



**AN ANALYSIS OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPLEMENTERS AND
BENEFICIARIES OF THE CHILD GRANTS PROGRAMME. A CASE
STUDY OF SELECTED REGIONS IN LESOTHO.**

BY

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Date 19 August 2024

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late parents; Teronko Alphonse Khiba and Masephieo Manthabiseng Khiba and my late brother Sephieo Khiba. Your lives were cut very short for all of you to see me become the person I am now. However, you will always have my respect and love.

May your souls rest in peace! Robalang ka Khotso Bataung!

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the implementation of the Child Grants Programme (CGP) which is a social assistance programme implemented by the government of Lesotho to meet the needs of vulnerable children. Implementation theory forms the basis for understanding how this programme is delivered. The approaches and models of implementation have been considered to assess the potential for programme success and the associated challenges. Policy implementation involves various actors, and in the case of the CGP, networks and partnerships have been formed with private companies. Policy networks and partnerships are commended for their efficiency and effectiveness.

The success of the policy depends on several factors that the implementers need to take cognisance of. These factors hamper or affect the implementation of the CGP. The delivery or payment modes are a vital component of any grant transfer programme. This concerns the manner in which the beneficiaries access the grant, the cost of access and appropriateness of the payment mode. Other issues include security, reliability and the potential or ability of the payment mode to allow the beneficiaries the opportunity to use the modern financial systems.

Social protection is defined and articulated to acknowledge its significance as a basic human right enshrined in various international, regional and domestic legal and policy frameworks. It serves various purposes which are generally concerned with uplifting the poor and vulnerable to restore their dignity, address issues of social inequality and injustice as well as economic exclusion.

The CGP systems and processes of implementation are explored to provide an understanding in terms of how the programme is delivered. Systems and processes include issues of targeting; eligibility and enrolment as well as the delivery or payment modes, and the implementation networks and partnerships. Targeting is an important aspect of most social assistance programmes especially in poor countries. The CGP uses a means testing criteria through the national household database called NISSA. Several suggestions for targeting and enrolment emerge in this study.

Qualitative research methodology was used to conduct this study; in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were used to collect the data. Purposive sampling was used to select the respondents, the various programme implementers, government and non-government officials and the beneficiaries.

The programme is appreciated by the beneficiaries; however, criticisms are inevitable. The unpredictability and irregularity of the payment dates and the low value of the grant diminish the goals of this programme. The implementers commend the partnerships formed, however, there are challenges. The overall impression from the results of this study suggests that this programme still need a lot of improvement in different areas to increase its credibility as well as ensuring sustainability.

Study Key Words: Beneficiaries, Children, Child grants programme, Digital payments, Government of Lesotho, Implementers, Manual payments, Payment modes, Policy implementation, Poverty, Public policy, Public policy networks, Public policy partnerships, Social assistance, Social protection, Vulnerability.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACPHR	African Charter on Human and People's Rights
ACRWC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
AU	African Union
BoS	Bureau of Statistics
CBL	Central Bank of Lesotho
CBC	Community Based Categorisation
CBT	Community Based Targeting
CGP	Child Grants Programme
CPWA	Children's Protection and Welfare Act
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
G4S	Group for Security
GoL	Government of Lesotho
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LDS	Lesotho Demographic Survey
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LRCS	Lesotho Red Cross Society
MISSA	Management Information System for Social Assistance
MIS	Management Information System
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NISSA	National Information System for Social Assistance
NSDP	National Social Development Policy
NSPS	National Social Protection Strategy
OAP	Old Age Pension

OVC	Orphaned and Vulnerable Children
OVC Bursary	Orphaned and Vulnerable Children School Bursary
PA	Public Assistance
PMT	Proxy Means Testing
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SADC	Southern African Development Community
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNUDHR	United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIGME	United Nations Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation
UN	United Nations
WFP	World Food Programme
WVL	World Vision Lesotho

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This study investigates how the Lesotho Child Grants Programme (CGP) is implemented, the processes, systems, delivery modes, the beneficiaries' experiences in accessing the programme, the experiences of the implementers, and the government and private partners in delivering the CGP. The study further explores how the beneficiaries view the programme and its impact on their children's welfare. Recent literature on the delivery of social cash transfers concentrates on e-payments as the most efficient and cost-effective means for the beneficiaries and programme implementers. This study is a policy review of the Lesotho child grants programme focusing on its delivery.

1.2 Background of the Study

In the early 2000s, the social protection agenda evolved rapidly in Africa, compelled by several factors which exposed citizens to vulnerability, most notably the HIV/AIDS epidemic and the recurring drought that caused severe food insecurity (Devereux and White 2008:2). Barrientos (2010:1) indicates that social protection swiftly advanced into a significant component of development policy in developing countries as a result of the background of economic predicaments which emanated from structural adjustment programmes and globalisation. Barrientos (2010:2) defines it as "the public actions taken in response to the levels of vulnerability, risk, and deprivation which are deemed socially unacceptable within a given polity or society". According to Nino-Zarazua, Barrientos, Hickey and Hulme (2012: 163), social protection, primarily social assistance, has received increased attention in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Garcia and Moore (2012:12) mention that cash transfers in Sub-Saharan Africa emerged once it became evident that other forms of public or social assistance failed to achieve their goals. For example, emergency food aid only addressed famine and did not contribute to improved food stability; people experiencing poverty remained reliant on food aid. Therefore, according to Adato and Hoddinott (2008:1), governments in Africa, especially in the poor southern and East African regions, have tended to adopt policies and programmes that shield the public from risk and

vulnerability, lessen the effects of shocks, and provide livelihoods to individuals who are incapable of providing for their daily living needs.

Growing migration, urbanisation, and the disintegration of traditional family structures have gradually damaged traditional safety nets in Sub-Saharan Africa. The HIV/AIDS scourge also exacerbated the problem, especially for the orphaned and vulnerable children; the individuals who would previously be taken care of by their family members were left to provide for themselves (Garcia and Moore 2012:12). Other issues of poverty such as social and economic marginalisation, nepotism, insecure property rights and landlessness, and deterioration of the environment aggravated vulnerability and hence necessitated action by governments to safeguard the survival of the needy and vulnerable (Garcia and Moore 2012:12). Targeted cash transfers consequently gained increased emphasis as crucial instruments in tackling poverty, deprivation and vulnerability among children and their households (Barrientos and DeJong 2004:1).

Garcia and Moore (2012:31), however, indicate that initially, social protection in Africa was implemented in a disjointed manner; countries did not have social protection strategies, or the governments were not reinforcing the strategies. According to Garcia and Moore (2012:31), the ministries in charge of social protection in Sub-Saharan Africa have also been very weak both politically and technically, and the weaknesses were evident in government budget allocations; the focus of social protection was much more focused on infrastructure or using it as a means for emergency relief. However, as development challenges intensified, governments and development partners showed growing attention towards improving social protection and safety nets.

Garcia and Moore (2012:32) mention that global economic crises also spurred the interest in social protection. In particular, in Sub-Saharan Africa, social protection, especially cash transfers, emerged as a response to the extreme consequences suffered by the poorest populations within the continent. Since late 2004, the African Union has encouraged countries to devise their social policy frameworks to expand and improve their social protection programmes (Garcia and Moore 2012:2). According to Garcia and Moore (2012:32), the threats of financial collapse and recession, food shortages and rising food and fuel prices around 2007 to 2009 caught the attention of donors who saw the need to mitigate the effects on the vulnerable

groups. There was a severe need to increase social protection for individuals and households adversely affected by the crises to help them survive. Barrientos and DeJong (2004:2) note that governments in emerging economies have relied more on cash transfer programmes because they have proven to be effective in empowering and increasing families' capability to invest in their children's development since they offer the beneficiaries more freedom in how they utilise the funds.

According to the World Bank (2019:25), over a quarter of Lesotho's population, about 27.7 per cent, is vulnerable to or falling into poverty. Poverty levels are consistently high among female-headed households, those who are less educated, and the unemployed with large families and children (World Bank 2019:25). Only 22.6 per cent of households, mainly concentrated in the urban areas, are not vulnerable to poverty (World Bank 2019:25). The UN Lesotho multi-dimensional poverty index report of 2023 reveals that about 447,000 people in Lesotho were multi-dimensionally poor in 2021 while the additional 652,000 people were vulnerable to multi-dimensional poverty (UNDP 2023:2).

UNICEF Lesotho's child poverty report of 2018 indicates that the effects of the prevalent poverty in the country were more severe for children; about 65 per cent of all children in Lesotho were multi-dimensionally poor, deprived in two or more dimensions of well-being (UNICEF 2018a:8). Comparatively, the trend is considerably higher in the rural areas than in the urban areas; 72 per cent and 43 per cent respectively, (UNICEF 2018a:8). However, child poverty is a global issue. Save the Children (2018:7) mentions that children are exposed to extreme poverty in developing countries; an estimated 385 million of the poorest children in the world live in rural areas (81 per cent), mostly in sub-Saharan African countries.

According to the Bureau of Statistics (BoS) (2023:77) children comprise the most significant proportion of Lesotho's population, 767,509 children constituting about 37 per cent. Twenty per cent of these children are orphans who have limited access to services and resources for livelihoods (BoS 2023:77). Lesotho is one of the countries most hard hit by the widespread HIV/AIDS scourge thereby exacerbating the poverty situation in all its aspects, striking children particularly severely. All children are born with an inherent right to a safe and secure childhood, an education and a healthy start in life, presenting plentiful opportunities for a productive and successful adulthood

(UNICEF 2016:1). A study by UNICEF (2018:18) indicated that Lesotho is one of the countries with the highest child poverty rate in the Southern Africa region; suggesting that this must be addressed by raising incomes for poor households caring for children.

The Government of Lesotho (GoL) National Social Protection Strategy paper 2021-2031 outlines that "social protection is a necessary public service; increasing the access of household members to education and health services, which has long term benefits that can help to discontinue the inter-generational transmission of poverty" (GoL 2014:2). The Constitution of the Kingdom of Lesotho also recognises the need to care for and protect children and young persons. Section 32 stipulates that the country shall "adopt policies that will provide protection and assistance to children and young persons and ensure that they are protected from economic and social exploitation" (Constitution of Lesotho 1993).

According to the UN (2019:25), Lesotho spent about 4.5 per cent of GDP on social assistance. The rate increased significantly to 6.4 per cent in 2021 (World Bank 2021:4). The overall budget for child-focused programmes in Lesotho was 0.326 billion Maloti in 2021/2022, increasing from 0.231 billion Maloti in 2020/2021 (GoL 2021:12).

1.3 Outline of the Research Problem

Lesotho, like other countries in Southern Africa, is plagued by the scourge of HIV/AIDS, recurrent drought, food scarcity, low life expectancy, weak economic growth and extremely unequal wealth distribution (GoL 2014:1). To respond to this pervasive poverty, the Government of Lesotho developed the National Social Protection Strategy paper (2014/15-2018/19) whose vision is, "a decent and dignified quality of life for all Basotho, free from poverty and hunger, that allows them to share in the benefits of national economic growth" (GoL 2014:vi). Vincent and Freeland (2008:100) mention that social protection programmes are used throughout Africa to provide sustainable poverty relief, largely through cash transfer programmes, including old age pensions, child support grants, and disability payments. Lesotho has also focused its attention on meeting the needs of its vulnerable citizenry through various social assistance programmes, including the child grants programme, the old age pension grant, orphaned and vulnerable children school bursary and the public assistance programme, which are all financed by the government (Ulrichs and Mphale 2016:7).

The non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have also played a significant role in responding to poverty and vulnerability in Lesotho. Gwimbi (2013:171) indicates that in Lesotho, various NGOs are involved in hunger alleviating programmes as a form of social assistance to the needy, such as the Catholic Relief Services (CRS), World Vision Lesotho (WVL), Lesotho Red Cross Society (LRCS) and the World Food Programme (WFP). According to Gwimbi (2013:171), these organisations have sponsored emergency food and cash transfer schemes in Lesotho to respond to the adversities of drought and other problems like HIV/AIDS. An example is a six months programme undertaken by World Vision Lesotho and the World Food Organisation in 2007-2008, which provided cash and food transfers to vulnerable households (Devereux and Mhlanga 2008:2). The implementation of the programme responded to the worst drought that Lesotho had ever experienced, which forced the Government to announce a state of food crisis and plead for quick support from development partners to fight hunger (Devereux and Mhlanga 2008:2).

The Government of Lesotho launched the child grants programme in 2009. The Lesotho Child Grants Programme (CGP) is an unconditional social cash transfer programme targeting poor households caring for and supporting vulnerable children (aged 17 years and under). The transfers are only for children; beneficiaries become ineligible for the programme as soon as the children attain the age of 18 (GoL 2011a:13). The CGP, according to the Government of Lesotho (2014:1), started as an experimental project funded by international donors; however, it has significantly advanced since its launch. It has established institutional and operational systems, it now has country-wide reach and is fully funded from domestic reserves. The main objective of the CGP "is to improve the living standards of orphans and other vulnerable children (OVC) so as to reduce malnutrition, improve health status, and increase school enrolment among OVCs" (GoL 2014:1). Eligible households receive different amounts of cash transfers depending on the number of children within the household; 360 Maloti (1-2 children), 600 Maloti (3-4 children) 750 Maloti (5 or more children) per quarter, (GoL 2014:1).

Several studies have been conducted about the Lesotho child grants programme. These studies have looked at the delivery issues related to the implementation of the CGP since its launch. Smith et al (2013: vii), mentioned that the efficiency and

effectiveness of the cash transfers in Lesotho need to be improved, and they proposed adjustments to the design and implementation of the social assistance programmes.

The study by Kardan and O'Brien (2017:5) found that some of the Lesotho Child Grants Programme operations have to be revised and improved, notably its disbursement modalities. Improving these modalities will help to better fit a crisis context and enhance the programme's efficiency. The manual payments are not cost and time-efficient. Kardan and O'Brien's observance of the operational shortcomings related to manual payments of the cash transfers suggests that a study can be undertaken to explore the benefits of e-payments, efficiency and effectiveness. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the beneficiaries' experiences of accessing the grant, their experiences with the manual payment system and investigate their views about electronic modes of payments. Further, the study will inquire about the programme's impact it has had on beneficiary households and their children's lives, and explore the factors affecting the delivery of the CGP since its inception in 2009. The study provides evidence for policy reform and restructuring to augment the quality of the programme delivery both in terms of time and money for the implementer and the beneficiaries alike.

1.4 Research Questions

- a) What is the rationale for the child grants programme in Lesotho?
- b) What organisational arrangements (processes, structures, resources, systems, mechanisms and partnerships) are in place to deliver the CGP in Lesotho?
- c) What are the issues confronting the Government of Lesotho in the delivery of the programme?
- d) What are the views of the implementers on the CGP payment modes?
- e) What are the experiences and perceptions of the beneficiaries in accessing the grant?
- f) How do the beneficiaries use the grant, or what are the benefits of the grant on the children's lives?

1.5 Research Objectives

- a) To establish why the Government of Lesotho implemented the child grant programme.
- b) To establish how the programme is delivered (processes, structures, resources, systems, mechanisms and partnerships).
- c) To establish the issues confronting the implementation of the programme.
- d) To explore the views of the implementers on the CGP payment modes.
- e) To examine how the beneficiaries receive the programme, their experiences and perceptions of accessing the grant.
- f) To discover how the beneficiaries use the grant and whether it benefits the children.

1.6 Theoretical and Conceptual Framework Adopted for the study

The study is based on the policy implementation theory, which discusses implementation approaches, models, policy networks and partnerships, as well as the conceptual explanations related to the factors that lead to successful policy implementation and the factors that impede proper implementation. The theory is used to analyse the experiences and views of the government officials regarding the issues confronting the Government of Lesotho in delivering the CGP. The definitions of the implementation approaches have shed light on understanding how the programme is being implemented while the implementation models have helped describe the actions of the implementing officials. The views of the implementing partners are mostly captured through analysing the policy networks and partnerships.

1.7 Research Methodology

1.7.1 Research Design

This study uses a qualitative research methodology guided by the interpretivist paradigm. Its goal is to obtain and record the factual experiences, perceptions and views of the different respondents concerning the implementation of the Child Grants Programme. According to Thanh and Thanh (2015:24), interpretivism holds that qualitative research allows the researchers to comprehend the research problem

through the participants' understandings and views. Qualitative research permits the researcher to form an extensive interpretation of the research problem; the kind of questions it asks, motivates the participants to provide thorough explanations on the issues; and respondents are not restricted or channelled towards the specific responses (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout 2014:173). Through the detailed insights that the qualitative data produced in this study, the researcher has gained a deepened understanding of the implementation of the CGP.

1.7.2 Case Study

This study uses a case study approach. Babbie and Mouton (2001: 288) define a case study as "an intensive investigation of a single unit, with its context being a significant part of the investigation". Baxter and Jack (2010:544) define a case study as an approach to qualitative research that allows for an investigation of a situation within its setting using various sources of information to ensure that the issue is broadly investigated to enable many aspects of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood. Njie and Asimiran (2014:36) mention that the case study allows the researcher to acquire as detailed insights as possible about an event, person or process.

This research uses three districts as case studies: Leribe, Berea and Mafeteng. The demographic characteristics of these districts is outlined along with demographic characteristics, employment and unemployment rates, and education and health statistics, described in relation to the prevalence of HIV/AIDS since it is one of the factors that influenced the formulation of the Child Grants Programme as a policy option for the welfare of children.

1.7.3 Sampling

Non-probability sampling is the purposive sampling technique used in this study. The sample consisted of the three districts. Two community councils were selected in each of the districts where the beneficiaries' focus group discussions were held, with government officials who were implementing the programme at the central, district and community councils and the representatives of the implementing partner organisations.

According to Teddlie and Yu (2007:80), purposive sampling is used to select the study elements based on the particular aim of the research. It focuses on the distinct characteristics of the population of interest. The respondents sampled in this study are privy to the implementation of CGP and, therefore, have insights related to the programme. The total number of respondents interviewed on a one-on-one basis for this study was 23, and 120 respondents participated in the focus group discussions.

The government officials were selected from the Department of Social Assistance, Department of Planning, district managers and the auxiliary social workers at the community councils. The three private organisations involved in implementing the CGP are the two payment companies, and one organisation that provides financial and technical support. Lastly, ordinary Basotho who are beneficiaries of the CGP, are included to explore their experiences concerning the programme.

1.7.4 Data Collection Methods

The study used qualitative data collection methods namely in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. These methods were suitable for this study as they permitted the scholar to uncover profound insights about the research issue. In-depth interviews allowed for an explanation of questions and additional information from the participants. Du Plooy-Cilliers et al (2014:188) state that interviews will enable the opportunity to search for more information by urging the participants to provide further details on their views. Focus group discussions allow the participants to reflect on and debate what others are saying, thereby providing the chance to clarify their views, experiences, and understandings about a research topic (Ritchie and Lewis 2003:3). Focus group discussions produce rich information from the study subjects.

1.7.5 Data Analysis

The study used thematic content analysis to analyse the data. Vaismoradi, Turunen and Bondas (2013:400) describe thematic analysis as a qualitative data analysis method used to analyse, categorise, and explain the patterns or core meanings flowing from the data. The themes were extracted from the overriding concepts from the respondents' answers. The themes used for analysis in Chapter Six of this study are the following: reducing deprivation and vulnerability, community mobilisation and

sensitisation, quality of data, validation and recertification, efficiency and effectiveness, reciprocity and mutual benefit, communication and coordination, high delivery costs, logistics and operational issues, unethical behaviour, lack of public participation, lack of decentralisation, resource constraints, poor administrative capacity and lack of political will.

In Chapter Seven, data is analysed under the following themes: accessibility (cost of access by the beneficiaries, appropriateness of the payment mode, rights and dignity of beneficiaries), robustness of the payment mode (reliability of the payment mode and security of the payment mode) and integration of the payment mode (financial inclusion), unpredictability of payment dates and low value of the grant.

1.8 Significance of the Study

This study is prompted by the desire to influence policy reform in terms of the implementation of the CGP. The evidence given by the study participants is important as it will influence decision-making regarding the various elements of the programme implementation that need modifications and or improvements. This study uncovers several aspects that need attention, clearly informed by those affected by the programme.

In the context of Lesotho, this study will contribute to the broader understanding of issues confronting the implementation of social assistance programmes in the country. There is minimal research on the implementation of social assistance programmes in Lesotho. This study included a very significant constituent in trying to understand the inner workings of the implementation of the CGP by including the beneficiaries and service consumers who have informed the understanding of the programme delivery. The experiences they shared apply to the other social assistance programmes delivered by the government. Therefore, some of the recommendations put forth in this study can be applied to all the programs.

1.9 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

1.9.1 Limitations

The researcher had intended to use a sample of six districts, three in the highlands and three in the lowlands. However, that was not achieved in practice. The three districts selected for this study are all in the lowlands. Therefore, only the views, experiences and perspectives of beneficiaries living in the lowlands are reported in this study.

1.9.2 Delimitations

Given that the researcher could not cover six districts as was intended, the researcher doubled the number of focus group discussions conducted in the community councils; two community councils instead of one were selected per district, and two focus group discussions were held in each district. The study had initially aimed to conduct one focus group discussion per council.

1.10 Definitions of Key Terms

- (i) **Beneficiary or beneficiaries** are people identified as eligible for the grant, thus receive the grant.
- (ii) **Child(ren)** refers to someone below the age of 18.
- (iii) **Child grants programme** a social cash transfer program targeting vulnerable children in Lesotho.
- (iv) **Digital payments** refer to different electronic systems used to transfer money from one account to another.
- (v) **Implementers** refer to the government officials and the partners implementing CGP.
- (vi) **Manual Payments** refer to a payment method whereby the grant beneficiaries are provided with hard cash, (enclosed in an envelope).
- (vii) **Payment modes** refers to the methods used to deliver or pay the grants to the beneficiaries.

