Social Development Office, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

“The research ... on social pensions and the earlier research on the resilience of older people in the slums of Nairobi, were especially relevant to our thinking regarding sub-sections 2 and 3 [of article 7 of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Older Persons In Africa] ... I am delighted that the protocol has now been signed by 17 countries, from Angola to Zambia, with the potential to directly affect 17.3 million older people, as well as their wider families.” (Member of the African Union Committee working towards and revising the African Union Policy Framework and Plan of Action on Ageing) [5.13]

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

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- 5.1 Testimonial letter, Head of the National Social Protection Secretariat (NSPS), State Department for Social Protection, Kenya 11th July 2019.
 - 5.2 Agenda of National Social Protection Secretariat (NSPS) meeting, 21st March 2018, Nairobi.
 - 5.3 Cash Transfer Project Dissemination Agenda (a) & Participants (b), 13th June 2019, Nairobi.
 - 5.4 Cash Transfer Project (a) Summary Report, June 2019 and (b) accompanying presentation.
 - 5.5 Testimonial letter, Head of the Social Assistance Unit, Ministry of Labour & Social Protection, National Social Protection Secretariat, Kenya, 24th November 2020.
 - 5.6 Cash Transfer Project Inception Meeting minutes & participants, 3-5th April 2017, Nairobi.
 - 5.7 Testimonial letter, Regional Manager, HelpAge International Africa, 19th July 2019.
 - 5.8 Booklet of 3 day event on ‘Power of Partnership: Research to Alleviate Poverty’ hosted by the ESRC-DFID Strategic Partnership, New Delhi, India, 3rd – 5th December 2018
https://www.theimpactinitiative.net/sites/default/files/materials/Impact_Delhi_A5Brochure_ELECTRONIC_Online_FINAL.pdf
 - 5.9 Case study on DFID Impact Initiative website <https://www.theimpactinitiative.net/project/impact-social-pensions-multiple-dimensions-poverty-subjective-wellbeing-and-solidarity>
 - 5.10 ESRC-DFID Research for Policy and Practice Briefing: Pensioner Poverty, ‘Inclusion should be a priority for social pensions’, output of the Impact Initiative for International Development Research, July 2019.
 - 5.11 Briefing paper data: <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/20.500.12413/14630>
 - 5.12 (a) Second Session of the Specialised Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment (STC-SDLE-2) Algiers, Algeria 24-28th April 2017
<https://au.int/en/newsevents/20170424/second-session-specialised-technical-committee-social-development-labour> and (b) Agenda of the Expert Group, evidencing our partner, APHRC, presenting our research in the Session 4.3.
 - 5.13 Testimonial letter, Member of the African Union Committee working towards and revising the African Union Policy Framework and Plan of Action on Ageing, 24th November 2020.