- (viii) **Policy implementation** is putting into action a government decision to address a public problem. According to Khan and Khandaker (2016:540) policy implementation denotes the execution of law, in which different stakeholders and institutions work together using processes and systems to accomplish policy goals.
- (ix) **Poverty** is when people lack the financial and material resources necessary to attain an acceptable standard of living. Poverty, in its most general sense, is the lack of necessities; basic food, shelter, medical care and safety; these are ordinarily supposed to be essential based on common ideals of human dignity (Bradshaw 2007:10).
- (x) **Public policy** is an officially articulated course of action of what the government follows to tackle a social problem (Hanekom 1987:7). On a simpler note, public policy is defined as what governments decide to do or not to do about public issues (Hanekom, 1987:8, Kraft and Furlong 2015:3).
- (xi) **Public policy networks** collaborate between governments and the private sector to deliver public goods and services. Policy networks are collections of stakeholders with an interest, or role in a given policy.
- (xii) **Public policy partnerships** are defined by Steets (2010:6) "as voluntary cooperative arrangements between organisations from the public, private and or civil society agencies that are formalised with common, non-hierarchical decision-making procedures that address a public policy issue".
- (xiii) **Social assistance** refers to public programmes offering a minimum level of income support to individuals and households living in poverty. Beegle, Honorati and Monsalve (2018:53) define social assistance programmes as non-contributory remunerations distributed either in cash or in kind which assist the underprivileged and needy individuals and households who are prone to risks and have no adequate means or resources to cope with everyday needs.
- (xiv) **Social protection** safeguards people from social and economic risks by providing them with financial assistance to at least attain the basic needs to enhance their human dignity. UNICEF (2012:1) defines social protection as a set of public and private strategies and initiatives to prevent, reduce and

eliminate the economic and social difficulties that cause poverty and deprivation.

- (xv) **Vulnerability** is the susceptibility to unfavourable situations that have the potential to harm an individual; mostly emotionally and / or physically. However, the term is relative and can be used to define different situations depending on the context. In relation to poverty, vulnerability refers to the possibility that a household or an individual may fall under the baseline poverty mark in the event of a shock or disaster (Gao, Vinha and Skoufias 2020:1).

1.11 Structure of the Study

CHAPTER ONE- Introduction

This chapter gives the background to the research and the research problem, the objectives and research methodology of the study, sampling methods, data collection methods, and data analysis. The chapter also provides core definitions, the study's delimitations and the significance and thesis structure.

CHAPTER TWO- Literature Review

A broad spectrum of academic literature on poverty and social protection is presented in this study. This gives insights into the problems over the years of how poverty has and continues to affect individuals, households, communities and societies and how social protection has evolved as a policy agenda over the years, particularly in Africa.

CHAPTER THREE: Policy and Legislative Framework for Social Protection

This chapter will present the legislative framework of social protection; international laws, treaties, protocols and conventions will be outlined. Then, the domestic legislative framework will also be engaged.

CHAPTER FOUR: Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This chapter explores the theories and concepts which define the need for social protection, helping the researcher to postulate a clear picture and / or understanding

of why it was necessary for the case study to be developed in the quest to curb child poverty in Lesotho.

CHAPTER FIVE: Research Methodology

This is a qualitative study using in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to collect data. These methods are suitable for this study because participants are going to share their own experiences, understandings, motivations and perceptions about the implementation of CGP. Ritchie and Lewis (2003:3) mention that qualitative methods allow participants to discuss a social phenomenon the way they understand or view it.

CHAPTER SIX: Findings and Analysis- Implementation of the Child Grants Programme

The findings presented in this chapter are organised according to the conceptual themes derived from the respondents' views. The findings are explained in relation to the conceptual definition of social protection, implementation theory approaches, implementation models, public policy networks and partnerships.

CHAPTER SEVEN: Findings and Analysis- Experiences of the Implementers and Beneficiaries of the Delivery Modes and the usefulness of the Child Grants Programme (CGP).

In this chapter the findings are presented in relation to the themes that explain the features of the payment modes; the views of the implementers on the payment modes and the experiences of the beneficiaries in accessing the payments as well as the themes emanating from the responses on the usefulness or impact of the of the grant.

CHAPTER EIGHT: Conclusion and Recommendations

A summary of the main findings in the context of the research questions and objectives are provided leading to general conclusions of the study and recommendations will be given in this chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The literature reviewed for this study first outlines the general profile of vulnerable children, the status of vulnerable children worldwide, the status of vulnerable children in Africa and the status of vulnerable children in Lesotho. Lesotho's demographics scrutinised in detail are for health and nutrition, education and child labour. These three aspects are some of the main factors that negatively impact on children's physical and social development in the country. Further, social assistance is defined, and the emergence of social grants as a means to respond to child poverty is discussed. This chapter also outlines the history of social assistance across poor and developing countries to help to explain the rationale behind the implementation of CGP in Lesotho.

The different types of social assistance are discussed as well as the accountability mechanisms used in countries where social assistance is accepted as a binding human right. The discussion further depicts why it is essential to provide cash grants for children, indicating the various reasons associated with the survival and development of children. The study also reviews the literature on delivery or payment modes for social grants, the manual payment system, and the advantages and challenges of using e-payment systems. Many of the studies reviewed are drawn from the African context as it is assumed that the CGP can also be delivered using some of the delivery modes used elsewhere in the continent.

This study will explore the perceptions of the beneficiaries of social grants regarding the different aspects related to access, benefits, as well as challenges. The literature illustrated here relates to understanding how the beneficiaries experience the delivery of the programme and whether they see it as responding to the needs of vulnerable children. Further, the challenges of implementing a social grant programme are

explored, particularly in Lesotho, to understand how social assistance programmes have been implemented over the years. Lastly, the literature on the impact of social grants, particularly children's grants, is explored so that the assessment of the CGP can be related to the experiences gathered elsewhere in order to establish whether the grant is achieving the goals commonly associated with child grants programmes.

2.2 Vulnerability Risks Facing Children

Vulnerability is the term usually used in the child welfare discourse to describe the unfavourable situations children face that affect their physical, emotional and social wellbeing. Skinner et al (2006:620) mention that vulnerability is very difficult to define; the difficulty of the concept is increased by the fact that it needs to consider children living in different contexts across the world. Vulnerability is not relative, in some situations, children are defined as vulnerable if they live in households with a chronically ill parent or caregiver; in other situations, in terms of lack of access to basic resources such as food, shelter, clothing, psychosocial and emotional support. In other situations, it may be defined in terms of children who live on the streets, child labourers, children who are sexually exploited, children who are neglected, children with parents in prison and children living in impoverished households (Skinner et al 2006:620).

Despite the variables given above, Skinner et al (2006:620), mention that there are several issues that need to be acknowledged when addressing the situation of children: poverty, access to shelter, education, health and other basic services and needs. Overall, the definition of child vulnerability needs to include a broad spectrum of elements, which include material problems, emotional problems and social problems that affect children in different contexts (Skinner et al 2006:624).

Vulnerability affects children in different stages throughout childhood, from infancy, school age to adolescence. The OECD (2019:142) indicates that zero to five years of age is a crucial phase for child development but unfortunately, also the stage of persistent poverty, malnutrition and poor healthcare. The non-stimulating home environments in which most children grow up, particularly in developing countries, deny young children the prospects of developing strong foundations in cognitive, motor, and socio-emotional skills (OECD 2019:142). Many of these children, especially

in Sub-Saharan Africa, die before their fifth birthday (ibid). On the other hand, the school-age children who are 6 to 14 years old are exposed to hardships like financial destitution, social gender expectations and poor educational performance, poor healthcare, lack of clean water, sanitation and hygiene. These children are also affected by violence and labour exploitation and, therefore, need to be safeguarded and assisted to be able to grow to their fullest capacity (OECD 2019:147).

2.3 The Global Status of Vulnerable Children

Governments must protect and ensure children's survival and proper development as mandated by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (UN 1989: Article 6). Children in developing countries across the world continue to suffer from various risks that compromise their development and well-being in spite of the massive advancements witnessed in poverty decline since the early 2000s (OECD 2019:142). These deprivations and risks prevent many of the world's children from reaching their full potential. Limited and poor access or no access to health services, adequate nutrition, positive early learning environments, quality education and other basic necessities deprive children of survival, proper development and opportunities for a bright future (OECD 2019:142).

Save the Children (2018:1) mentions that children have the right to survival, food and nutrition, healthcare, formal or informal education and shelter. Equally important, children are entitled to live free from fear and violence and secure from abuse and exploitation. However, thousands of children are denied a fair start in life and therefore grow up into adulthood facing poverty. The UNDP (2022 and OPHI:18) indicates that Covid-19 has also exacerbated the plight of children worldwide, exposing them to increased deprivation and vulnerability. According to the Global Multidimensional Poverty Index Report of 2020, Covid-19 set back the progress in poverty reduction by three to ten years, increasing the number of people including children who lived in a food crisis to 193 million in 2021 (UNDP and OPHI 2022:18). UNICEF (2021c:86) indicates that poverty is not only a deficiency of livelihood but is multifaceted and includes a lack of access to basic education, health, food, water and sanitation. Lack of all these necessities constitutes poverty which unfortunately affects

millions of children across the world. The State of the World's Children 2021 report revealed that about 644 million children lived in multidimensional poverty (UNICEF 2021b:86). The effects of this widespread poverty are the reason for increased school dropouts, crime and prostitution, alcohol and substance abuse, as well as escalating numbers of child marriage and early pregnancies.

The health of children born in the most impoverished families is poor, characterised by high degrees of malnourishment, stunting and death. In 2016, the State of the World's Children report indicated that in 2015, about 5.9 million children passed away before they reached five years of age, mainly because of diseases which could have been quickly and inexpensively prevented and treated (UNICEF 2016:3). Regrettably, the report released by the United Nations Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation, (UNIGME) 2023, indicates that children continue to die in high numbers. According to the report, the annual death toll among children and adolescents remains unacceptably high (UNIGME 2024:4). In 2022, 4.9 million children under the age of five died, with about 2.3 million dying during their first month of birth (UNIGME 2024:4).

The State of the World's Children report released in 2021 indicated that the challenges of malnutrition continue to affect children globally, with 22 per cent of children younger than 5 years stunted while 7 per cent are severely wasted (UNICEF 2021b:73). The impact of this on the development of children is detrimental including the lower potential to develop well both mentally and physically. The report further disclosed that about 9.3 million children would suffer from wasting by the end of 2022 (UNICEF 2021b:101). This is no doubt that children remain vulnerable and need protection in order to secure them a promising future.

The Global Multidimensional Poverty Index released by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) in 2022 indicates that 19.1 per cent of people living in 111 countries across the world live in severe poverty (UNDP and OPHI 2022:18). Many of these people are children (593 million), making child poverty more widespread, one in three children live in poverty compared to one in seven adults (UNDP and OPHI 2022:18). Children living in poverty lack access to quality education, they are often involved in

child labour, they are susceptible to harmful practices like child marriage and early childbearing (Save the Children 2018:7). UNICEF (2013:7), indicates that children growing up in a safe environment, who are healthy and well-educated are the base of a flourishing and equal society. Nonetheless, poverty issues like child labour continue to deprive children of their fundamental rights, like going to school. Save the Children report of 2018 indicated that an estimated 152 million children are trapped in child labour, working to sustain themselves and their households. Shockingly, nearly half of these children (some 73 million), are engaged in unsafe work that endangers their development physically, mentally and socially (Save the Children 2018:11).

The child labour report released by ILO and UNICEF in 2021 revealed that at the start of 2020, about 160 million children, 63 million girls and 97 million boys, are involved in child labour with almost half of them working in hazardous work directly endangering their health, safety and moral development (ILO and UNICEF 2021:21-22). This situation persists despite the global agenda set through the SDGs to eliminate the worst forms of child labour and eradicate child labour in all its forms by 2025 (ILO and UNICEF 2021:21-22).

According to Save the Children (2018:7), many children live on the streets, in care facilities and in the urban slums, while some move from one place to another and are missing in household surveys, meaning that a massive number of children are suffering in one way or the other. A report by UNICEF indicates that children from poorer backgrounds, especially those affected by armed conflicts, refugees and displaced children, are at a heightened risk of grave violations (UNICEF 2022a:14). Girls are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence, while boys are predominately the victims of recruitment and use in wars where they end up being killed, and abducted and maimed, (UNICEF 2022a:14). The risk of being killed in armed conflicts and wars has increased more than at any time in the last 20 years with close to 240 million children living in countries affected by conflicts (Save the Children 2018:14).

According to UNICEF (2022:15), about 85 per cent of boys were recruited into armed conflicts while 98 per cent of girls were victims of rape and other forms of sexual violence in 2020. These children are usually deprived of their rights to health,

education, protection and freedom from fear; they are disconnected from their family members and exposed to economic hardships which leave them susceptible to abuse, child labour, early marriage, sexual violence and recruitment by armed groups (Save the Children 2018:14). UNICEF (2021:96) points out that the one significant severe effect of conflict on children is that it endangers their mental health and well-being but not only that, lack of access to essential services like health and education. School closures resulting from the fear of attacks on schools, and poor public health measures exacerbate the risks faced by children who are already vulnerable; the girls are more exposed to domestic and gender-based violence including child marriage, because of the socio-economic insecurity of families in the regions affected by conflicts (UNICEF 2022a:24).

The issues that affect children are numerous, and according to the UNIGME (2024:4), many low and middle-income countries will not meet the SDGs targets if these issues are not tackled. Infant mortality, in particular, is predicted to be around 35 million before 2030. Families in developing countries will essentially bear this death toll.

2.4 The Status of Vulnerable Children in Africa

The world has made notable developments in reducing severe poverty but Africa, particularly the Sub-Saharan region, has not shown much progress in poverty alleviation (Watkins and Quattri 2019:9). According to the Programme, UNDP and OPHI (2022:2), the largest number of poor people live in Sub-Saharan Africa, nearly 579 million people. Save the Children (2018:7) particularly mentions that children in developing countries live in extreme poverty; most of the poorest children in the world live in African countries, mainly Sub-Saharan Africa. Many African countries have adopted Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), one of its goals being the pledge to end extreme poverty for all people everywhere. However, according to Watkins and Quattri (2019:1,) that aim is seemingly far from reach in Africa, particularly for children. The developments indicate that about 305 million African children, two in every five children, will be experiencing severe poverty by 2030.

Childhood poverty in Africa is linked to high incidences of poor health and mortality, poor nutrition, and diminished prospects for education. Changing this situation requires an urgent and concerted effort and, according to Watkins and Quattri (2019:1), Africa will lag in achieving the SDGs because, despite the decline in child deaths from 4 million to 2.7 million since 2000, Southern Africa still registers escalating figures of under-five mortality (Watkins and Quattri 2019:11). The anticipated shortfalls in reaching the 2030 SDG targets are predicted to occur in Africa. For example, while the SDG 3 target is zero child deaths from preventable diseases, 4.2 million child deaths will be recorded in 2030, with 2.7 million deaths occurring in Sub-Saharan Africa (UN 2022:2).

Child labour is a long-standing aspect of child rights violations. According to the ILO and UNICEF (2021:22), Sub-Saharan Africa stands out as the region with the highest prevalence of child labour; 23.9% of children, comprising 86.6 million aged between 5 and 17, are engaged in child labour in this region. This alarming rate of child labour in Africa is more than in the rest of the world combined, and the progress towards eliminating child labour is elusive because child labour has actually been increasing since 2012. Inadequate coverage of social protection in Africa in terms of universality and adequacy of benefits contributes to high incidences of child labour.

Malnutrition is another child development indicator which remains rife in Africa. Although the proportion of children underdeveloped because of undernourishment has decreased worldwide since 2000 from 33% to 22%, the statistics of African children who are undersized has grown (Watkins and Quattri 2019:12). This upsurge is more striking in West and Central Africa. It affects a total of over 28 million children (Watkins and Quattri 2019:12). The current progression falls far behind the possibility of achieving the target to end all forms of malnutrition; close to 115 million children are facing the possibility of stunting in 2030, and 61 million of them living in Sub-Saharan Africa. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO 2024:2), about 46 million people face crisis levels of acute food insecurity, with 12 million children under five years of age prone to acute malnutrition, with about 2.9 million of them requiring treatment for severe malnutrition. The countries in Eastern Africa continue to

experience rainfall shortages hence extreme drought leading to high levels of food insecurity, mostly affecting children (WHO 2024:2).

Covid-19 left children in a situation of crisis; schools got disrupted and children suffered. The situation has been dire; for example, UNICEF (2021b:100) reports that in July 2021, at least two out of five children in Eastern and Southern Africa had left school because of the pandemic. These estimates are undeniable, looking at how much the pandemic raged, killing millions of people and leaving children vulnerable and prone to abuse since they could no longer go to school. Children from low-income families were predominantly affected as they could not access remote learning, access to the internet is still a challenge in some parts of most countries, especially the rural areas, therefore learning was severely hampered as a result of Covid-19 (UNICEF 2021b:100).

According to Save the Children (2018:14), some countries in Africa are experiencing armed conflicts, and it is mainly children who suffer because violent conflicts cause food insecurity, interrupt access to health care and disrupt school attendance. In many African countries including Libya, Nigeria, and Sudan, education is often disrupted; schools, teachers and students are targeted for attack, and sometimes captured by armed groups, making education risky for children (Save the Children, 2018:16). As a result, schools are frequently closed or parents remove their children from school for fear of violence, including sexual violence (Save the Children 2018:16).

Another threat to the development of African children is early marriage. Child marriage is prevalent in the least advanced countries including in Africa. According to Save the Children (2018:24), Sub-Saharan Africa is home to most child brides, and child marriage rates are not decreasing progressively enough across the whole African region. UNICEF (2018:2) indicates that more than 1 in every 3 young women in Africa were married in childhood, some married before their 15th birthday. This is even though the African Union made a regional call to end child marriage in 2013. Child marriage was declared a harmful practice with highly detrimental effects on the rights of children, depriving them of attaining developmental aspirations like education (African Union 2013:2).

According to UNICEF (2018c:2), West Africa has the world's highest marriage prevalence before the age of 15. In the West and Central Africa in particular, it is likely to take over ten decades to end child marriage, looking at the current rate of progress (Save the Children 2018:24 and UNICEF 2018c:2). This is particularly worrisome because child marriage is amongst the most harmful practices which should be eliminated according to the UN Agenda 2030. Save the Children (2018:12) indicates that the economic gains from ending child marriage could save most African countries billions of dollars; Niger can save up to 1.7 billion dollars annually, Ethiopia can benefit to the tune of 4.8 billion dollars, while in Nigeria the financial cost of child marriage can be up to 7.6 billion annually. Regrettably, countries with over 50 per cent of child marriages show no signs of decline; meaning that children, especially girls, will continue to be violated (UNICEF 2018c:2). This is even though in 2015 the Heads of States and Governments of the African Union officially agreed on a joint position to adopt the Campaign to End Child Marriage in Africa (Budoo and Ramnauth 2018:11).

2.5 The Status of Vulnerable Children in Lesotho

Lesotho, like many other countries in the continent, is confronted by multiple challenges related to persistent poverty and underdevelopment (UNICEF 2018a:7). According to the UN (2021:5) over 30.5 per cent of Basotho were estimated to live below US\$1.90 a day, with most of the newly poor living in the urban areas. Children in Lesotho are vulnerable to various poverty issues that include malnutrition, HIV/AIDS, high school dropout rates, under-five mortality and orphan-hood. UNICEF (2018a:7) mentions that it is essential for the country to recognise the intricacy of child poverty, and to tackle child-related vulnerabilities through proper policy actions. The Lesotho Demographic Survey of 2021 reveals that children make up 848,930 of the total population (BoS 2021:12). However, regardless of the numerous efforts to avert child poverty through child-focused poverty reduction interventions, children continue to bear the heavy brunt of poverty in Lesotho. Around 65 per cent of children in Lesotho experience multidimensional deprivation of different basic social services (UN 2020:22). About 70 519 households living with children are ultra-poor and cannot meet the basic needs of children (UN 2020:22).

A study on child poverty was conducted in Lesotho by UNICEF (UNICEF 2018b:2), to be able to supply the government with evidence for responding to the development agenda of halving the percentage of children living in poverty by 2030. This study used a set of measurements to gauge child well-being in Lesotho, and found that 65.4 per cent of all children (aged 0–17 years) are poverty-stricken in multiple ways, that is they are concurrently deprived in three or more dimensions of well-being; which include housing, nutrition, health, education and water and sanitation (UNICEF 2018b:3). The situation of child poverty is more dominant in rural than urban areas: 72 per cent and 43 per cent, respectively (UNICEF 2018b:4).

In 2021, UNICEF released another report on child poverty in Lesotho. The study assessed the situation of children in the same dimensions as in 2018; housing, nutrition, health, education and water and sanitation. According to the findings, as of 2021, more than 2 in 5 Basotho children (45.5%) face multidimensional poverty, suffering in a number of ways that deprives them of basics necessities for their wellbeing (UNICEF 2021a:8). This is a notable development in comparison to the 65 per cent proportion in 2018. However, poverty is still widespread in rural areas, about 52.5 per cent of rural children suffer the various effects of poverty compared to 33.1 percent of children in urban areas (UNICEF 2021a:8). According to UNICEF (2021a:19), the pervasiveness of deprivation is complex in rural areas because life in rural Lesotho is embedded in patriarchal and cultural tendencies such as forcing young children into marriage and pulling children out of school to take care of livestock. Inaccessibility of essential services like health care also has undesirable consequences on the survival and growth of children.

According to UNICEF (2023:1), in the fiscal year 2022-2023, Lesotho allocated 13 per cent and 11 per cent of its budget to health and education respectively. However, the allocation for health fell short of the 15 per cent threshold set by the Abuja Declaration, whilst the quality of primary healthcare continues to be a concern affecting maternal health care, immunisation and nutrition services (UNICEF 2023:1). According to UNICEF (2021a:9), the Government of Lesotho needs to increase social protection interventions such as the CGP to tackle the multifaceted problem of child poverty.

□ Health and Nutrition

According to the UN report of 2020, Lesotho's healthcare system is fragile and much of the population is geographically constrained from accessing health services despite these services being subsidised (UN 2020:23). Approximately 10.6 per cent of GDP is spent on healthcare in Lesotho. Still, children appear to have limited access to health care and HIV health services (UN 2020:23).

With regard to nutrition, the Country Analysis Report of 2020 indicates that the national incidence of stunting was 35 percent in the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) report of 2018. In 2020, food insecurity was reported to be widespread; 582 000 people were suffering, particularly children, whereby about 92 000 children under the age of 5 suffered from stunting (UN 2020:32). Stunting is more widespread in rural areas than in urban areas. According to the United Nations (2021:8), more boys than girls suffer stunting; 36.6 per cent of boys under 5 years are stunted compared to 32.7 per cent of girls of the same age in rural areas. Overall, children who are stunted in rural areas of Lesotho account for 36 per cent while 28 per cent live in the urban areas.

The United Nations (2021:8) indicates that climate change has devastated, and continues to threaten Lesotho's developmental efforts. Frequent droughts and floods are affecting agricultural yields; leading to increases in food prices especially for Basotho who live in the rural areas. Food insecurity is high and the livelihoods of those who depend on subsistence agriculture are under threat. Children are the ones most affected by the resultant food insecurity, leading to deaths in some instances.

To address the effects of poor health, UNICEF (2018a:6) advises that the government should decentralise health services to be accessible to all the people, especially people in rural and remote areas and disenfranchised communities. The government should also support foodstuff subsidies and provide micronutrient supplements to guarantee satisfactory nutrient consumption for infants in their initial 1,000 days of life. Malnutrition remains a pervasive problem for new borns in Lesotho, resulting in high rates of child mortality and stunting (UNICEF 2023:2). Stunting is estimated at 34 per cent, which is worsened by poor infant and young child feeding practices.

□ Education

The enrolment figures in primary education have regressed in Lesotho. Primary school enrolment dropped from 82% in 2000 to 76.6% in 2015 (UNICEF 2017:7). According to UNICEF (2023:3), the situation has changed, primary education enrolment in Lesotho has risen to 85 per cent with a considerably high retention rate until graduation. However, the enrolment rates of girls are higher than those of boys. UNICEF (2018a:7) advises that gender disparities in education need to be addressed to ensure that boys finish their primary education and progress to secondary education the same as girls and that the neediest children, orphans included, and children with disabilities, get sponsorships for schooling. The UN (2020:77) indicates that the Government of Lesotho also needs to address equity in education expenditure and ensure that financing reaches the most disadvantaged, as this can realistically lead to the achievement of the SDG target 4.2 by 2030, which aims to ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality education.

According to the UN (2020:33), the deteriorating enrolment numbers in primary education are particularly worrying considering the amount of funds allocated to education in Lesotho. Education vulnerability for primary school children is 17 per cent and for secondary school children, 62 per cent. This is because primary education is free while secondary education is paid for and many families cannot afford to pay for their children's school fees. UNICEF (2018a:7) advises that the government must make secondary education compulsory and sponsor all children in secondary schools so that every child can acquire education.

Geographic location also impacts access to education in Lesotho. There is a difference in the quality of education between rural and urban areas (UN 2020:37). Most households in rural areas are poor, therefore, children in such families tend to drop out of school while children from wealthier families, primarily residing in urban areas, stay longer in school (UN 2020:37). Poor educational performance exacerbates poverty in the rural areas.

□ Child Labour

The Government of Lesotho has ratified all the key international conventions on child labour (Bureau of International Labour Affairs 2022:2). The government has also established national laws and regulations related to child labour; however, there are gaps in Lesotho's legal framework to adequately protect children from the worst forms of child labour (Bureau of International Labour Affairs 2022:2). The minimum age for employment in Lesotho as mandated by the Lesotho Labour Code of 1992 and the Children's Protection and Welfare Act 2011, is fifteen years. This Labour Code aligns with the provision of the 1973 International Labour Organisation (ILO) law on child labour, under Article 2(3). However, Basotho children, some under the age of fifteen, are still exposed to domestic slavery and forced labour especially in animal herding, and these are mostly orphaned children (UNICEF 2017:9). Herding is supposed not to be harmful, but it is because it prevents children from going to school.

According to the Bureau of Statistics (2019:39), the proportion of the employed population in Lesotho is 38.7 per cent while unemployed people account for 61.3 per cent. These numbers have a negative bearing on children because they become victims of child labour as their parents tend to send them out to work as shepherds and domestic workers. Others become street kids while others, mainly girls, engage in commercial sex work. Children, commonly HIV orphans, are compelled by poverty to migrate to the urban areas to survive, only to end up engaging in commercial sexual exploitation.

In 2015, the Government of Lesotho developed a strategic document, the National Action Plan on the Elimination of Child Labour, but children in Lesotho are still involved in the most severe practises of child labour, including working in the streets and begging and engaging in commercial sexual exploitation (UNICEF 2017:26). The problem remains with the fact that Lesotho's labour law does not forbid the usage children in illegal activities. According to the report, this is further perpetuated by a shortage of government resources for the implementation of the law.

The Government of Lesotho has made strides in responding to the needs of vulnerable children by introducing various programmes targeting children. Besides the CGP,

there is the orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) bursary scheme, whose purpose is to provide bursaries to secondary school students identified as OVCs (Saminathen 2015:12). The bursary is offered to pupils who have lost one or both parents; have a sick, disabled or incarcerated parent; or are considered needy in various ways, (UNICEF 2018b:4). Another programme is the Public Assistance (PA) programme which provides a combination of cash transfers and various in-kind transfers, such as medical exemptions and food packages and baby clothing. The nature of assistance given varies depending on the need of an individual (Smith et al 2013:51, Ulrichs and Mphale 2016:8). The beneficiaries are destitute individuals, young and old, including people with disabilities. Furthermore, the government is implementing a school feeding programme targeting primary school children, offering them two meals a day during the school days.

In addressing vulnerability, children must have different forms of support, ranging from the attainment of necessities required for daily living, such as food and health care, to interventions that will improve their quality of life in the future such as education, psychosocial support and economic self-sufficiency (Stover, Bollinger, Walker and Monash 2007:22). Investing in social protection has taken on a new urgency as governments react to pervasive poverty and other vulnerability factors that put the lives of children at risk.

According to Adato and Bassett (2009:60), cash transfers have positively influenced improved education, health and nutrition of children globally. This as a result, has hastened the international, regional as well as national commitments to social protection to tackle the challenges affecting the potential of children to defy intergenerational poverty (Adato and Bassett 2009:60). Poor nutrition leads to stunting, unnecessary fatalities resulting from poor health and increased school dropout because of a lack of school materials are under control, as various social assistance programmes targeting children exist in different countries.

Adato and Bassett (2009:61) mention that cash transfer programmes help vulnerable households by:

1. Safeguarding basic maintenance where illness or death affects family income;

2. Preventing children from dropping out of school because of failure to pay fees;
3. Preventing the sale of productive assets to pay for essentials;
4. Enabling investment in small livestock for food and income generation;
5. Increasing women's status and child nutrition through giving cash benefits directly to women.

In recent years, children have faced challenging times due to the Covid-19 pandemic. According to UNICEF (2021b:100), lockdowns have directly affected millions of children across the globe. Apparently, over 1.6 billion children have lost out on their education, with about 463 million estimated to be unable to access remote learning (UNICEF 2021b:100). Problems affecting children have become more and more complex; thus, governments are now obligated to prioritise children more than ever in their national budgets to prevent and respond to all the economic, social and cultural issues compromising the protection and wellbeing of children. Without child-focused budgets; children will continue to live in miserable situations, denying them the opportunities to flourish and grow into healthy adulthood.

2.6 Social Assistance

a) Defining Social Assistance

According to Kunnenmann and Leonhard (2008:8), social assistance programmes are also referred to as “safety net programmes” or “social welfare programmes”. Beegle, Honorati and Monsalve (2018:53) define social assistance programmes as non-contributory remunerations delivered either in cash or in kind which are meant to assist poor and needy individuals and households who are prone to risks and having no adequate means or resources to cope with everyday needs. Social assistance programmes include child grants, disability grants, old age pensions, in-kind transfers, food vouchers and public works programmes (UNDP 2019:6). Social cash transfers are the most prominent type of social assistance. These cash transfers target households and groups of people considered to be extremely poor. According to Barrientos (2019:1), social assistance programmes have evolved as a response to alleviate poverty hence have played a significant role in developing welfare institutions in low and middle-income countries.

Unlike social insurance, social assistance programmes are not focused on addressing risk, but are meant to redistribute income and productive assets to underprivileged groups (Barrientos 2019:3-4). These groups of people include vulnerable children, the disabled, the elderly and the destitute. Since social assistance is non-contributory and regarded as an entitlement for needy people, it therefore comprises of tax financed programmes managed by public agencies or financed through state budgeted transfers of income and services addressing poverty and deprivation (Barrientos 2019:5 and Barrientos & Pellissery 2012:3). According to Künnemann and Leonhard (2008:4), social cash transfers lessen the extreme income disparities which characterise most of the poor and developing countries; they alleviate poverty and starvation, encourage the production of essential products and services for the poor, inspire school attendance, while also enhances gender empowerment and social fairness.

As enshrined in international human rights law, social assistance has become critical for states to meet their duties in achieving the right to an acceptable level of living for their citizens, especially the poorest and most vulnerable. According to Vonk and Olivier (2019:222), there is a growing understanding that social assistance is not just charity but a fundamental right which has gained recognition, both at the international and national levels and therefore a constitutional responsibility of government. Governments have a binding duty to fulfil this obligation to guarantee the fulfilment of many other human rights: economic, social, cultural as well as civic and political rights (Künnemann and Leonhard 2008:5). The CGP as a cash transfer programme is being implemented with the same objective of ensuring income for poor households to enable them to meet the developmental needs of their children.

Nonetheless, criticisms are levelled against the social safety nets or social grants. According to Shepherd, Wadugodapitiya and Evans (2011:2), most governments struggle to sustain social transfer programmes especially in the highly resource-constrained countries. Hoddinott (2012:3 and Woolard 2012:10) mention that these programmes are criticised for creating dependency amongst those who earn such grants; people are discouraged to work and accumulate their own assets, since they know that they will receive predictable and free social transfers. Also, people tend to

avoid participating in the labour force, and waste money on alcohol and other unnecessary uses. Although these reproaches are highly contested by the advocates of social assistance, they are to some degree true because some individuals appear to lose the inclination to improve their circumstances by themselves (Shepherd, Wadugodapitiya and Evans 2011:2). Some governments are therefore sceptical about making long term commitments to social assistance programs.

Although the legal frameworks guarantee a claim to social assistance, institutions play a critical part in realising that right (UNDP 2019:14). Effective government arrangements, including a specified ministry or an agency governed by transparent rules and clear accountability mechanisms, are needed to ensure that social assistance is implemented efficiently and effectively. These administrative structures are meant to manage social assistance to ensure that benefits go to the right people, in full and on time, so the beneficiaries are able to plan, invest and reap the returns of increased security. UNDP (2019:14) indicates that several governments have established national social protection policies, enacted relevant statutes and also allotted increased national social assistance funding.

b) The History of Social Assistance

Massive development of social assistance programmes emerged in developing countries in the first decade of the 21st century (Barrientos and Pellissery 2012:3). Since that time, vast anti-poverty programmes giving targeted cash transfers to poor households have advanced in most of the middle-income countries in the South. According to Bastagli et al (2016:5), it is estimated that about 130 low-and-middle-income countries have at least one non-contributory unconditional cash transfer programme targeting poverty reduction. Notably, considerable progress in implementation is seen in Africa, where 40 out of 48 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa are presently implementing unconditional cash transfer programmes (Bastagli et el 2016:5). However, the growth of the programmes in some low-income countries has been slower, mainly because of delivery capacity and financial constraints (Barrientos and Pellissery 2012:3).

Holmes and Lwanga-Ntale (2012:4) mention that the shared idea in how different governments define social protection is the objective of addressing the problems of

risk, vulnerability and extreme poverty. Social protection is the collection of public interventions that support individuals, households and communities to cope better with risk in order to be able to partake actively in all spheres of life, (Holmes and LwangaNtale 2012:4). Barrientos (2010:10) indicates that its purpose is to safeguard the minimum levels of consumption which shield poor households from the adverse effects of deprivation, by increasing their access to basic services and lessening their social marginalisation to improve the inclusion of the poorest in their localities and areas.

Although social assistance has become a global phenomenon, it should be noted that there is great diversity in the design of social assistance programmes in the developed and developing countries. According to Barrientos and Pellissery (2012:4) social assistance provision in advanced countries has an income maintenance design, providing income transfers aimed at bridging the gap between the poor and the well-off, while in the less developed countries, social assistance delivery involves a variety of programme designs that include unconditional cash transfers such as the non-contributory pensions or child grants and disability grants.

c) Different types of Social Assistance Programmes

According to Barrientos (2010:10), social assistance is the main type of social protection offered in many developing countries. Social assistance is viewed differently in rich countries and in underdeveloped countries. In the advanced states, it is mostly a residual safety net used to safeguard a smaller number of individuals and households from the effects of poverty, while in the developing countries it is a critical mechanism for fighting poverty and vulnerability (Barrientos 2010:10). It plays a more critical role than in the advanced countries; it is expected to support productivity through enhancing the human capital and physical assets, bridge the inequality gap, increase access to essential services as well as increasing the participation of the poorest in their communities and societies. Essential services are highly stratified in developing countries, labour market laws and regulations are weak, and only a small minority have decent jobs affording them cover for social insurance, therefore poverty, vulnerability and risk are high making social assistance an option for human development (Barrientos 2010:10).

According to Barrientos (2010:11) social assistance programmes have grown rapidly in developing countries. They include unconditional and conditional cash transfers, non-contributory social pensions, in-kind transfers, school feeding programmes, public works and fee waivers (Carter, Roelen, Enfield and Avis 2019:13, Barrientos 2010:11). These different programmes are discussed individually below.

d) Cash transfers

Cash transfers are direct, predictable and regularly paid grants which usually have a double goal of poverty relief and alleviation, and promoting self-reliance among the vulnerable households by empowering them to save, invest and cope better with risks and shocks (Carter et al 2019:14). Cash transfers take different forms: unconditional cash transfers (simple transfers), and conditional transfers which are tied or linked to certain services (Carter et al 2019:14).

□ Unconditional Cash Transfers (UCTs)

These kinds of transfers are not tied to any stipulations about how they are expended or how they can be accessed. Dornan and Porter (2013:156) mention that the categorical unconditional cash transfer programmes are fairly easy to administer, efficient and effective in targeting those in need. The nature of these programmes of not tying the receipt of a payment to conditionality gives the beneficiaries the liberty to make their own decisions on how they use the grant, and preserving their dignity by not serving social assistance as a charity (Dornan and Porter 2013:157). In this way these programmes recognise the transformative aspect of social protection for social parity, inclusion, empowerment and rights; acknowledging the role of social protection beyond economic security.

□ Conditional Cash Transfers (CCTs)

Conditional cash transfers are linked to the terms that the recipients meet defined specifications usually associated with the aspects of human capital development like taking children to health care services, enrolling children in school and ensuring they attend school. The CCTs target reducing the immediate and enduring effects of poverty and vulnerability. Policymakers usually attach conditions to these programmes as a way to achieve objectives beyond the monetary needs of the beneficiaries

(Dornan and Porter 2013:158-159). The idea of conditions is to ensure that the programmes guarantee investment in human capital to help to disrupt the transmission of the revolving poverty in poor families which exposes future generations to unending vulnerability. According to Dornan and Porter (2013:159) school attendance and healthcare are widely used as conditions to mainly target developing human capital development in children. However, the challenge in some countries is that the public service environment is very poor, making services inaccessible, thereby compromising the envisaged benefits of the CCTs (Dornan and Porter 2013:167). For example, the numbers of children attending school increased in Peru but that increase exerted pressure on schools because the increase had not been sufficiently matched by investment in school infrastructure and other resources.

□ **Cash Plus Programmes**

Cash plus programmes are a combination of cash grants and complementary services or goods, given with the notion that cash on its own is insufficient to solve the nonfinancial and structural problems for enhancing the livelihoods and well-being of people (Roelen et al 2017:7). According to Bello et al (2008) and Barrientos et al (2014:106), the basis for the implementation of cash plus programmes is that poverty is broader than income or consumption shortage, it encompasses shortfalls in productive assets and human capital and is usually accompanied by social exclusion. Therefore, these programmes aim to address poverty in its entirety so they address other issues of human development like health care, education and other programmes aimed at making sure that the poor and vulnerable also contribute towards community development.

□ **In-kind Assistance**

This kind of programme includes school feeding schemes offering free healthy meals. They are aimed at decreasing starvation and malnutrition, increasing food security and improving school attendance and student achievement.

□ **Social Pensions**

Social pensions are the non-contributory regular, predictable and direct payments made to people above a certain age. They are state pensions financed mainly by

domestic taxes. Lesotho has one such programme, the Old Age Pension (OAP) introduced in 2004.

□ **Public Works Programmes (PWPs)**

Public works programmes, sometimes referred to as Public Employment Programmes (PWPs), are projects which involve the reimbursement of wages for compensation for the provision of labour (Carter et al 2019:14). PWPs are usually government initiatives, however, non-governmental organisations also provide such employment. The PWPs are often used as the primary social assistance programme targeting the working age poor (McCord 2012:1). However, the problem with these programmes is their unreliability; they are usually implemented on a once-off basis, hence do not make an impact on chronic poverty alleviation. McCord (2012:2) indicates that if the PWPs are to make an impact and address poverty caused by long-term labour market failure, they need to provide employment on a long-term basis in order to alleviate economic suffering, stimulate growth and produce assets that will contribute to livelihoods.

□ **Graduation Programmes**

These programmes are based on the consideration that cash transfers alone are not adequate for self-sufficiency and for improving all aspects of survival (Carter et al 2019:29). As a result, their intervention goes beyond the provision of cash, they aim to tackle the multifaceted poverty struggles faced by the poor (Arévalo, Kaffenberger and de Montesquiou 2018:1). Graduation programmes package cash transfers with financial aspects like savings and credit, extended financial coaching to support livelihoods, and encouraging a sustainable exit out of poverty (Arevalo et al 2018:17). These programmes are production oriented, they target households with labour capacity, and have become popular over the last decade, being found in over 43 countries (Arevalo et al 2018:17).

2.7 Providing Cash Grants for Children

According to Barrientos and Dejong (2006:537), children are not fairly represented among the income-poor, but large numbers are suffering from severe deprivation, and their poverty and vulnerability have increasing and enduring ramifications. Watkins and Quattri (2019:19) mention that if children lack monetary support within their families, then cash transfers should be the solution. Most African states, primarily in Sub-

Saharan Africa have realised this, hence they have adopted social safety nets especially cash transfer programmes, intended to benefit vulnerable children and their families. According to Watkins and Quattri (2019:19), many programmes are delivering real benefits, but are too restricted in reach, and deliver transfers that are too little to essentially transform the state of child poverty. Beyond their economic effects, safety net programmes deliver broader benefits; evidence shows that both conditional and unconditional cash transfer programmes contribute to better-quality health and nutrition outcomes and increased school attendance.

UNICEF (2016:1) indicates that all children are entitled to the same absolute right to a healthy start in life: an education, a safe and secure childhood and all the basic opportunities that result in a successful and flourishing adulthood. Millions of children across the world are, however, deprived of their rights and denied of what they require to grow up healthy and strong. According to UNICEF (2013:4) children have the right to survive, live and grow up in a decent environment, attend school, enjoy good health and nutrition, and live and grow in safety and security. Köhler, Cali and Stirbu (2009:239) mention that to ensure children's right to survival and development, social safety nets must be assured so as to fulfil their rights to nutrition, health, and education, as well as their civil rights. Safeguarding these rights is very critical because children are particularly susceptible to poverty, and the results of deficiencies from food and nutrition, stimulation and education, and health are irrevocable, damaging to their future (Köhler et al 2009:239).

The state must implement social grants programmes that target social threats impacting children and allocate enough funds to cater to this purpose. Therefore, if undertaken from a rights-based approach, cash transfers can successfully assuage poverty and vulnerability of the socially side-lined and maximise the benefits for children's well-being (Köhler et al 2009:239).

2.8 The Impacts of Social Cash Transfers

Various benefits are attributed to social assistance as a policy option in the development agenda. According to Andrews, Hsiao and Ralston (2018:87), there is immense evidence on the effects of social safety nets among the poor and vulnerable

in Africa. Social cash transfers, in particular, have become prominent in addressing and correcting different social ills that afflict the poor and deny them the opportunity to live in dignity. The insights of the existing evidence significantly promote expansion of social safety nets, effective design of programmes and bringing programmes to scale (Andrews et al 2018:87). However, certain programme design features are critical to support notable impacts from cash transfers. First, the worth of a cash transfer: transfers should be significantly large and adjusted over time to account for inflation, which affects the purchasing power of beneficiaries (Andrews et al 2018:90 and Watkins and Quattri 2019:19). The programme payments should also be predictable, that is, they should be delivered regularly and most importantly, be coupled with complementary programmes such as skills training to maximise resilience and promote productive inclusion (Andrews et al 2018:90 and Watkins and Quattri 2019:19). Tiwari et al (2016:16) note the same point that adequately large transfers together with consideration given to making sure that payments are regular and reliable, ensure that cash transfer programmes have the desired impact on the beneficiaries' standard of living.

Bastagli et al (2016:52-53) mention that cash transfers have effects beyond the monetary impacts. They contribute to health and nutrition outcomes, increased school enrolment and attendance. Importantly, well-designed programmes help to alleviate the possibilities of transient poverty by enabling poor households to build productive assets, with essential secondary benefits for children (Watkins and Quattri 2019:19). Some of the benefits are discussed below.

a) Reducing Poverty and Hunger

As previously indicated, social cash transfers are granted to address poverty and, according to Künnemann and Leonhard (2008:10), they have brought about significant reductions in income poverty in various countries in Africa and abroad. Watkins and Quattri (2019:19) mention that well-designed cash transfer programmes ease the burden of poverty and improve the living conditions of poor households by allowing them to invest in productive assets, which increases the benefits for children. Künnemann and Leonhard (2008:10) cite programmes from different countries, for example, social safety nets in Brazil increased the income of the poorest by 5%, while

in South Africa, it increased by 50%. Increase in income means that individuals, households and families can afford most of their needs, consumption for basic goods and services increases and thus the effects of poverty are reduced. Food insecurity, poor nutrition and lack of access to health care are reduced and people lead more dignified lives. Other examples are Mexico's Progresa Programme which lowered the poverty gap among its beneficiaries by 36% between 1997 and 1999, and Mozambique's GAPVU urban cash transfer programme, which increased the household incomes in poor towns by up to 40% (Künnemann and Leonhard 2008:10).

Watkins and Quattri (2019:19) cite an example of Ethiopia's social safety net programme which became vital in reducing vulnerability to food shocks while generally lessened the country's poverty rates.

The impacts of social grant transfers are also seen in the improvement in the quality and variety of diet. A review of cash transfer programmes conducted by Tiwari et al (2016) in four countries, found that social assistance programmes substantially impact the numerous aspects of food security, cost of food and consumption, diet variation and calorie intake, which increase significantly when families receive consistent income. According to Watkins and Quattri (2019:19), increases in household income enable families to withstand unexpected shocks, like droughts and floods that lead to food shortages. Miller et al (2011) found that a pilot social cash transfer programme in Mchinji, Malawi, improved the food consumption, expenditure and dietary diversity of the programme beneficiaries. According to Galvani and Juergens (2018:26-27) households prioritised buying food while a portion was used to buy other household needs. More importantly, Watkins and Quattri (2019:20) further indicate that the growth and development of children receiving cash grants are less likely to be affected by stunting because they are more likely to be vaccinated and healthy. Fundamentally, the cash grants significantly raise the levels of investment in productive assets thereby unlocking potential for future income gains.

Davis et al (2015:1) found that the CGP increased protection against food insecurity in Lesotho even though the issue continues to affect the country. The programme

decreases the number of months in which households struggle with severe shortages of food, increasing food security advantages for both adults and children.

b) Stimulating the Production of Essential Goods and Services by and for the Poor

Social cash transfers lessen economic deprivation and increase the ability of households to engage in economic activities. According to Andrews et al (2018:96), social cash transfers build resilience, which has recently become a prominent feature within the broader development arena. Resilience is measured through the lens of strengthened livelihoods, better coping strategies and risk management; it fosters ownership of economic assets which improving families' living standards. According to Künnemann and Leonhard (2008:10-11), these cash transfers need to be reliable to allow families to plan accordingly and invest in additional income-generating activities, so that they are not trapped in situations where they cannot make ends meet while waiting for the next payday. Andrews et al (2018:87) indicate that cash transfers also allow families to increase savings and investments in productive assets such as livestock, and on productive activities such as the launching of small businesses and spending more time on household farms.

The increases in poor household incomes bring about more significant demand for goods and services in the retail and agricultural sectors of the local economies thereby causing the economic overflow into the non-beneficiary households as well (Andrews et al 2018:95). Social cash transfers stimulate demand in food markets and other local economy sectors thus benefiting both the beneficiary and non-beneficiary households. An evaluation undertaken by Daidone et al, on Lesotho's CGP in 2014, found that the impact is not only on households receiving the transfer but the positive consumption spill over impacts are visible among the non-recipient neighbours of cash transfer beneficiaries. Daidone et al (2014:12) mention that the CGP creates demand for goods in the local economy benefiting both the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. According to Davis et al (2015:1), the CGP has a significant impact on the local economy; the transfers have considerable income multipliers, for instance, every Loti paid to a low-income family can improve the local economy, with the non-beneficiary households getting the most of the benefit.

c) Reducing Income Inequality

Income inequality is common in low-income countries. The poor usually have limited access to services and productive resources. As a result, low-income households struggle to maintain their livelihoods; they experience food shortages, lack access to health care, and their children drop out of school. The primary threat of income disparities among citizens is that they endanger social cohesion and equity because high inequalities can disrupt the functionality of the economy and particularly, make the poor to suffer the most (Künnemann and Leonhard 2008:11). Künnemann and Leonhard (2008:11) mention that social cash transfers are effective in decreasing income inequality. According to Andrews et al (2018:87), one of the objectives of cash grants is equity; aiming to ensure that most disadvantaged and poverty-stricken households attain acceptable standards of living and can afford to meet their daily basic needs. These programmes lay the foundation for equality and opportunity because low-income households are able to purchase necessary household essentials and basic food and non-food goods (Andrews et al 2018:90).

Evaluations of several programmes in Africa aiming at analysing the impacts on total household consumption of families benefiting from the programmes, indicate an increase in household consumption, narrowing the gap between the poor and the middle-income households. Andrews et al cite examples of programmes like the Social Cash Transfer Programme (SCTP) in Malawi, the Child Grant Programme in Zambia and Kenya's Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP), which have shown significant improvements in the livelihoods of the beneficiaries. In Zambia, beneficiary households experienced the most significant rise in consumption where over three-quarters of the transfer are used to buy food. Health care and hygiene consume 7 per cent, clothing 6 per cent, and communication and transport accounting for 6 per cent (Andrews et al 2018:92). In Kenya, the programme beneficiaries realise robust positive consumption gains including spending on durable assets such as roofs while also investing some share (Andrews et al 2018:94). The disbursements are utilised to meet the household basic needs.

d) Stimulating School Enrolment and Attendance

The evidence on the impact of cash transfers or social grants on education is vast. The results in Africa are consistent with the international literature; the programmes have proved to increase school attendance significantly (Andrews et al 2018:104 and Künnemann and Leonhard 2008:13). Künnemann and Leonhard (2008:13) mention that sending children to school and improving their health and nutrition are seen as critical developmental activities because they help to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty. Several studies provide evidence from different countries. In rural Brazil, social pensions to over 5 million elderly poor are linked with increases in school enrolments, while in Zambia absenteeism was found to have declined by 16% in just nine months of the implementation of a social cash transfer programme (Künnemann and Leonhard 2008:11). The results from the Kenyan cash transfer for orphans and vulnerable children also indicate an increase in school attendance.

Bastagli et al (2016:7) indicate that the available evidence from the implementation of different cash transfer programmes illustrates a strong connection between the receipt of cash transfers and school attendance, and a decline in school absenteeism. These developments in enrolment and school attendance are consistent with other progressive impacts noticed in scholastic expenses such as shoes and uniforms, the lack of which are key problems to enrolment and attendance (Andrews et al 2018:104).

Further reasons attributed to increased school enrolment and attendance are the decline in child labour as more children attend school and are no longer responsible for working and providing for their basic needs. It is based on the same reasons that Lesotho, like other countries plagued by poverty and income inequity, implements a number of cash transfer programmes aiming at alleviating poverty among the vulnerable groups including the elderly and children. In 2014, Pellerano et al conducted an evaluation of CGP, which indicates that enrolment levels among children aged 13-17 increased by about 10 per cent. The programme retained the children in school, particularly boys who are usually forced to drop out (Pellerano et al 2014: viii).

2.9 Cash Grants Payment Modes in Africa

In Southern Africa, several pilot projects and national programmes exist as a form of social assistance to the needy and vulnerable (Vincent and Cull 2011:37). However, in spite of this growing evidence that social grants are a viable means of social assistance, payment systems remain a challenge especially for recipients living in the secluded and hard to reach areas (Vincent and Cull 2011:38). Consequently, the advent of innovative technologies which aid digital cash transfers are tremendously valuable both for donors and recipients for whom this is a more flexible and expedient delivery mechanism (Ford 2017:8).

According to Barca et al (2013:10), the choice of delivery arrangement affects the programme budgets, barriers faced by those receiving cash, as well as the costs and risks of successful programme implementation. Evidence on the payment modalities is needed in order to explore their comparative merits especially in Sub-Saharan Africa where most of the cash transfer recipients live in areas with poor and insufficient infrastructure (Barca et al 2013:11).

□ Manual Payment of Social Grants

Some developing countries still have limited financial infrastructure, therefore, cash transfer programmes still require physical distribution to inaccessible rural areas (Aker et al 2016:1). According to Vincent and Cull (2011:38) and Devereux and Vincent (2010:368), cash transfers have usually been disbursed manually through government agencies such as the post office. However, this method has proven inefficient and problematic to both the implementers and the beneficiaries. Disbursement expenses for the implementing agency increase. At the same time the value of the cash transfer is reduced because of potential hidden costs to the programme recipients (Aker et al 2016:1). For targeted households living in isolated and marginalised areas, accessibility is potentially a huge problem especially for groups such as the elderly and the very poor who may lose their income and or incur transport costs to collect their payments (Barca et al 2013:11).

Devereux and Vincent (2010:369), Vincent and Cull (2011:38) and Vincent (2010:2) note that the physical delivery of cash is expensive and risky due to the liquidity of the

resource. The cash is susceptible to leakages through fraud and cash-in-transit robberies. Physical delivery of cash transfers markedly raises programme budgets because of the need to employ new workers or adding opportunity expenses of deploying the existing staff from their usual duties (Vincent (2010:2). A study conducted by Aker et al (2016) revealed that the operational costs for manual distribution of cash transfers amounted to over 60 percent of the cash transfer budget. Those costs for the manual cash distributions include transport, security costs, as well as costs related to allocating the cash into separate envelopes that are handed to the beneficiaries at the designated pay points (Aker et al 2016:12). The beneficiaries also incur costs to access the grants including transport costs to and from pay points as well as other costs of wasted time due to travelling, and waiting and queuing for the money (Devereux and Vincent 2010:370, Barca et al 2013:15 and Gronbach 2020:12). According to Gronbach (2020:12), the challenges also include issues associated with human dignity, for example, in rural areas the pay points usually lack protection from the rain or heat, do not offer benches or waiting areas, or even basic ablution facilities for beneficiaries.

□ **Digital Payments of Social Assistance**

Devereux and Vincent (2010:368) mention that delivery mechanisms or payment systems are a vital part of social cash transfer programmes since they require significant amounts of administrative and operating budgets; they are a crucial basis for effective and efficient programme implementation. According to Devereux and Vincent (2010:370), in Africa cash grants have conventionally been disbursed through pull mechanisms which require the beneficiaries to go at a particular venue. These pull mechanisms are expensive because, among other things, the physical distribution of cash needs supervision and security to safeguard against loss ranging from trivial theft, fraud and heists (Devereux and Vincent 2010:370 and Klapper and Singer 2014:8). Devereux and Vincent (2010:370) provide an example of the administrative costs of delivering the Old Age Pension in Lesotho which, at that time, cost 6 per cent of the total transfer amount per transaction.

According to Garcia and Moore (2012:7), cash transfer programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa began to investigate how to use innovative technologies to improve their

traditional delivery modes and capacity constraints in reaching their beneficiaries more easily. Advanced solutions that use new technologies such as mobile phone banking, fingerprint recognition, digital information storage on 'smartcards', point of sale (POS) devices and other devices that provide safe access to cash such as automated teller machines, have become popular in transferring grants in different countries (Barca et al 2013:11). Gronbach (2020:12) also indicates that while most programmes originally depended on manual cash payments to beneficiaries, interest in digital, 'financially inclusive' payment technologies have grown significantly in the past ten years in Sub-Saharan Africa. Ford (2017:7) reiterates that the innovative technology allowing digital cash transfers has become immensely useful for donors and recipients; this delivery mechanism is convenient and more flexible.

Electronic payment systems are creating valuable synergies in delivering the cash transfers as payment digitisation efforts gain prominence in Sub-Saharan Africa (Gronbach 2020:13). According to Gronbach (2020:23), the use of this new financial technology power to enhance access to cash grants and the use of formal financial services is growing in Sub-Saharan Africa, because the region has the largest number of mobile money platforms, while also leading in terms of both registered and active mobile money accounts. It is, therefore, understandable that several social cash transfer programmes across sub-Saharan Africa are experimenting with mobile money as a new payment instrument (Gronbach 2020:24).

Mobile money is seemingly mostly effective in countries with a weak or underdeveloped traditional financial sector, comprising mainly of the poor and 'financially excluded' people who are usually the recipients of social cash transfers. As a result, mobile money also plays a significant role in improving financial inclusion on the continent (Gronbach 2020:24). Bailey (2017) conducted a study on a programme that used mobile money transfers to pay recipients in Ethiopia, Zimbabwe and Bangladesh. In Zimbabwe the study found that the number of people who used mobile money transfers substantially increased from 20% to 76 % after the project. The people also used mobile money to purchase airtime and goods and 92% of the recipients were willing to continue using mobile money for various purposes in the

future (Bailey 2017:10). The reasons for preferring to receive future transfers via mobile money rather than physical cash were safety, ease of access and convenience.

According to Barca et al (2013:16), payment systems must consider the possibility of fraud and corruption because different payment system features have very different effects for possible occurrence of corruption. In delivery systems where the grants are paid manually at pay points, there is substantial opportunity for the accounting agent distributing the money to take advantage (Barca et al 2013:16). The most likely threat which can lead to fraud is the disbursement to large numbers of unaware, false or unentitled beneficiaries. Electronic-based delivery systems such as smartcards and mobile phone transfers have the potential to reduce this corrupt behaviour. Programme implementers can also safeguard against the possibility of this type of fraud by using a payment system that is integrated with a reliable and secure Management Information System (MIS), and robust case management and monitoring (Barca et al 2013:17). Barca et al (2013:17) explain that to verify whether the beneficiaries really exist and are getting their money, a random sample of recipients can be identified in the MIS and double-checked as part of ongoing case management or programme monitoring.

According to Ford (2017:5), digital payments create other development opportunities, such as the improvement of infrastructure in areas which are difficult to access and the access to large amounts of data to inform planning of future responses and accurate identification and targeting of beneficiaries in a period of emergency. Ford (2017:13) indicates that further possible benefits of digital payments are related to opening the possibility of linkage of humanitarian aid and government platforms for improved access and targeting of recipients and facilitating a faster and more cost-efficient intervention.

Some of these technologies are being used to address challenges that are particularly common to the Sub-Saharan region such as the point-of-sale devices or mobile phones that are used to transfer cash to the itinerant or hard-to-reach beneficiaries (Garcia and Moore 2012:7). These technological mechanisms are called the 'push' mechanisms (Devereux and Vincent 2010:371). The 'push' mechanisms allow the

beneficiaries to be paid electronically; the payments are accessible at anytime and anywhere using a variety of advanced technological approaches (Devereux and Vincent 2010:371). The introduction of mobile phone-based money transfers systems in many developing countries offered an unconventional way of distributing such transfers (Aker et al 2016:1). Compared to the prevalent cash-based transfers, this innovation substantially lessens the implementation costs associated with providing cash transfers manually, and the transfers are easier to make and convenient for recipients to access them wherever and whenever (Bold, Porteous, and Rotman 2012:1). Recipients do not need to be at a designated payment site at a predetermined time to collect their payment. According to the World Bank (2014:10), digital transfers safeguard the recipients from robbery while manual payments expose them to such since payments dates are publicly known beforehand.

According to Devereux and Vincent (2010:371), the use of mobile phones to transfer grants is by far the greatest creative version of a 'push' mechanism in Africa. A local mobile network company in Kenya developed an SMS-based system known as M-PESA. With M-PESA, money transfers are paid to beneficiaries' mobile phones (Devereux and Vincent 2010:371). This system permits individuals to receive and send money that has been deposited on their mobile phones over the mobile network airtime vendors.

O'Brien, Hove and Smith (2013:25) mention that mobile money has become common because of its usability for daily business transactions including payments to individuals, buying foodstuffs or paying service bills. Other current practices include access to loans and making insurance contributions. Other benefits relate to operational costs. According to Aker et al (2016:2), a field experiment in Niger revealed that dispensing cash grants through mobile money technologies lessens the operating expenditures for the implementing organisation as compared with the physical cash transfers. Programme beneficiaries receiving the mobile money transfers are also able to save time and money as they are no longer travel to the designated pay points (Aker et al 2016:2).

Ford (2017:12) notes that mobile money transfers offer lower transaction charges, better control over one's finances and bigger opportunities for economic inclusion for individuals and families in receipt of cash assistance, while also contributing to longer-term personal financial security, and exercising choice over how they use their resources as resilience against future shocks. Donors also incur lower costs especially where the programme is to run over a long period of time.

Emmett (2012:5) and Ford (2017:5) indicate that e-payments improve transparency and reduce opportunities for leakage and corruption because of the use of distinctive beneficiary identifiers such as biometric recognition devices or personal identification numbers (PINs). According to Devereux and Vincent (2010:371), e-payments have several advantages such as efficiency and cost-effectiveness in terms of personnel utilisation: staff are not required to expend the pay-outs physically therefore saving on money and time so they are released to perform other tasks which would otherwise be neglected. Also, there is no need to hire transport, security and insurance for the physical distribution of money to the pay points, thus saving on the operational costs (Devereux and Vincent 2010:371). Another advantage of the push mechanisms is their flexibility. Recipients access their grants conveniently from Auto Teller Machines (ATMs) or mobile phones, at a time of their choosing as they no longer have to go to an identified locality on a stipulated date (Devereux and Vincent 2010:371 and Emmett 2012:5). This saves on transport money and time because the direct and opportunity costs of travelling for hours to collect money can be crucial, which at times is almost equal to the transfer value (Barca et al 2013:18).

Also, the beneficiaries are less prone to exploitation by traders, loan sharks and or being targeted by criminals since they are able to decide the time and place where they can withdraw their grants (Barca et al 2013:22 and Emmett 2012:6). According to Ford (2017:5) personal security is further enhanced by reduced reliance on physical cash since mobile money allows for other electronic transactions.

According to Devereux and Vincent (2010:371), biometric smart cards are also being utilised to pay social grants in some of the Southern African countries, whereby the recipients are able to withdraw their funds at the Auto Teller Machines (ATMs) or at

the Point of Sale (POS) at different retailers. Examples include the biometric smart cards used in Namibia and South Africa to pay out social pensions; beneficiaries get their funds from the Auto Teller Machines. In Malawi, smart cards are integrated into the Malswitch network, permitting access to money through ATMs as well as electronic payment for other services (Devereux and Vincent 2010:371). Klapper and Singer (2014:8) suggest that e-payments are convenient and significantly reduce expenditure when administering large-scale government-to-public payments, such as social cash transfers. The report refers to the payments of social grants in South Africa. It reveals that in 2011 the cost of expending social grants using smart cards was a third of the amount spent on manual cash pay outs (Klapper and Singer 2014:8).

Generally, e-payment systems reduce transaction costs, avert loss and stealing, and offer payees increased control over their incomes (Sossouvi 2018:8). These delivery mechanisms also offer prospects for introducing beneficiaries to formal financial systems like banking, which is an essential attempt at accomplishing more financial inclusion and broad-based economic growth (Sossouvi 2018:8). Digital transfers are usually the first point of entry into the financial system for individuals; other than receiving payments, they offer several opportunities for financial inclusion, savings, loan access and easy payment of bills and other transactions (Klapper and Singer 2014:10).

A study conducted by Bold et al (2012:13) indicates that recipients uniformly value more ease connected with electronic payments in comparison with the cash alternative. One of the participants in the study who was a beneficiary in the programme and who had switched from cash to electronic payment, admitted to the convenience offered by the e-transfer: "You had to wait for the day when it was your turn and stand in huge lines, not now.... There were people sleeping here, saving their place in the line because it was with a token. You stayed up really late. Not now, with the card; wherever I am I go and collect there."

This study further showed that the time that recipients spent travelling to the pay points was greatly reduced compared to the time they travelled to mobile money agents. The waiting time was also greatly reduced especially if they opted to get their money from a supermarket or a store. Further, Bold et al (2012:13) indicate that grant recipients,

like other people, can and actually do save, even though it is not easy to do so because of various daily living needs demands on their low incomes.

2.10 Challenges of Using e-Payments/digital Payments for Social Grants Transfers

Delivery mechanisms for cash transfers have transformed significantly over the years, with various programmes shifting from manual payments to new technologically advanced methods, like electronic disbursements by mobile phones or smart cards (Roelen, Longhurst and Sabates-Wheeler 2018:11). According to Roelen et al (2018:11), using technology invites the participation of private partners in the transfer of social assistance cash grants. The advantage of such partnerships includes reduced operational and delivery costs and less possibility of fraud (Roelen et al 2018:11). However, there are challenges and downsides, especially in low-income countries with weak financial schemes whose structures are based in metropolitan areas (Klapper and Singer 2014:13-14).

E-payments need solid financial and monitoring frameworks and huge funds for system set ups. Developing a physical network sufficient to deliver digital payments to all corners of the country is a significant challenge (Klapper and Singer 2014:14). Weak network coverage in some areas, coupled with the scarcity of payment agents to process payments, is also a challenge (Roelen et al 2018:12). Some beneficiaries are illiterate and may struggle to use technology. Attention needs to be paid to different options when choosing a suitable type of delivery (Klapper and Singer 2014:11). These include the capacity of distributing agencies, financial literacy of the recipients and experience with using financial institutions and accessibility.

Roelen et al (2018:12) also indicate that various factors need to be considered when deciding about the suitable mode of e-payment to disburse social grants. These factors include the frequency, variability and duration of the transfers, local capacity of distributing agencies, beneficiaries' financial literacy and exposure to financial institutions and accessibility of these facilities. According to Roelen et al (2018:12) the agencies distributing the payments must be able to do so consistently for effectiveness

and efficiency of programme delivery. Also, the programme must include a financial education component to facilitate the use of e-payments by the beneficiaries.

Implementing any e-transfer programme is challenging and sometimes requires significant up-front investment to develop appropriate infrastructure. This is especially the case when the cash transfers are to be delivered to remote areas where there is shortage of reliable payment providers with liquid cash-out points, inadequate and unreliable electricity, patchy mobile network coverage and low education levels among beneficiaries (Sossouvi 2018:8 and Klapper and Singer 2014:14). According to Ford (2017:14), beneficiaries still face challenges with the use of e-transfers even though the method is considered to be an efficient and practical solution in dispensing cash safely and conveniently. There is the possibility of leakage especially with mobile money transfers as agents demand fees for services or may coerce the beneficiaries to spend some of their money in their stores. Bailey (2017:9) affirms that cash liquidity is a problem for mobile money cash transfers. Bailey (2017:9) gives an example of a study she conducted in Zimbabwe which revealed that programme recipients of an emergency grant provided by Save the Children struggled to cash out their money from the mobile money agents because they often lacked cash. As a result, agents who are also shop owners, obliged people to purchase goods instead of disbursing cash. This behaviour by agents limits the recipients' autonomy in how they spent the money.

2.11 Challenges Facing the Delivery of the Social Cash Transfers in Lesotho

Lesotho is implementing different cash transfer and safety net programmes. Some are funded strictly by the government, while some are supported by the development partners (Smith et al 2013:42). Three of these programmes are social cash transfer programmes targeting specific group namely the universal old age pension (OAP), the public assistance (PA) programme which is means tested to cover the most impoverished individuals, and the child grant programme which targets low-income families with children aged 0-17 years. The government funds these three programmes but the CGP also receives support from UNICEF (Ulrichs and Mphale 2016:7).

Over the years, the main challenge for implementation of these programmes has been the lack of an overall framework for coordination which resulted in overlaps and duplication of beneficiaries, with some benefiting from more than one programme at the same time (Smith et al 2013:86). Coordination between social transfer programmes is crucial to ensure that resources are being spent efficiently and economically without replication of efforts, disjointed delivery systems and administrative procedures.

The problems are exacerbated by a lack of rigorous evaluation of the programmes, particularly the OAP and PA. The CGP however, has undergone several systematic evaluations while the other two lack proper assessments which could provide useful evidence about their contribution in reducing poverty both at national and household levels (Ulrichs and Mphale 2016: viii). Smith et al (2013:86) point to the same issue of a lack of information with respect to the impact these programmes have on poverty alleviation or consumption, which is challenging for policymakers as they need to establish what their effectiveness is in reducing poverty. Evaluations are critical because they will help improve the delivery of the programmes and increases the predictability of transfers, improves targeting and coordination and increases the productive and promotive potential of the programmes (Ulrichs and Mphale 2016:10).

Evidence indicates that predictability is a significant aspect of guaranteeing that transfer programmes have the utmost possible impact; however, predictability of payments in Lesotho's transfers programmes is a huge problem (Smith et al 2013:86). Ulrichs and Mphale (2016:10) indicate that the CGP is less predictable in the way it delivers the transfer while the old age is doing much better. Additionally, the CGP is characterised by high targeting errors; with around 52 per cent exclusion errors and 51 per cent inclusion errors, meaning that a large number of families benefitting from the transfer are not necessarily the most needy (Ulrichs and Mphale 2016:10).

2.12 The Beneficiaries' Perspectives on Cash Grants

Fisher et al (2017:1-2) mention that shocks, stresses and uncertainty characterise the lives and livelihoods of poor and vulnerable people in Sub-Saharan Africa. The region suffers an endemic poverty, enduring food insecurity and the rampant HIV/AIDS

pandemic, which all lead to significant escalation of vulnerability shocks such as illness, death or crop failure thereby severely impacting negatively on families and individuals' survival.

Fisher et al (2017:2) conducted a study analysing cash transfer programmes from six African countries to establish the community and beneficiaries' perceptions regarding the influence of cash transfers on strategic livelihood choices and the contribution they make to productive investment, managing social risk and fostering economic collaboration. The study indicates strong evidence that cash transfers empower households to survive better (Fisher et al 2017:24). Directly and indirectly, the cash transfers improve the capability of recipients to engage socially; improve cleanliness and dignity, reduce food shortages and improve nutrition, and allow people to work, thus harmful surviving strategies are reduced (Fisher et al 2017:24). In all the countries, beneficiaries repeatedly emphasised that the transfers build dignity, self-worth and a sense of confidence for poor people. The beneficiaries also appreciate the cash transfers for preventing hunger and enabling them to eat healthy foods and make changes in their diet with a variety of food (Fisher et al 2017:24-25).

A study was undertaken by Zembe-Mkabile et al (2015) titled "The experience of cash transfers in alleviating childhood poverty in South Africa: Mothers' experiences of the Child Support Grant". Zembe-Mkabile et al (2015:845) found that the child support grant was the only source of income for many families; parents could not afford their children's basic needs without it. The grant assists families in providing for essential needs like food, clothing, healthcare and school needs for children.

According to Zembe-Mkabile et al (2015:845), the grant also eases household monetary emergencies. Household heads are able to join in local savings schemes and the grant permits access to communal transaction arrangements such as informal credit. This allows families to share, improve their living conditions and manage their vulnerability (Zembe-Mkabile et al 2015:845). The child support grant is generally used to buy staple food but it is clearly not enough for dietary diversity; many mothers reported that they frequently run short of food before their next grant payment. The grant's contribution to the alleviation of child poverty is trivial (Zembe-Mkabile et al

2015:845). The study also revealed that most families remain vulnerable to debt, especially from the loan sharks because mothers have to borrow money to meet unforeseen expenses such as illness or costs related to schooling (Zembe-Mkabile et al 2015:846).

The recipients reported that they try to supplement the grant by seeking piece-jobs or part-time work while others borrow from friends and fellow neighbours (Zembe-Mkabile et al 2015:841). According to Zembe-Mkabile et al (2015:841), some recipients complained that the value of the grant is small and hence they could not determine its impact because they said it is just too little to meet daily needs.

2.13 The Social Accountability Mechanisms for Social Assistance

Some governments, especially where social protection is endorsed as a right, protected and legislated in the Constitution, establish institutions for social accountability (UNDP 2019:11). This is a perfect way of allowing citizens and civil society to hold government accountable to the laws it has formulated. According to UNDP (2019:11), social accountability democratises social protection. However, these practices are more established in countries where governments are receptive and tolerant of the civil society protests (UNDP 2019:11). An example is South Africa's Framework for Strengthening Citizen Government Partnerships for Monitoring Frontline Service Delivery. In Ethiopia, tools like community score cards and citizen report cards are used to monitor and improve the delivery of social assistance and other services (UNDP 2019:12). In other countries, social assistance programmes have built-in accountability measures such as complaint procedures that allow beneficiaries to present their complaints if they do not receive their payments in full and on time.

2.14 Conclusion

The literature on social assistance programmes is vast, and more and more evidence is being generated as social protection continues to rise as a strategy to respond to poverty and vulnerability, especially in very poor countries. Globally, the situation of children is very concerning; children face multi-faceted effects of poverty, violence,

crime, poor health, malnutrition, school dropout, early marriage, early pregnancy and many other problems. Evidence indicates alarming rates of children suffering across the globe but more so in poor regions like Sub-Saharan Africa. Lesotho is rated amongst the poorest countries; country reports reveal that children are poverty stricken, suffer multiple effects of poverty such as malnutrition, infant mortality, school dropout, poor health, poor sanitation and more. The recent child poverty study undertaken in 2021 indicates that nearly half of Basotho children (45.5 per cent) face multi-dimensional poverty, most of them living in the rural areas.

More and more children continue to be need of social assistance especially after the rampant Covid-19 pandemic that left most people unemployed and unable to provide for their households. Other factors like violence, food insecurity, poor nutrition, lack of clean drinking water and hygienic sanitation affect children's development. Countries must strive to prioritise social assistance despite the financial challenges they face. For instance, in countries like Lesotho, financial capability is strained, the government cannot reach more children who are in dire need of assistance. Still, the government needs to prioritise children in their budgets and increase allocations for social protection interventions targeted at children. Social assistance is a right, it needs efficient, accountable and transparent government institutions to ensure that benefits go to the correct people and at the right time.

The impacts reaped from social assistance grants include poverty reduction, reduction in income inequality, increase in school enrolment and improvement in health status. Although several positive results are connected to social grants, studies undertaken in countries like South Africa indicate that social grants tend to be low in value and hence insufficient, because families usually run short of food before the next payment. Families also remain vulnerable to debt even though they receive a grant.

In Africa, the delivery of social grants is challenging due to poor infrastructure so payment disbursements remain predominately manual. Lack of electricity, poor financial sector infrastructure especially in rural areas, and poor road networks affect the payments of social grants. Nonetheless, delivery of social assistance is evolving and various digital methods are being used to pay the grants. Governments are taking

steps to enhance financial inclusion for those who have been marginalised due to their social and economic status. Digital payments are gradually replacing manual payment systems as governments are promoting effectiveness and efficiency in their service to the people. The application of technological advances in paying social grants provides various advantages for the government such as lower costs, safety in terms of decreasing the leakages of the money, and maximising the utilisation of agency staff since they no longer have to spend time administering manual payments.

CHAPTER THREE

POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL PROTECTION

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines and describes the policy, legislative and other frameworks for social protection programmes in Lesotho with a specific focus on the Child Grants Programme. The chapter begins with a discussion of the international frameworks, followed by the African charters and frameworks, and lastly, discusses the frameworks on social protection in Lesotho. Various official government documents are used as sources of information.

The international frameworks discussed are the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNUDHR 1948), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR 1966) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC 1989). The African frameworks include the Constitution of the Organisation of the African Union (AU 2000), the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR 1981), Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Citizens to Social Protection and Social Security, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children (ACRWC 1990), the Ouagadougou Declaration on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa (2004), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Charter of Fundamental Social Rights (2003), the Social Policy Framework for Africa (2008) and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa (2018).

The Lesotho documents pertinent to this study are the Constitution of Lesotho (1993), the Children's Protection and Welfare Act (CPWA 2011), the National Social Development Policy (NSDP) of 2014 and the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) of 2021. The chapter will end with a general overview of social protection in Lesotho, which will include a description of four main social assistance programmes, all of which are fully financed by the Government of Lesotho.

This chapter also outlines the country's political, social and economic profile.

3.2 An Overview of the Importance of Policy and Legislative Frameworks for Social Protection

A legal and policy framework is a central factor of any well-built social protection system (UNDP 2019:9). Social protection and social assistance across Africa are progressively supported by national legislation, a social protection policy or strategy, references in national constitutions, and endorsement of applicable international conventions and laws that grant the right to social protection and social accountability mechanisms that allow citizens to claim that entitlement (UNDP 2019:9). A legal framework for social assistance enables abstract rights to become enforceable claims, meaning that these statutes afford the citizens the chance to petition responsible government agencies as well as seek accountability where this right is encroached upon.

According to the UNDP (2019:10), constitutions express society's values, people's rights and state obligations towards fulfilling some of the rights. For example, in 2004, a constitutional court case explained why the right to social assistance is entrenched in South Africa's constitution: "A society had to attempt to ensure that the basic necessities of life were accessible to all if it was to be a society in which human dignity, freedom and equality were foundational".

However, in other countries, constitutional provisions are not necessarily enforceable or justiciable; in some countries, the implementation of social assistance programmes often depends on whether the government believes they are affordable (UNDP 2019:10). Some social assistance programmes operate at a national scale, more especially in Central Africa where social protection has barely penetrated (UNDP 2019:10).

3.3 International Frameworks for Social Protection

Social protection is recognised in the international human rights instruments that list the obligations state parties that have ratified these instruments have in regard to

assurance of livelihood for their citizens. Different frameworks, including the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are discussed below.

3.3.1 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNUDHR 1948)

The Universal Declaration promises all economic, social, political, cultural and civic rights. These are the incontestable rights of all people, from every race and ethnic group, whether disabled or not, citizens or migrants, no matter their sex, their class, their belief, their age or sexual orientation (UNUDHR 1948: v-vi). Social protection is part of these rights recognised by the global community and is therefore endorsed in different international laws which the states are obliged to fulfil for the survival and welfare of their citizens.

Article 22 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNUDHR 1948) provides that everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realisation of this right through national efforts and international cooperation, and, by the organisation and resources of each state, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his/her dignity and the free development of his/her personality (United Nations 1948:46). The encompassing nature of this provision reinforces Article 3 of this document, which grants the right to life. All the rights stipulated under article 22 constitute life because the lack of these rights compromises dignified human existence.

3.3.2 The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR 1966)

The ICESCR aims to safeguard the economic, social and cultural rights which are the same rights that form the core of the basic human rights under the UNUDHR. Article 9 commits the state parties to recognise the right of everyone to social security, (United Nations 1966:18). Article 10 of the same covenant further stipulates that the broadest possible protection and assistance should be accorded to the family, which is the natural and fundamental unit of society, particularly for its establishment and while it is responsible for the care and education of dependent children.

Article 11 of the covenant further commits the state parties to recognise the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions (United Nations 1966:19). The state parties are urged to take appropriate steps to ensure the realisation of this right. The three aspects of human life advocated for by this covenant complement each other for complete and acceptable life. Therefore, the fulfilment of the provisions stated above, particularly Article 11, means the respect for human dignity is shown in the state's duty to ensure acceptable living conditions for all citizens.

3.3.3 United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC 1989)

Another important legal instrument endorsing social protection as a human right, is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC 1989). Article 26(1) of the UNCRC stipulates that state parties shall recognise the right of every child to benefit from social security, including social insurance, and shall take the necessary measures to achieve full realisation of this right in accordance with their national law (United Nations 1989:8). Subsection (2) of Article 26 articulates that the benefits should, where appropriate, be granted, taking into account the resources and the circumstances of the child and persons having responsibility for the maintenance of the child, as well as any other consideration relevant to an application for benefits made by or on behalf of the child.

Section 27 of the UNCRC further mandates the state parties to recognise the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development (United Nations 1989:8). Further under subsection 3; the Convention urges the states parties, in accordance with national conditions and within their means, to take appropriate measures to assist parents and others responsible for the child to implement this right and to provide material assistance and support programmes, particularly with regard to nutrition, clothing and housing. Many countries have espoused this convention by domesticating its provisions in their laws and policies. As a result, social protection continues to increase in prominence as a policy response to poverty and vulnerability globally. This convention realises that by being children, children are more vulnerable than other groups of people within the

society, and hence the state must take responsibility to assist the parents to fulfil their basic needs.

3.4 African Frameworks for Social Protection

3.4.1 Constitution of the Organisation of the African Union (2000)

The Constitutive Act of the African Union is the supreme law guiding the determination of the continent to promote unity, solidarity, cohesion and cooperation among the peoples of Africa and African states. Among this Constitution's objectives under Article 3 is the commitment to promote and protect human and peoples' rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other relevant human rights instruments. Under Article 4, the Act further affirms the promotion of social justice to ensure balanced economic development as one of the principles recognised by the African Union.

The Act promotes unity, solidarity, cohesion and cooperation among African countries. It also acknowledges that human rights and dignity are as important as economic and political independence in promoting and implementing sustainable development. Article 4(n) refers to the principle of promotion of social justice to ensure balanced economic development. This is directly related to the human rights-based approach to social protection, which advocates for reduced social inequality and economic discrimination with respect to the accessibility of livelihood opportunities within the society. Fulfilment of economic needs through the provision of social assistance in cash reinforces unity, solidarity and cohesion, which are indispensable for peace and security within societies.

The Act considers the living conditions and standards for African people and how these can be addressed through democratic institutions (good governance and the rule of law), as well as through cultural institutions. The Act 's primary intention is to "promote sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels as well as promoting co-operation in all fields of human activity to raise the living standards of African peoples" (African Union Constitutive Act, 2000).

3.4.2 African Charter on Human and People's Rights (1981)

The African Charter on Human and People's rights does not explicitly provide for the provision of social protection as a basic right for African citizens. However, a combination of rights such as the health, education, and protection of the elderly and people living with disabilities, are guaranteed in Articles 16-18. Article 16(2) stipulates that the signatory states under this Charter shall undertake the required action to protect their people's health and to ensure that they have access to medical attention when they are sick. Article 17(1) refers to the right to education for every individual and Article 18(4) provides that the elderly and the disabled shall have the right to special protection measures to keep up with their physical and psychological needs.

The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Citizens to Social Protection and Social security has been drafted and contains several provisions which reaffirm social protection as a fundamental human right.

It has been drafted to complement the African Charter on Human and Peoples' rights as allowed under its article 66.

3.4.3 Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Citizens to Social Protection and Social Security

This protocol refers to various global and regional legal frameworks on social protection. The protocol establishes Africa's basis for the provision of social protection which is generally recognised as a basic human right. The provisions of Article 2 (a) of the protocol are outlined below:

- (i) Ensure good governance and coordination among institutions responsible for the delivery of social protection;*
- (ii) Safeguard the human rights of individuals and maintain their human dignity by treating them equally in relation to the provision of social protection;*
- (iii) Encourage consistency across institutions responsible for delivery of social protection.*
- (iv) Provide social protection benefits; and*
- (v) Improve policies, legislation and programmes that improve the standard of life of individuals.*

These provisions encourage establishing social protection through policy and legal framework for sustaining human dignity. Article 2(b) stipulates that the states parties shall endorse a human rights-based approach to social protection, allow it to be participatory, transformative, integrative and intersectional, follow a life cycle approach, tackling deprivation and inequity and to be inclusive.

Furthermore, Article 2(g), mandates all the member states to develop a unified and broad social protection system which:

- (i) Guarantees meaningful coverage in terms of, among others, social insurance schemes, social assistance measures and social services;*
- (ii) Shields people from distinct and collective risks, including political conflict, climate change and natural disasters;*
- (iii) Integrates sufficient preventive, protective, promotive, transformational and reintegrated measures, including processes intended to integrate and reintegrate workers into the labour force;*
- (iv) the national laws compel provision of social protection so as to indicate the obligation for government to take responsibility, and for safeguarding the rights, and delineating the duties and roles of all social protection stakeholders.*

Article 3 emphasises the right to social protection under various sections;

- (a)** *All the people living within the borders of a country signatory to this Protocol have the right to social protection. It is the government's responsibility to ensure that social protection is available, accessible, adequate, affordable and transparent.*

States Parties shall: -

- (i) Establish, uphold and establish a proper monitoring, institutional and effective system for the delivery of social protection and ensure proper administration of social protection organisations and arrangements;*
- (ii) Establish and maintain a system of social protection in accordance with the provisions of this Protocol;*
- (iii) Design and deliver a social protection package with at least the minimum essential needs of all;*

- (iv) Ensure that all the people who have inadequate resources to sustain themselves and their dependants get social assistance and other services delivered by the government;*
- (v) Increasingly expand the reach of social protection and advance systems of social protection to sophisticated levels, in relation to the provisions of this Protocol;*
- (vi) Support and standardise private and public sector participation, with regard to the provision and management of social protection.*

This protocol generally accepts need to respect human dignity by not making social protection a matter of charity but an entitlement dispensed without prejudice and mainly aiming for economic and social justice. It further advocates for effective institutional management of social protection, characterised by necessary innovation as a way to ease delivery and access as in the case of any other social service provided by government.

3.4.4 African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children (1990)

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children notes with concern that most African children continue to live under life-threatening conditions because of the distinctive issues of their socio-economic, cultural, traditional and developmental situations, natural disasters, armed conflicts, abuse and deprivation. The Charter therefore, mandates member states to take care of children and provide them with particular protection because of their physical and mental immaturity (African Union 1990:1). The Charter stipulates under Article 5 that all the states participating in this Charter must guarantee the maximum possible level of survival, protection and development of the child. This article refers to the state's duty to safeguard the means to meet children's basic needs.

Most African states have taken heed of the provisions of this charter and continuously implement programmes to safeguard children's survival and development.

3.4.5 Southern African Development Community (SADC) Charter of Fundamental Social Rights (2003)

Article 8 of the SADC Charter refers to elderly persons. Subsection (b) provides that every retired citizen who is not entitled to a pension or who has no income for survival, shall be eligible for acceptable social assistance to provide for necessities as well as health care. Article 10 refers to social protection. Subsection (b) advocates that individuals who have never been employed or those who lost their jobs and have no income to maintain a living must receive necessary and sufficient assistance to maintain their livelihoods (SADC 2003:8).

3.4.6 The Ouagadougou Declaration on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa (2004)

This Declaration was the result of the meeting at the 3rd Extraordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of States and governments of the African Union held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, from 8th to 9th September 2004. This followed a proposal to assemble an Extraordinary Summit on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa to tackle the threats resulting from prevalent and enduring poverty and limited employment opportunities in African countries (African Union 2004). This declaration focuses on human development, taking a comprehensive approach to empowering and protecting every citizen in all African states. The declaration commits to addressing various social, economic and political factors contributing to enduring poverty affecting the African people.

Most importantly, the continent realises the necessity of promoting social development, alleviating poverty and creating employment opportunities to enable the poor to provide for their families with sustainable livelihoods. The declaration further acknowledges the lack of social protection, which mostly affects women, youth, persons with disabilities, the aged and children. Through this pronouncement, the state parties recognise that the pervasive poverty, lack of employment or underemployment undermine the rights and dignity of people and communities affected, while also constituting a danger to economic, social and political stability (African Union 2004:1). It therefore obligates the state parties to increase the level and efficiency of social protection for all and advance the standards of living of the aged through better social

protection services comprising of value-added pensions, health and other social security arrangements (African Union 2004:6).

3.4.7 Code on Social Security in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) 2008

The SADC code on social security defines social assistance as a form of social security which assists in cash or in kind to persons who lack the means to support themselves and their dependents (SADC 2008:1). Social assistance is means-tested and is funded from government revenues to alleviate poverty through, amongst other things, the provision of minimum income support. This code encourages solidarity and redistribution and provides the member states with a set of general principles and minimum standards of social protection for the welfare of the people of the SADC region.

Article 5.1 of the Code points to the fact that everyone in the SADC who has insufficient means of subsistence to support themselves and their dependents, should be entitled to social assistance in accordance with the level of socio-economic development of the particular member state. It is the responsibility of the member states under article 5.2 to provide an enabling environment for the provision of social services to both those individuals and groups in the community in need of welfare and development support, and as article 5.3 articulates, to provide the social allowances to persons falling within the designated categories in order to assist them in the realisation of their full potential.

This framework realises the need for social and economic justice so it advocates for redistribution and solidarity. It aligns itself with the fundamental human right to social protection as stipulated in the UNUDHR.

3.4.8 Social Policy Framework for Africa (2008)

The member states of the African Union agree that social protection has numerous positive influences on domestic economies. So, they have developed a social policy framework that aims to provide an all-encompassing policy structure to help the affiliated countries to prioritise and reinforce their commitment to national social

policies to enhance human empowerment and development. The African Union (2008:16) acknowledges social protection as vital in strengthening human capital, discontinuing the vicious cycle of poverty and decreasing the rising inequalities that restrain Africa's economic and social development. The member states are therefore urged to increase political understanding and accept social protection as a government responsibility, fully provided for in their domestic statutes, including in national development plans and poverty reduction strategy processes (African Union 2008:17).

Integrating social protection into national plans and developing its basic content will enable countries to effectively manage and use the existing resources to reduce poverty, improve living standards, reduce inequalities and promote economic growth (African Union 2008:17). Commitment to increase access to social protection is still low in many countries. However, through the recommendations of this social policy framework, the member states are encouraged to gradually increase investment and access to social protection by developing broad and longer term national social protection action plans.

3.4.9 Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa (2018)

In fulfilling and recognising the basic rights of people with disabilities as enshrined in the UNUDHR, the African Union has recently authorised the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights Exclusive to the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Disabled people are a minority group within society and are normally excluded and discriminated against even though it is acknowledged they require special treatment due to their vulnerability. The Protocol contributes to the growth of African legislation particularly in terms of safeguarding persons with disabilities.

Under Article 20, the protocol emphasises that people with disabilities and their families are entitled to a satisfactory standard of living, sufficient food, accessible safe drinking water, shelter, sanitation and clothing, the progressive enhancement of living circumstances and to social protection. Part 2 of the Article provides that state parties should take suitable and practical action to ensure that persons with disabilities fully enjoy this right; based on equality of access to social protection programmes.

The AU is commended for enacting this law as a way to balance the disparities between the non-disabled and the disabled, because the disabled usually tend to be overlooked by the majority and side-lined from development programmes and initiatives. Therefore, the states who are signatories to the ACHPR must recognise and accede to this protocol as a commitment to safeguarding the rights and welfare of people living with disabilities.

3.5 Lesotho Policy Frameworks and Legislation for Social Protection

Lesotho is a signatory to various international, African and regional laws, conventions and treaties on social protection. The Government of Lesotho recognises the importance of social protection as an effective strategy to address social and economic vulnerabilities in a variety of legal and planning frameworks (GoL 2014: i). The country, therefore, endorses social protection in its Constitution, Children's Protection and Welfare Act and in the national policy for social development. However, the country is yet to develop a social assistance Act and implementing policy.

3.5.1 The Constitution of Lesotho (1993)

The Constitution of Lesotho provides an enabling environment to respond to vulnerability. Section 26(2) of the Constitution notes that "the state shall take appropriate measures in order to promote equality of opportunity for the disadvantaged groups in the society and enable them to participate fully in all spheres of public life" (Constitution of Lesotho 1993:21).

3.5.2 The Children's Protection and Welfare Act (CPWA 2011)

Deriving its mandate from the international and regional statutes as well as the country's Constitution, the CPWA provides protection for children's basic rights. Section 11(1) of the CPWA 2011 explicitly provides for children's basic rights: access to education, adequate diet, clothing, shelter, medical attention, social services or any other service required for the child's development (GoL 2011a:471). Children, like all other human beings, are entitled to the realisation of basic human rights and fulfilment of needs and this is the basis for the implementation of the CGP, to provide income to fulfil the government's obligation as directed by the Constitution and the CPWA to assure that children's rights for realisation of basic needs are met.

3.5.3 The National Social Assistance Policy (2022).

The vision for social assistance in Lesotho is to protect households against deprivations across their lifecycle and to reduce poverty and vulnerability among the Basotho population (GoL 2022:5). The principles guiding this policy recognise the need for social assistance to be needs sensitive, responsive to shocks, delivered timeously and equitably and reliably. The policy further indicates that social assistance should be transparent and accountable, deliver accurate information, set clear eligibility criteria and employ effective grievance redress mechanisms (GoL 2022:6). More importantly, the policy underscores that the GoL should provide long term sustainable funding for social assistance programming and ensure adequate programme coverage and benefit levels.

Through this policy, the GoL commits to deliver cash and / or in-kind transfers that provide a minimum level of income support to individuals and families who are ultra-poor or poor and are unable to work or construct a viable livelihood (GoL 2022:11). The aim is also for these individuals or households to gain access to relevant complementary social protection programmes and services in other sectors and to progressively build an inclusive social assistance system, covering all poor and ultra-poor households (GoL 2022:23).

3.5.4 The National Policy on Social Development (2015 – 2025)

Social protection is the main feature of this policy. Through this policy, the GoL aspires to create a nation where everyone enjoys an acceptable minimum standard of living and in which there are equal opportunities for every citizen to realise their full potential. Most importantly, the government intends to improve the living standards of all Basotho by addressing poverty, deprivation, vulnerability and inequality through interventions that are comprehensive and holistic (GoL 2014:2). The policy harmonises the implementation of various programmes delivered by the different state and non-state organisations to complement each other towards sustainable prevention and reduction of poverty, deprivation and inequality (GoL 2014: i). The policy, therefore, acknowledges that to address the problems that cause vulnerability, government interventions must be oriented to be preventive, protective, promotive and transformative because it is this approach that is capable of enhancing social and

economic well-being and human dignity. However, implementing policy requires sufficient deployment of resources, both human and financial, which are inherently dependent on the political will of those in power.

3.5.5 The National Social Protection Strategy (2021-2025)

Social protection can be described as the set of policies and programmes meant to prevent, reduce and eliminate economic and social vulnerabilities to poverty and deprivation (GoL 2021:22). This strategy is formulated with a view to fulfilling the constitutional right of Basotho as is stipulated in the Constitution of Lesotho, section 26(2). Through social protection, the Government of Lesotho envisions a better life for all Basotho; dignified, free from poverty and hunger, that allows them to share in the benefits of national economic growth (GoL 2021:22). The strategy appreciates that to reduce poverty and vulnerability, a life cycle approach to social protection has to be maintained, and recognises that throughout life all citizens become vulnerable to various risks. A straightforward implementation plan is therefore mapped around the life cycle approach, split into five life cycle stages (pregnancy and early childhood, school-age children, youth, working age population, old age population) and includes two risk and vulnerability factors that can impact citizens at any life cycle stage (disability and chronic illness, shock) (GoL 2021:7).

The main objectives of the GoL through this strategic plan are:

- (1) to expand the core social protection programmes that provide relief from deprivation for poor and vulnerable households across all life cycles;
- (2) to strengthen the preventive, promotive, transformative and shock-responsive capabilities of social protection by integrating the programmes through strong cross-sector coordination, and;
- (3) to innovate and harmonise implementation systems for efficient, effective and accountable delivery of social protection programmes (GoL 2021:22-23).

3.6 Social Protection Programmes in Lesotho- An Overview

The country has made remarkable progress towards a systems approach to social protection. The key steps include establishing the policy framework (National Policy on Social Development of 2012 and the National Social Protection Strategy 2021-

2025), and strengthening institutional capacity under the Ministry of Social Development. Other actions taken include high levels of investment in social protection and the application of innovations in programme implementation, like the building of the National Information System for Social Assistance database (NISSA) (UN 2017:13).

According to the UN (2017:13), the country spends about 9% of its GDP or 16% of the national budget on social assistance programmes. This, according to the UN (2017:13), is the highest social protection spending rate in Africa. In 2020, the share of social protection increased substantially in the national budget, constituting about 12.3 per cent in the fiscal year 2020/21 (UNICEF 2020:8). According to UNICEF (2020:9) the social protection budget has been increasing since 2017/18 despite unstable revenue collection, showing a solid duty of the government to address poverty and inequality through targeted safety net programmes. Lesotho's budgetary effort is admirable; being the largest in Southern Africa it should allow the country to accelerate the reduction of poverty and deprivation through the implementation of various social protection programs (UNICEF 2020:11).

Social protection in Lesotho offers a range of programmes including cash transfers and in-kind resources, free school meals at reception and primary level, public works and subsidies. However, the most notable government programmes include the child grants programme (CGP), the orphaned and vulnerable children school bursary programme (OVC Bursary), the public assistance (PA) programme and the old age pension (OAP). This study focuses on the Child Grants Programme.

3.6.1 Child Grants Programme

The Lesotho Child Grants Programme (CGP) is an unconditional social cash transfer programme targeting poor households caring for and supporting vulnerable children aged 17 years and under. The programme launched in 2009 and the transfers are strictly tied to children; beneficiaries become ineligible for the programme as soon as the children attain the age of 18 (GoL 2011b:13). The CGP, according to the GoL (2014:1), started as an experimental project supported by international donors; however, it has developed since its launch establishing institutional and operational

systems, and it has now reached country-wide coverage and is fully sponsored from the government coffers. The main objective of the CGP “is to improve the living standards of orphans and other vulnerable children (OVC) so as to reduce malnutrition, improve health status, and increase school enrolment among OVCs” (GoL 2014:1). Eligible households receive different amounts of cash transfers according to the number of children within the household; 360 Maloti (1-2 children), 600 Maloti (3-4 children) and 750 Maloti (5 or more children) per quarter (GoL 2014:1).

Lesotho, as a poor country, is trying to provide safety nets for its poor population. However, challenges persist. The main challenges facing full social protection coverage as identified by the UN (2017:13) include limited resources, lack of coordination and duplication of effort and little data on the number of deserving cases. However, through the NISSA, Lesotho has made impressive strides towards a systems approach to social protection (UN 2017:13). NISSA is the household database used as a single registry for targeting for social protection programmes to support a comprehensive and integrated social protection system, and to improve coordination between existing social protection interventions (UNICEF 2018b:4). NISSA stores all the information on potential households and individuals eligible for social protection interventions which includes emergency responses, making it easy to target and ensuring that no deserving individual is left out of the programmes.

According to UNICEF (2020:5), the number of households covered by the CGP is 41 049, comprising of about 90 821 children. The CGP got a budget increase of 16.1 per cent from M0.082 billion in 2019/20 to M0.095 billion in 2020/21 (UNICEF 2020:14). An evaluation conducted in 2022 revealed that the programme had expanded its coverage to nearly 50,000 households in 2022 (Binci et al 2022:2).

According to UNICEF (2020:14), the Government of Lesotho is still confronted with a challenge of maintaining buying power through social cash transfers targeting children. Since the inception of the CGP in 2009/10 its value has not been inflation-adjusted; families still get the exact amounts whose buying power has constantly eroded (UNICEF 2020:14). The CGP impact evaluation report of 2022 further reveals that the

grant value and its protective effect has severely depreciated since it has not been adjusted since its inception (Binci et al 2022:20).

3.6.2 CGP Targeting and Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for the CGP, households must meet the following criteria: be classified as ultra-poor or very poor by both the community-based categorisation (CBC) and NISSA; and be caring for at least one child aged 17 years or under (GoL 2011b:13-14). NISSA is a single central registry system used to store and process the socio-economic information for all households in Lesotho. NISSA uses a door-to-door survey to collect information from households in an interview style. This data is entered into the system of Management Information for Social Assistance (MISSA) which processes the information using a Proxy Means Test (PMT) formula to categorise and rank households according to their poverty status (GoL 2011b:13).

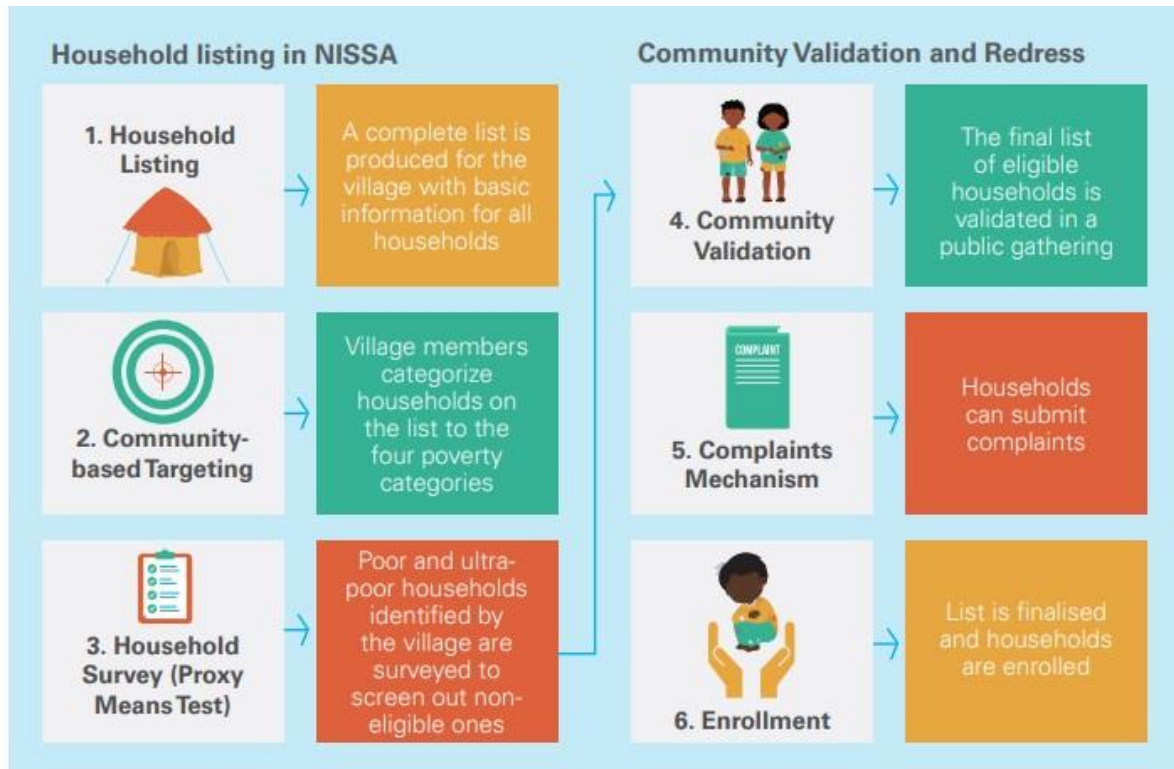
The PMT is complemented by the CBC. The CBC allows all community members to participate in the categorisation of households to identify the poor and the ultra-poor (GoL 2015:3). Involving communities in the targeting process is popular across social assistance programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa, and is used by several cash transfer programmes for the selection of beneficiaries (GoL 2015:5). The responsibility for the categorisation of households is spread across the whole village rather than giving a few people the power to decide who is and is not poor.

The stage following the NISSA categorisation is enrolment. Enrolment is the process of capturing the eligible households into the programme database. The households which have been categorised as poor and ultra-poor are enrolled by confirming the household information and updating it where necessary, and orientating the beneficiary households with important information so that they understand the programme's objectives, the processes, how to collect the payments and how much they should be paid, and how to report problems with payments or other complaints (GoL 2011b:15).

The data of the enrolled household is uploaded to the MISSA. The MISSA is the management and implementation system used to manage the various stages of social

assistance processes, including delivery of benefits, case management, and tracking and monitoring (UNICEF 2022b:4-5). Figure 3.1 below illustrates CGP targeting and enrolment.

Figure 1: CGP Targeting and Enrolment Process.



Source: UNICEF Lesotho.

3.7 Conclusion

Social protection is globally supported as a fundamental human right, hence there are laws binding states to legislate it in their domestic laws and to develop subordinate laws, design policies, strategies and development plans to implement social protection programmes. Everyone is entitled to social protection as indicated by the supreme international instrument, the UNUDHR; more so the vulnerable individuals who are socially and economically marginalised. Making social protection obligatory ensures that the poor are at least guaranteed a share in the national economy through receiving regular cash transfers. Also, states' constitutions bestow on citizens the right to claim social protection benefits and states have to be accountable for fulfilling that right. Social policy scholars maintain that the provision of social protection augments social

cohesion and makes governments more legitimate; but more importantly protects human dignity by reducing social and economic inequality.

The African continent, through its African Union (AU), has developed the various legislative frameworks for social protection and social security, some of which Lesotho espouses. These laws and declarations advocate the provision of social protection as an inherent right to underprivileged individuals so that they can maintain an acceptable standard of daily living. At the regional level, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and several other accords obligate the state parties to provide social protection to groups like the elderly, disabled persons, children and the unemployed.

Lesotho is signatory to various legal and policy frameworks and it is progressively embracing social protection. It recently embarked on a life cycle approach to social assistance, recognising that vulnerability occurs at different stages of life thus seeking to address the risks and challenges throughout the life course. Taking a four-stage life course, the National Social Protection Strategy includes the provision of social protection at pregnancy and early childhood, school-age and youth; working age; and old age. It also includes the two dimensions of shocks and of disability or chronic illness that may impact at any stage of the life course. A disability grant was launched in 2021 after the country signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) bringing the total number of social assistance programmes to five excluding the complementary programmes.

More importantly, the country's constitution enshrines the right to social protection. The various legal and policy frameworks emanating from the constitution provide the basis for the social assistance programmes implemented by the Government of Lesotho for the different groups of vulnerable members of the society.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to present the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that guide the study in the investigation of the implementation of the Lesotho Child Grants Programme (CGP). The theory explored in this study is the Implementation Theory which is useful in understanding how the child grant programme is executed. First public policy is defined and further broken down to define a public policy programme and how it relates to public policy. Then, policy implementation approaches and models are explored. These include the implementation top-down approach and the bottom-up approach, the implementation models, rational model, management model, organisational development model, bureaucratic model and political model which are used to analyse the approach and methods adopted for implementing the CGP.

The factors influencing successful policy implementation, as well as the barriers impeding implementation, are also outlined because the study wants to assess the challenges, if any, which may be present that affect the implementation of the CGP. A discussion on public policy networks and public policy partnerships as mechanisms for implementation are also explored; their advantages and challenges are examined. The purpose is to understand their origin and the ideas associated with them, in order to assess whether their usefulness in policy implementation also applies to the implementation of the CGP.

The information on the public policy networks and partnerships explains the research questions related to the collaborations formed to implement the CGP in an endeavour to understand how the programme is being implemented, and to establish from those involved how they experience the programme delivery. Exploring the literature on policy networks and partnerships in this study stems from the fact that the government has partnered with private companies in delivering CGP. The study aims to identify the issues the government is confronted with in this partnership, and also establish

whether this collaboration enhances the public value in delivering this public programme.

The study is interested in broadly understanding social protection even though the case study is a social assistance programme intended to assist vulnerable children and their households. More and more of the social and development policy literature is acknowledging social protection, particularly in the form of social assistance as a means to eradicate poverty and deprivation in the poor countries (Barrientos 2019:1, UNDP 2019:14 and Bastagli et al 2016:5). Therefore, in this chapter social protection is conceptually defined, examined in terms of the different purposes it serves, its depiction as a basic human right and the justification for the need for social assistance programmes is explored. The idea is to understand whether social protection in Lesotho is understood in the same way as it is conceptualised in the global context.

Targeting for social assistance programmes is explained and the method discussed in this study is the method used for the CGP. Poor countries like Lesotho have limited fiscal capacity, therefore the social assistance programmes are means-tested as a way to prioritise the needy for optimal resource distribution. Social grant payment modes are also discussed in this chapter, so that the experiences of the beneficiaries on how they access the CGP can be assessed in order to motivate policy reforms for programme improvement.

4.2 Defining Public Policy

Public policy is described by Anderson (1997:10) as a deliberate and calculated plan of action undertaken by the state in tackling public problems. Agenda setting, policy formulation, decision making, implementation and monitoring and evaluation are the various stages of the public policy making process (Fisher et al 2007:43, Anderson 1997:39-40).

Agenda setting, the first stage of policy-making as defined by Fisher et al (2007:63), is the phase where policy issues are recognised and brought to the attention of government for intervention. The second stage of policy formulation is a pre-decision stage of policy-making, whereby a number of public policy options that can respond to

the identified problems are designed (Kraft and Furlong 2015:93, Fisher et al 2007: 79). Proper policy formulation depends on the correct identification of the policy problem. In the third stage, decision making, the government adopts the most suitable approach from the policy alternatives to deal with the perceived problem (Hanekom 1987:13).

This study investigates the implementation of the Lesotho Child Grants Programme, one of the programmes designed to accomplish the Lesotho National Policy for Social Development. Some of its priority areas are to combat poverty, deprivation and inequality, and the protection of children (GOL 2012:16,18). A definition of a public policy programme is outlined below.

□ **Defining a Public Policy Programme**

According to Lassance (2020:10), a policy programme is the solution to the policy problem; a crucial strategy designed to execute the government's decision to respond to a public issue. Programmes set goals, choose indicators, estimate resources and deliver products, results and impacts in the long run (Lassance 2020:11). The policy agenda becomes feasible and manageable once a programme or programmes are designed (Lassance 2020). A policy programme, as defined by Hudson, Hunter and Peckham (2019:5), is the point at which the policymakers design the practicalities of implementation namely planning, governance, stakeholder engagement, risks, resource management, monitoring, review and evaluation.

The following sections explore the theoretical approaches to implementation as well as the models of implementation and how they are applied this study, to provide an understanding of how successful the programme is. Implementation is the most critical stage of the policy cycle because this is where the policy comes to life and the actions of the actors involved can either make or scupper the policy. Lipsky's theory of street level bureaucracy and the policy networks theory are used in this study to assess the actions of the public officers involved in the implementation of the CGP, as well the actions of the various private actors collaborating with the government of Lesotho.

4.2.1 Policy Implementation

Implementation is the fourth stage of the policy cycle. The policy is executed or an action is taken to address the identified problem (Kraft and Furlong 2015:95, Hanekom 1987:55). According to Khan and Khandaker (2016:540), policy implementation denotes the execution of a plan in which different stakeholders and institutions collaborate and use various processes and systems to accomplish policy goals. Bhuyan, Jorgensen and Sharma (2010:1) define policy implementation as putting together the mechanisms, resources, and relationships that link policies to programme actions. Bhuyan et al (2010:2) define policy implementation as the set of actions and processes carried out by different stakeholders in order to attain the aims and objectives defined in an official policy. These scholars also indicate that policy implementation is influenced by various aspects such as policy content, the nature of the policy process, the actors involved, and the environment in which the policy is planned and must be executed.

Implementation takes place after the decision-making stage, where the government chooses from the various policy options and decides on an approach to tackle the existing problem (Hanekom 1987:13). Implementation, as indicated by Khan and Khandaker (2016:540), is a process, an output and an outcome, it involves diverse actors, organisations and techniques for control, and setting goals and carrying out actions planned to achieve them. Policy implementation as defined by Paudel (2009:36), involves the activities performed by the state and private organisations dedicated to accomplishing the goals as set out in the policy decisions.

Policy implementation is not a linear process because courses of action change over time for various reasons. It is a complex, continuing course of decision-making by key role players. Policies are often re-defined and re-interpreted during the implementation process as challenges arise on the ground (Bhuyan et al. 2010:2). Key features along the policy-to-action process such as leadership, stakeholder participation, the setting, resources, and operational issues shape the decisions and actions at different levels (Bhuyan et al 2010:2).

4.2.2 Approaches to Policy Implementation

Policy implementation researchers point out that as implementation research progressed over the years, two schools of thought emerged as the dominant ways of defining implementation. These are the top-down and bottom-up approaches (Matland 1995:146 and Lindquist, Wanna and Marshall 2015:212).

(a) Top-Down Approach

According to Matland, top-down philosophers perceive the legislators as the crucial actors for implementation. The top-down approach views execution as based on the level at which the behaviour of implementing officers and the policy beneficiaries match the objectives contained in the official proposal. The shared idea of top-down theorists according to Matland (1995:147), is to maintain clear and consistent policy goals, limit the number of stakeholders, limit the degree of amendments required and to place implementation accountability in an organisation that is largely concerned with the policy ambitions.

According to Matland (1995:147-148), the top-down model has shortcomings, namely considering implementation merely as a process of managing and overlooking or trying to eliminate the political issues involved. The top-down approach considers the legislative language as the commencement of policy implementation; failing to acknowledge the importance of actions taken earlier in the policy-making process. The emphasis is exclusively on the lawmakers as the main role players in the process. However, the service deliverers are closer to the public, hence have knowledge and proper comprehension of public problems, therefore, they are well positioned to offer decisive policy actions (Matland 1995:148 and Paudel 2009:41).

(b) Bottom-up Approach

Bottom-up theorists underscore the importance of policy beneficiaries and the frontline workers who actually deliver the service, arguing that policy is actually made at the lower level (Matland 1995:148). The argument is that a more reasonable view of implementation would be to consider a policy from the position of the service users and the service deliverers. DeLeon and DeLeon (2002:470) mention that bottom-up theorists believe that proper implementation occurs when the policy recipients are

vigorously engaged in developing and effecting the programmes because they are well positioned to understand the full range of implementation complexities. According to a bottom-up theory proponent, Berman, implementation happens at two levels. The large-scale implementation level is where the actors located at the central administration formulate a government policy, and the small-scale implementation level is where the local governments execute the central government strategies by developing and implementing the programmes intended to deliver services to the people (Matland 1995:148).

Arguing further from the bottom-up perspective, Matland (1995:149) indicates that the effective execution of a programme is largely reliant on the competence of the implementers, and their ability to acclimate the policy to local settings while the central activities only play a minor role. Michael Lipsky (1980) promotes a theory of 'street level bureaucracy'. This theory argues that the officials who implement policy are the lower level officials. Therefore, street-level bureaucrats are crucial to the bottom-up approach because they are considered to know better in terms of what the clients need because of their proximity to them (Paudel 2009:41). However, it is undeniable that in certain settings it is advisable to acknowledge that both theories are relevant in any implementation situation (Matland 1995:171 and Lindquist, Wanna & Marshall 2015:213). For example, central authorities certainly affect policy implementation through their decisions on finance and jurisdiction (Matland 1995:171). Also, policies are by no means self-executing, because micro implementation processes definitely take place. According to DeLeon and DeLeon (2002:471) and Lindquist, Wanna and Marshall (2015:216), there is no perfect implementation approach, the appropriateness of the approach depends on the setting based on the circumstances related to the policy concerns and how best they can be tackled.

These approaches are important for defining and understanding how the CGP is implemented and the issues confronting the implementation of the programme. The theory surrounding these approaches particularly the bottom-up approach, is that the policy beneficiaries are also vital for successful implementation. This means that for this study even the beneficiaries' perceptions will contribute towards understanding the issues surrounding the implementation of the CGP. The beneficiaries experience

the policy at the practical level; it affects them directly so they are in a better position to inform its implementation through the process of monitoring and evaluation. Further, Brinkerhoff (1996:1396) emphasises the relationship between the political, bureaucratic, and managerial factors in policy implementation, suggesting that different levels are involved. The understanding is that policy implementation is affected in different ways across all these levels, therefore, it is important to seek an understanding of the implementation of the CGP from the different actors including the beneficiaries.

The implementation approaches are used to analyse the broad research question concerning the issues that confront the government of Lesotho in delivering the CGP.

4.2.3 Models of Policy Implementation

Khan and Khandaker (2016:540) propose five models that are vital to policy implementation.

- (a) **The Rational model** necessitates that the programme aims and objectives are clear and well formulated; planning should be accurate and consistent with proper and comprehensive assignment of responsibilities and monitoring.
- (b) **The Management model** where the budget should be adequate and used efficiently, organisational structure must be well established, communication must be quick and straightforward, and the people, the policy beneficiaries, must participate. Adequate equipment and appropriate technology are also essential. The management model is used to answer the research question about the resources, delivery systems, processes, structures and partnerships being used to implement the CGP. The management model will be used to answer the third research question in an attempt to understand the issues affecting the implementation of the programme in terms of budget availability and usage, the nature of organisational structure as well as communication issues.
- (c) **Organisational Development model** - the leadership must be active and possess the necessary skills to motivate their staff, engage them and encourage team building while taking accurate and meaningful decisions.

- (d) **The Bureaucratic model** is about the overall competency, commitment and professionalism of the front-line implementers; their ability to make appropriate decisions is imperative for successful implementation.
- (e) **The Political model** entails avoiding the complication of joint actions, possession of greater bargaining ability, coordination among the politicians, vigorous political willingness and lessening the impact of pressure politics.

Some of these models are used to analyse this study's research questions and objectives. Savard (2012:2) indicates that there is usually a disconnection between a policy's intent and its outcomes that result from the actions of implementers especially the public servants assigned with different responsibilities. The bureaucratic model in this case will assist in assessing the competence, commitment and the behaviours of the officers who are implementing the CGP at the community level. The bureaucratic model can be linked to evaluating the experiences and perceptions of the beneficiaries in accessing the grants, their interaction with grant officers and how they serve them.

4.2.4 Street Level Bureaucrats and Policy Implementation

According to Savard (2012:2), the personal views of civil servants tend to influence their perceptions and even their intentions when it comes to implementing a policy. Lipsky (1980:14) calls them street-level bureaucrats and indicates that they are the actual policy designers since they possess the discretionary role in delivering the services and enforcing the regulations. Paudel (2009:41) suggests that the discretionary function of civil servants, as asserted by Lipsky, makes them significant role players in effecting public policies. Onyekwelu, Okpalibekwe and Dike (2015:15) indicate that the bureaucrats can augment or harm policy implementation because they are the ones responsible for the co-ordination, execution and monitoring of activities. Their vitality, leadership, discipline, skills and expertise are very vital for policy success.

Some of the actions of the front-line officials relate to the issues confronting the implementation of the policy, so the impact of their decisions on the performance of the programme will be evaluated in relation to the bureaucratic policy implementation model. Street-level bureaucrats, according to Lipsky (1980:14), are the interface

between the policy and the service recipients (citizens), therefore their discretion in how they execute their work has substantial impact on the policy. Vedung (2015:16) indicates that street-level bureaucrats are usually faced with difficulties in balancing the clients' endless requests for public services and the scarce resources, thus face being forced to adopt what Vedung calls 'coping mechanisms'.

“To avoid heavy caseloads, street-level bureaucrats use two coping strategies. They try to limit client demand for services, reduce information dissemination, ask clients to wait, make themselves unavailable to contact, or make ample use of referrals. Or they resort to ‘creaming’. They handpick easy, well defined cases rather than difficult, ambiguous, and time-consuming ones. They attend to cases that promise to be successful and down play the trickiest ones”
(Vedung 2015:16)

Lipsky (2010:1) mentions that public servants are the key players in shaping the outcome of a public policy through their discretion and autonomy. Through their discretionary powers they shape public policy as they try to cope with work situations that are overwhelmed with clients and have a shortage of resources (Lipsky 2010:1). These unauthorised ways of coping tend to digress from the policy intent. According to Lipsky, the implementation of public policy is difficult because of the disconnection between the intended legislative goals and actual policy outcomes.

The questions on assessing the beneficiaries' experiences and perceptions of the programme will help the researcher understand how the officers implementing the programme affect its delivery. The behaviours and attitudes of the officers obviously affect the beneficiaries' experiences regarding the programme.

4.2.5 Factors Influencing Successful Policy Implementation

According to Brynard (2009:558), successful policy implementation is a planned activity approved by the government to deliver the envisioned policy pronouncement and to attain the anticipated results whereby accomplishment denotes realising the anticipated functionality as required by an identified stakeholder. The different scholars point to various factors leading to successful policy implementation. Mthethwa

(2012:45) indicates that successful public policy implementation requires extra consideration to develop accurate implementation strategies, qualified management, inter-sectorial stakeholder participation, sufficient and accessible resources, and effective feedback and monitoring systems. Brynard (2009:558) identifies commitment, coordination, training, the institutional environment, the role of the implementers, contextual factors, and inter-organisational cooperation. Giacchino and Kakabadse (2003:144) identify an effective approach, positive disposition, collaboration, effectual strategising, adequate resourcing, management style, location of political responsibility, role allocation, competence and expertise and stakeholder participation. Elmore (1978:195) identifies four main elements for effective implementation: (1) clearly stated responsibilities and objectives that precisely outline the policy intent; (2) an administration strategy which assigns responsibilities and performance standards to sub-units; (3) a well-established system for appraising the sub-unit performance; and (4) a system of supervision measures and social authorisations sufficient to hold implementing officials answerable for their duties.

Some of the factors identified above are chosen and discussed below:

(a) Commitment

Commitment, as explained by Giacchino and Kakabadse (2003:144) refers to a noticeable and evident political and organisational determination to deliver a policy. Brynard (2009:560) mentions that commitment refers to sustain the attention on the policy initiative from its initiation through to its delivery. However, even though commitment is considered as the central concept of policy implementation, it has to be backed up by strong coordination of all the stakeholders, while making sure that the implementing organisation takes absolute ownership.

Brynard (2009:561) indicates there are different views regarding commitment to policy implementation. Political support is vital, implying that commitment mainly needs to come from the authorities while maintaining the importance of commitment from the implementing staff. The outlook of the employees who execute the programme at the ground level determines how it performs, meaning that it will only succeed when they are dedicated to it. Most importantly, policy feasibility is crucial to bolster commitment

from the bureaucrats who execute the policy from the bottom up, as well as from the legislators who must support it from the top down (Giacchino and Kakabadse, 2003:146). According to Burke, Morris and McGarrigle (2012:11), commitment requires supportive organisational structures and systems. When the systems, policies and procedures within the organisation are clear and robust, they enforce commitment to policy implementation on the side of staff.

(b) Effective resourcing

Effective implementation entails planning and the mobilisation of sufficient resources (Mthethwa 2012:42). Political, financial, human and technical resources are required in the implementation process, therefore, it is important to make sure that these required resources are available and accessible throughout the implementation process (Mthethwa 2012:42-43). According to Mthethwa (2012:43) and Bhuyan et al (2010:8), as soon as strategies are designed, the implementing agency needs to make estimates and organise the financial, human, and material resources necessary to implement the policy.

Onyekwelu et al (2015:15) mention that the capacity of the implementing human resources greatly determines which policies can be well implemented. If the staff are well-trained and skilled, policies can be implemented. Khan (2016:10) indicates that frontline workers are the crucial assets in the implementation of a policy, hence they must have requisite skills in utilising the resources meant to accomplish policy goals. Frontline implementers must be motivated and be capacitated with the required competencies and skills because their incompetence can lead to policy failure. Burke et al (2012:10) mention that staff capacity building is an essential factor to guarantee that the best outcomes are attained. According to Burke et al (2012:10), securing funding is also pivotal in ensuring successful policy implementation.

Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980:545) emphasise that financial resources must be readily available to the implementing organisation. Money is required to employ the staff and to secure other resources necessary to effect the policy and conduct the workshops and work seminars for the development of working guidelines, procedures and regulations. According to Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980:545-46) the level of

funding for a policy programme needs to be proportional to the objectives it has to achieve; a poorly funded policy will not reach its goals.

(c) Role of implementers

Implementers affect the way in which policies are received by the public, and how they achieve the set objectives (Brynard 2009:564 and Altman and Petkus 1994:47). According to Onyekwelu et al (2015:15), bureaucracy is the crucial actor alongside the level of policy implementation, it is the administrative machinery for executing and effecting public policies. Bureaucrats are responsible for coordinating, monitoring and enforcing implementation activities. They are the interface between the executive and the citizenry, they exercise considerable discretion over policy implementation and consequently re-interpret and remodel the policy in unanticipated ways (Brynard 2009:564). Makinde (2005:64) indicates that the success of the policy is largely based on the attitude of officers. Consequently, the degree of policy achievement is determined by the implementers' disposition, that is, how they perceive the policy as impacting their organisational and individual interests.

According to Makinde (2005:64), if a policy results in remuneration cuts or relinquishment of the status of the officials, the outlook for the policy will be badly affected, but if a policy boosts the rank, the salary or the pride of the officials, such officials are inclined to make it successful. Sabatier and Mazmanian (1980:547) note that the achievement of statutory objectives depends on the commitment of the officials in the implementing agency. No matter how well a policy is structured, the attainment of its target goals is influenced by the role that its implementers play in its execution. Implementation, especially of new programmes, needs implementers who are fittingly obstinate and dedicated to pursuing new and workable strategies, regulations and operating procedures, and who consistently enforce them in order to reach the set goals and or targets (Sabatier and Mazmanian 1980:547).

(d) Multi-sectoral Stakeholder Involvement

Stakeholder involvement refers to extensive and inclusive meetings with people or entities likely to affect, or be affected by the policy (Giacchino and Kakabadse 2003:146 and Bhuyan et al 2010:7). These include the officers and the experts responsible for accomplishing policy goals. According to Bhuyan et al (2010:7),

effective involvement of various groups within the government, non-governmental, and private sectors is fundamental since the individual sectors contribute different ideas, expertise and other resources necessary for implementation. For example, civil society plays a part in monitoring implementation by pressing for certain approaches to enhance implementation and guarding the public interests, while the private sector's contribution improves the quality of service provision (Bhuyan et al 2010:8).

(e) Effective feedback and monitoring systems

Programme monitoring requires a set of pointers and a reporting process to measure developments towards the attainment of outcomes. Recognising the significance of frequently collecting, analysing, and using feedback to measure advancement in regard to achieving results is crucial in programme implementation (Bhuyan et al 2010:6). Through obtaining opinions, policy makers and implementers are able to utilise the information to assess successes, failures and make required modifications or adjustments (Mthethwa 2012:44). For effective monitoring, feedback must include beneficiaries or clients' perspectives to learn from their views as well as how implementation of the policy can be improved (Bhuyan et al 2010:6).

Burke et al (2012:11) maintain that monitoring and evaluation are necessary to gauge whether the set performance pointers are being met and results achieved. However, tracking delivery performance alone is insufficient to guarantee effectual implementation, particularly where the policy is complicated and long-term in nature (Hudson, Hunter and Peckham 2019:7). Another critical undertaking for implementation support is to pay attention to the views and perceptions of those whose behaviour influences the implementation process; evaluate the capacity to implement, know what is being done well, what needs enhancement and how best to increase competency (Hudson, Hunter and Peckham 2019:7).

Public policy should be implemented appropriately so that the citizens can gain benefits because the achievement of its objectives is associated with the way in which it is put into practice (Khan and Khandaker 2016:539). Actors at this stage are very important, because of their dependency on each other to successfully deliver (Agranoff and McGuire 1999:20-21). The interdependence of the organisations needs to be well

managed for well-coordinated action (Agranoff and McGuire 1999:20-21). The political, economic and social environments where the policy is being executed are also deemed highly influential for its success (Cloete and Wissink 2000:171, Lindquist, Wanna and Marshall 2015:210).

4.2.6 Barriers to Policy Implementation

Various adverse factors affect public policy implementation which involve the diversion of resources, changing policy objectives, as well as administrative problems (Khan and Khandaker 2016:541). Khan and Khandaker (2016:541) further indicate that sometimes policy results diverge from their design because a policy agenda may just fare poorly because of political interference, the lack of human resources, insufficient facilities or because of the lack of inspiration or proficiency of frontline personnel to carry out an intervention. The inability of the leadership to structure and convey the policy intent correctly to staff can also affect its implementation. Makinde (2005:64) also affirms that a shortage of resources causes implementation glitches, for example when the qualified or skilled staff who are necessary for the execution of the policy decision are in short supply or the material resources are insufficient, implementation will be flawed.

According to Khan and Khandaker (2016:542), successful policy implementation is associated with many constraints, namely political interference, lack of materials and competent human resources, lack of incentives, negative attitude amongst implementers, lack of inter-organisational commitment to statutory objectives and clear communication, lack of delegation of authority and flexibility, lack of necessary technical competence or managerial skills and the pervasiveness of self-centred intentions of public servants. These constraints pointed out by Khan and Khandaker (2016:542), will be investigated in relation to the research questions to help the researcher understand where implementation challenges occur, if any. Issues confronting the implementation of the programme and the experiences of the beneficiaries in accessing the programme will be defined by some of these implementation constraints.

Some of the issues identified as challenges above are selected and discussed further below.

(a) Political interference

A policy intervention may be compromised by political interference (Khan 2016:8). Political interference occurs when political leaders take control and make decisions in public management affairs like planning, organising, employment, directing, coordinating, reporting, and costing as well as provision and use of public funds (Mfuru, Sarwatt and Kanire 2018:21). Meddling of politicians in administration issues according to Mfuru et al (2018:21) is one of the governance problems confronting developing democratic countries, particularly African countries. As a result, service delivery in such countries tends to be badly affected by the involvement of politicians in public administration matters (Mfuru et al 2018:28). The role of politicians is to formulate and monitor policies, not to get involved in the execution or operational part of the policies because it is the responsibility of the administration (Mfuru et al 2018:30). Onyekwelu et al (2015:17) indicate that there are times when the political executives interfere with domineering political power to change the course of a public policy, specifically in undemocratic governments. Therefore, if there is such excessive political interference in the implementation process and the bureaucracy is not given autonomy when it comes to their role in implementing public policies, the final outcome of the policy becomes seriously affected (Onyekwelu et al 2015:17).

(b) Lack of resources

Efficacious policy execution requires adequate financing, human and material resources (Signe 2017:20). There is also a need to mobilise and garner the right combination of implementation resources because lack of appropriate resources, for example a knowledge gap in the expertise needed to implement a policy, can lead to policy failure even if funding and infrastructural resources are available (Signe 2017:20-21). Khan (2016:9) mentions that the prerequisites for implementing a new policy are sufficient finances and personnel with necessary aptitude and expertise. According to Makinde (2005:63), the lack of resources poses a huge threat to policy implementation. Implementation resources should comprise both sufficient human and material resources such as adequate staff who are well qualified with the requisite

skills and expertise to carry out the implementation, and who have undergone the necessary training to implement the particular policy. Policy implementers have to be conversant with the content of the policy and possess the requisite knowledge for managing its implementation (Mthethwa 2012:43). According to Makinde (2005:64), having insufficient and incompetent human resources may result in laws not being enforced, poor service delivery and limitations in development of reasonable regulations and operating procedures. Therefore, it is imperative that as soon as the strategies have been designed, the implementing organisations embark on resource mobilisation namely the financial, human, and material resources required to implement the policy efficiently (Mthethwa 2012:43).

(c) Negative disposition among implementers

Some scholars confirm that effective policy implementation can be severely affected by the existence of a negative outlook among implementers. Makinde (2005:64) mentions that the manner in which the implementers use their discretion over the policy is to a larger extent dependent on their attitude concerning the policy. These officials are the last link in the implementation chain according to Signe (2017:19), but they are in charge of the most crucial tasks of government organisations in implementing policy; responsible for defining programme eligibility, allocating benefits, judging compliance, and even imposing sanctions. This means that their attitude towards policy is vital, and if it is negative, can jeopardise its success considering the leverage they have over its implementation.

Policy success greatly depends on how the implementers perceive its effect on their institutional and individual interests. If a policy is going to lead to salary cuts, diminished self-confidence, or demotion of the implementers, a negative outlook towards the policy is inevitable which adversely impacts the implementation of public policy (Makinde 2005:64). Onyekwelu et al (2015:15) reiterate the same point indicating that the disposition of bureaucratic leadership and staff determines implementation success. Positive attitudes may inspire commitment to implementation, while a negative disposition may lead to resistance thereby frustrating and even sabotaging implementation. The bureaucracy may also implement policies according to its interests and values. For example, when policy makers' goals are

ambiguous, queried or contradictory, the bureaucrats will use their own discretion and make decisions in a manner favouring their values and beliefs (Signe 2017:19-20). This clearly suggests that bureaucrats should have room for participation in policy formulation to promote understanding and ownership.

Onyekwelu et al (2015:16) indicate that implementers can change the direction and target of implementation by making unnecessary adjustments, alterations and distortions to the implementation plan through their self-interests. Where policies do not favour the bureaucratic interests and the goals differ with policy makers, the impression may be created that the policy changes or alternative actions are not viable resulting in poorer delivery on official goals (Signe 2017:19-20 and Onyekwelu et al 2015:16).

(d) Lack of clear communication

Makinde (2005:63) indicates that communication is a crucial element for the successful implementation of public policy; orders must be accurate and consistent, and communicated in a clear, appropriate and timely manner. According to Makinde (2005:63), insufficient information can result in the implementers making mistakes when they are unclear about what exactly is expected of them. Serious policy implementation setbacks are bound to emerge when instructions are distorted, unclear, inconsistent and poorly communicated.

(e) Lack of Inter-Organisational Commitment

Inter-organisational collaboration is often considered to be valuable to policy implementation (Brynard 2009:565). According to Hudson et al (2019:4), weak collaborative policymaking and the inability to find a shared understanding to resolve common problems using practical management of organisational disputes, remains one of the leading causes of implementation hiccups. Coordination is vital in policy implementation, particularly for modern-day policies that involve various organisations. Makinde (2005:64) mentions that one implementation theorist, Edward (1980), observed that organisational disintegration hinders cooperation that is essential for the effective implementation of a policy, particularly one that involves the collaboration of different actors. This results in the misuse of limited resources, hinders change,

causes misunderstandings, leads to disagreements and ultimately the key roles being disregarded (Makinde 2005:64).

Policy implementation entails constant collaboration with multiple stakeholders, including the involvement of lower-level groups like the service consumers, service providers and a range of local service organisations whose actions need to be harmonised so that common goals are achieved (Hudson et al 2019:4). Failure to reach satisfactory mutual agreement and commitment on policy goals leads to constant battles thus undermining policy performance and the organisational duty of providing a public service. The critical idea for effective execution of a multi-actor policy, is for the process to be synergistic and well-coordinated across the involved organisations, not a series of disconnected and divergent actions (Hudson et al 2019:4).

Having discussed the various factors necessary for successful policy implementation and the factors that can impede proper implementation, the mechanisms of policy implementation as well as the policy networks and partnerships are now explored. The government of Lesotho is collaborating with private companies and non-governmental organisations to deliver CGP. The experiences of policy implementers are assessed in terms of the issues they relate to the successes and or the shortcomings of this policy.

4.3 Public Policy Modes of Implementation

The mode of policy implementation is important because the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery depends on it. According to Brinkerhoff (2001:2), policy implementation is the concerted effort of different organisations; no sole agency can unilaterally manage implementation; one can only be a lead organisation but not entirely in charge of the process alone; responsibilities are dispersed among the actors involved. According to Rosenau (2000:85), as a result there is a widespread appreciation everywhere in the world that the socioeconomic problems that public policies are meant to tackle cannot be answered by government alone. Rosenau (2000: 85) indicates that as a result, public policy implementation has become multi-sectoral and multi-organisational.

4.3.1 Public Policy Networks

Societal problems have become increasingly complex and require quick responses and effective decision-making, hence, can only be addressed through multi-actor cooperation (Streck 2005 :5). The collaborations between agencies are called public policy networks. Brinkerhoff (1999:126) defines policy networks as the cross-sectional partnerships whose intention is to accomplish mutual goals through collective actions of all allies, whilst the individual duties and accountabilities of players continue to be distinctive.

According to Ferlie et al (2011:307), there has been a shift from hierarchies towards networks in public services organisations. The networks usually arise in situations where old collaboration and problem-solving styles are deemed insufficient in addressing a particular issue. The advantages resulting from these networks are that members bring complementary resources, skills and expertise to the process, allowing for cooperation and more effectual responses (Streck 2005:20). Brinkerhoff (1999:126) also mentions that policy collaborations produce better and more effective outcomes than when organisations work independently.

The public policy literature indicates that networks are mostly powerful in dealing with what Horst, Rittel and Webber call 'wicked problems'. This concept according to Horst, Rittel and Webber (1973) denotes complex societal problems where: (1) there is no obvious solution; (2) several people and organisations are affected; (3) there is dissension among stakeholders. 'Wicked problems' as understood by Ferlie et al (2011:308), need comprehensive and systemic approaches, working across boundaries and allowing the public and stakeholders to participate and co-produce public policy and engage in its implementation. Importantly, Brinkerhoff (1999:138) indicates that the potential for a successful network depends on the nature of a policy that the network has to implement; the level of technical proficiency needed and the period within which the outcomes have to be seen, for example.

According to Ferlie et al (2011:308-310), the effectiveness of these networks depends on the organisations' willingness and openness to share information across agency boundaries; having capacity for inter-organisational learning; and the ability to change

from vertical management to managing together. The joint problem-solving through transference of knowledge and best practices across organisational boundaries strengthens public policy delivery outcomes especially for 'wicked problems' which are normally characterised by chronic policy failure (Ferlie et al 2011:308-310).

(a) Advantages of Public Policy Networks

Eduardo et al (2013:369) mention that organisations often take a collaborative approach to solving wicked public problems because a single agency cannot effectively tackle them on its own. Creating or bringing value is a significant concern for the public sector. As a result, public managers attempt, by various means, to discover and or produce public value through the services they provide, hence the use of collaborative networks for public sector service delivery and policy implementation has been increasing overtime (Moore 1995:20). According to Eduardo et al (2013:369), governments are now reliant upon other governments, private sector actors and non-profit organisations to design, execute and direct government agendas and services.

Agranoff (2007:8) identifies five mechanisms through which the individual collaborators benefit from their involvement in the public management networks. The five are: knowledge gained and the skills learnt through working with others; networks are usually interdisciplinary hence allow the collaborators to work with and learn from other organisations with different backgrounds and functional areas; the opportunity to work with and or manage individuals from different organisations augments the capability to manage and work within intergovernmental arenas; better opportunities for building professional relationships, and finally, networks add value and strengthen provision of public services (Agranoff 2007:8)

According to Eduardo et al (2013:370), policy design and implementation through a network collaboration, offer collective benefits through the synergy created as the agencies work together. Such engagements increase the capabilities of individual organisations involved serving their clients by accessing the knowledge, information, connections, personnel, material, and monetary resources of their partners (Eduardo et al 2013:370). Further, in network collaborations, risk is shared amongst the partners,

efficiencies are realised together, and service delivery is coordinated as organisations learn from each other (Huxham and Vangen 2008:9). The quality of outcomes gained through collaborative actions is commonly the motivation for the establishment of collaborative networks (Eduardo et al 2013:370).

More importantly, within the network governance, relationships are built upon the basis of mutual benefit, trust and reciprocity (Junki 2006:22). According to Junki (2006:23), the networks are bound to continue because the actors accrue several benefits as they share goals and utilise collective strengths. Networks' strength lies in their ability to pull resources which are not easily at the disposal of one actor; their dependence on one another is not only for material resources and transactions but also the core resource of policy legitimisation especially on the side of government (Junki 2006:24). Policy legitimacy is crucial to governance hence it is one of the main objectives the state seeks to achieve by forming policy networks.

The current study investigates the delivery of a child grants programme (CGP) which is delivered through a government partnership or a network with two private companies. Forrer et al (2010:475) mention that public-private partnerships are increasingly being used for the delivery of public goods and services because of the private sector's innovation, technical expertise and efficiency. Scholars agree that public policy implementation has, over the years, extended beyond the government sphere. The responsibilities of non-governmental organisations and the private sector have expanded the delivery of public policy, with governments seeking collaborative engagements with outside actors to better deal with public service delivery demands (Rosenau 2000:85). Brinkerhoff (2001:2) indicates that the current generation of public policies requires policy networks because their implementation challenges extend well beyond the governments' capabilities to achieve results alone. Therefore, the study aims to establish whether the partnership between the government of Lesotho and the private sector in delivering CGP provides the envisaged opportunities and efficiency in the delivery of the programme.

The expertise of technological innovation for efficiency and security against easy leakage of money cannot be guaranteed by the government, hence the invitation of

the private entities into the delivery of CGP. The government of Lesotho and the public are intrinsically bound to benefit from the partnership with the two companies because the multiple issues which confront the government in implementing the CGP cannot be instantly solved. Issues of physical infrastructure include, for instance, roads and the extension of formal financial institutions to remote and secluded rural areas.

(b) Challenges of Public Policy Networks

Despite the evidence provided on the usefulness of policy networks in public policy implementation, several challenges are also noted. According to Keast, Mandell and Brown (2006:10), networks are frequently difficult to steer or control, agreements on the results and activities to be undertaken are challenging, and it is not easy to determine who is in charge. Wanna (2008:9-10) also mentions that collaboration sometimes blurs the delineation of responsibilities, and the question of who is answerable and accountable for decisions taken if problems emerge, may sometimes confuse. When expectations are not met, blame games are bound to arise leading to non-governmental actors disengaging or disrupting policy delivery and having no real accountability for any final outcome (Wanna 2008:9-10). Collaboration sometimes frustrates rather than expedites decision-making (Wanna 2008:9-10).

Eduardo et al (2013:369) indicate that collaboration has challenges such as time, costs, logistical issues, issues of mistrust amongst organisations stemming from different organisational principles and management, sharing of control over resources and differing goals and objectives.

4.3.2 Public Policy Partnerships (PPPs)

According to Brinkerhoff (2002:325), the public policy discourse emphasises the 'facilitative state' concept in exploring ways to augment efficiency and effectiveness in public service delivery. Partnership has become prominent and the favoured solution for addressing public demands. Brinkerhoff (2002:325-326) defines partnership as an "active affiliation amongst the different actors who share the mutually approved objectives that are pursued through a common understanding appreciation of the most rational division of labour based on the respective comparative advantages for each partner". Brinkerhoff (1998:9) describes partnerships as collaborations intended to

accomplish convergent goals through the collective efforts of all actors while the roles and responsibilities of each remain distinctive. However, the objectives need to be set out, the strategies for merging efforts and managing the cooperation also clearly set out, and roles and responsibilities well stipulated to ensure that every partner can execute its part (Brinkerhoff 1998:9).

In the case of service delivery partnerships, governments usually retain the responsibility for financing and payments while outsourcing the service provision to the private and or non-profit sectors (Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff 2011:6). Working together, according to Bryson, Crosby and Stone (2015:6), requires elements of trust, commitment and communication amongst the partners. Trustful relationships often depict the essence of and requirement for successful collaborations; resources must be openly shared, information, competency, good intentions and follow through on assigned tasks (Bryson, Crosby and Stone 2015:6). Communication is also crucial.

(a) Advantages of Public Policy Partnerships

Partnerships enhance efficiency and effectiveness. They are pursued specifically because the actors have unique assets to offer such as resources, skills and expertise (Brinkerhoff 2002:325). The mutual gains attained in the partnership enhance efficiency and effectiveness because each partner seeks to protect its organisational identity, strengthening the synergistic efforts to maintain the partnership (Brinkerhoff 2002:325). The organisations however, maintain autonomy while incorporating mutual respect, equal participation in decision-making, accountability and transparency. Brinkerhoff (1998:9) mentions that these new institutional arrangements in public policy implementation bring significant gains in governance, more efficient and effective service delivery, better incentives and increased capacity for responsiveness to client demands.

The issue of accountability and responsiveness is further analysed by Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff (2011:8) in that partnerships produce quality service delivery and accountability, responsiveness, efficiency and effectiveness in reaching the targeted beneficiaries. By partnering with the private sector, governments get access to technical expertise and reputable networks for reciprocal resource sharing, including

technical issues such as augmenting the quality of the solutions to the policy problem by combining the competency of the partners (Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff 2011:5).

(b) Challenges facing Public Policy Partnerships

Public policy partnerships are regarded as one of the key practical tools in programme implementation. However, various challenges surround PPPs (Batjargal and Zhang 2021:1). The challenges discussed in this study include the different organisational cultures and goals between partners, poor institutional environment and support, unreliable mechanisms for sharing risk and responsibility and inadequate monitoring and evaluation of PPPs processes.

□ Different Organisational Cultures and Goals Between Partners

According to Reich (2018: 240), public policy partnerships often bring together organisations with different cultures, values, interests and views. Where the private sector organisations form the partnerships, the relationships become complex as the values and the moral standards of the private sector differ from those of the public sector (Batjargal and Zhang 2021:1). The public sector is usually bureaucratic while the private sector is flexible and this sometimes leads to problematic and ineffective collaborations (Batjargal and Zhang 2021:2-3). According to Bryson et al (2015:9), conflicts in the partnership arise from differing aims, strategies, views and expectations, as well as the differing statuses of the collaborating organisations.

According to Strasser, Stauber, Shrivastava, Riley and O'Quin (2021:10), early strategic planning processes to establish partners' roles and responsibilities is necessary; clear discussion on common goals and priorities among the partners can abate differences. Collaboration is improved by establishing more consistent coordination and communication practices which should be strictly followed so that fewer conflicts occur between the partners. This can improve the efficiency level of the partnership (Batjargal and Zhang 2021:2-3). Bryson et al (2015:9) also indicate that effective conflict resolution mechanisms in the public-private partnership include extensive regular meetings to raise and manage issues.

□ **Poor Institutional Environment and Support**

A robust institutional environment is a fundamental factor for the success of the public-private partnership programmes (Batjargal and Zhang 2021:3). According to Nuhu, Mpambije, and Ngussa (2020:8), the partnership setting is affected by weak governance mechanisms, including poor enforcement mechanisms, inadequate policies, lack of transparency, and unequal participation in decision-making processes. Three aspects are important for collaboration to work: the maturity level of the abilities to manage the partnership, namely legitimacy, trust, and capacity (Casady et al 2019:3). Legitimacy means that the actions of the entity are desirable, proper and appropriate regarding the prevailing systems of norms and values; trust represents the disposition and attitude concerning the willingness to adhere to the contractual obligations; while capacity refers to the ability of the actors to perform and govern partnerships (Casady et al 2019:6). Where these abilities are lacking, the institutional environment is unlikely to be effective and supportive for the success and sustainability of the public-private partnership (Casady et al 2019:6).

□ **Unreliable Mechanisms for Sharing Risk and Responsibility**

Dechev (2015:234) mentions that one of the major reasons for implementing the partnership is the opportunity to share risk. Technical and organisational challenges occur for some public-private partners, which include unclear agreements on risk and responsibility sharing, insufficient procedures for dealing with disputes, disagreements between partners, and the lack of agreement on ways to deal with large profits and risks of failure (Batjargal and Zhang 2021:4). According to Dechev (2015:234), the absence of reliable mechanisms for assessing risk results in deficient evaluation and inequitable distribution of risk amongst the partners, whilst some risks may arise that were not covered in the agreement terms. Walwyn and Nkolele (2018:3) mention that effective allocation of risk is vital for the partnership's success along with correct identification of risks factors, followed by the allocation to the party which is best able to manage them.

□ **Inadequate Monitoring and Evaluation of PPP Processes**

Public-private partnerships must have well-established monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure stakeholders' adherence to the contractual terms and

conditions (Twinomuhwezi and Herman 2020:141). According to Batjargal and Zhang (2021:6), a lack of monitoring mechanisms can foster unethical practices within the partnership, increasing the chance of corruption, especially among government authorities. Public-private partnerships can be used as a tool for corruption if there are insufficient monitoring mechanisms (Batjargal and Zhang 2021:6). Therefore, governments must ensure robust monitoring of the programmes to prevent the misuse and diversion of resources (Twinomuhwezi and Herman 2020:141). Batjargal and Zhang (2021:9) further indicate that inadequate or lack of proper monitoring and evaluation of the public-private partnerships programmes often results in unsustainable and poor-performing programmes.

4.4 Social Protection

The concept of “social protection” is defined below to give a broad understanding of the subject that the study is investigating and the basis on which the first research question will be analysed to determine the understanding of government officials about the need for implementation of the CGP. It is defined by its different purposes: protective, preventive, promotive and transformative functions, which all enhance the social and economic well-being of the disadvantaged individuals and households within the society. Further, the concept is defined from a human rights-based viewpoint; the state is responsible for providing social protection.

(a) Defining Social Protection

UNICEF (2012:1) defines social protection as different government and nongovernment strategies and programmes meant to respond to the causes of economic and social problems that cause poverty and deprivation. Social protection, according to Devereux and White (2007:1-2), is defined as “all policy initiatives that safeguard and promote the standard of living and well-being for the poor and impoverished vulnerable; providing them with income or consumption transfers, protecting them from livelihood risks, and improving the social standing and dignity of socially deprived and disenfranchised people.” The idea of social protection is to enhance individuals’ and or households’ livelihoods through the implementation of programmes that alleviate risk or vulnerability. These programmes, particularly cash transfer programmes, are direct, regular and predictable non-contributory cash

payments and include social pensions and child grants that benefit the poor and vulnerable families by increasing their incomes (Kadam 2016:30).

Cook and Pincus (2014:1) describe social protection as “different programmes intended to support individuals and households to maintain basic needs and living standards when faced with a variety of difficulties throughout the life course.” The definitions provided above suggest that some individuals and households are economically disadvantaged and need state intervention to secure basic daily living. These social transfers that the poor or vulnerable people receive enhance their social status and maintain their basic rights. In this way, the poor also benefit from the economy thereby lessening their economic and social lack (Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux 2007:25).

Androniceanu (2012:5) indicates that social protection in the form of social assistance cash transfers, is an option to address child poverty and vulnerability. Köhler, Cali and Stirbu (2009:239) mention that to secure children’s right to survival and development, a social safety net has to be guaranteed to ensure that their right to proper diet, health care, and education, as well as their civil rights are met. According to Leung (2006:3), social assistance programmes that embrace a range of in-kind and cash transfer services, are used by governments of different countries as social safety nets for poor households. These are usually means-tested; eligibility depends on the test of household income to ensure that only the poorest families benefit (Leung 2006:3).

Thomas (2005:3) argues that social protection characteristics, particularly cash transfers, can potentially decrease child poverty. States therefore have an obligation to make sure that their legislative frameworks regarding social protection are appropriate and that administrative policies and the fiscal budgets accommodate the provision of social assistance cash transfers (Piron 2004:6). These have to be legislated because states must offer essential primary health care, free and universal primary education and proper nutrition for enhanced child development (Piron 2004:6).

Social policy scholars define social protection as having four functions:

- (1) the protective function provides relief from deprivation and protects the household's level of income for daily living (Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux 2007:25);
- (2) the preventive function attempts to prevent households from turning to harmful ways of survival which are unsafe for children such as removing them from school and involving them in child labour (Adato and Hoddinott 2008:1);
- (3) the promotive function aims to enhance incomes and capabilities (Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux 2007:25); and
- (4) the transformative function addresses the issues of social justice and marginalisation (Garcia and Moore 2012:24).

Social protection measures provide relief from poverty to individuals and households, through usually targeted safety net measures which cover grants for the destitute, resource transfers, disability assistances, single-parent grants, child grants, and social allowances for deprived individuals and specific groups that need economic support (Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux 2007:25). According to Garcia and Moore (2012:24), cash transfers also provide a safeguard for individuals who have been affected by adverse shock and need humanitarian emergency relief.

The preventive measures refer to social protection programmes, which are authorised systems of pensions, health insurance, maternity benefits and unemployment benefits, often financed through the contributions of employers, employees and the state (Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux 2007:25).

The purpose of the promotive measures is to improve household incomes and self-reliance. Promotive measures include implementing income-generating programmes targeting households and individuals (Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux 2007:25). Examples include the public works jobs that transfer food supplies or cash wages and micro-credit schemes in order to generate income. The promotive programmes increase incomes over time and alleviate present deprivation. The cash transfers play a promotive role by inspiring investments in assets or human capital (Garcia and Moore 2012:24). This is basically because the cash transfers give the recipients autonomy to use the money in a manner that addresses their real needs. Promotive

social protection targets and integrates the poor into the economic growth thereby increasing their social welfare.

The agenda of this social protection characteristic is ensuring that the mechanisms of vulnerability and poverty reduction also lessen dependency and allow the poor to be productive individuals to achieve sustainable means of livelihood (Sabates-Wheeler and Roelen 2011:181). According to Sabates-Wheeler and Roelen (2011:181), social protection must provide and promote resilient livelihoods and facilitate the attainment of, independence of, and sustainable incomes for poor and vulnerable households. Regarding children, promotive social protection supports children's development by ensuring their access to education by covering their school needs, health needs and general care and protection (Jones and Holmes 2010:1)

Targeted social transfers provide "economic protection" as interventions to reduce financial shocks and income deficiencies. Therefore, approaching social protection from a transformative angle means incorporating other forms of 'social protection' that respond to the distinctive issues of 'social vulnerability', by providing suitable social services and using strategies to transform behaviour towards socially vulnerable groups (Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux 2007:24). Policies that address problems of social vulnerability necessitate a transformative approach, where 'transformative' means implementing policies which include individuals on an equal basis into the society, permitting everybody to benefit from growth, and allowing the poor and vulnerable citizens to demand their civil rights (Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux 2007:24). Transformative social protection spreads further than safety nets and welfare assistance; it strives to enable the people to demand social protection as a basic human entitlement (Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux 2007:23).

Cash transfer programmes also have the potential to change people's outlooks and to enhance social justice and inclusion of minority groups, including women, orphans and vulnerable children (Garcia and Moore 2012:24). Jones and Holmes (2010:1) mention that the transformative aspect of social protection helps in tackling the social inequalities that encourage, create and sustain vulnerabilities within societies; it supports fairness and empowerment of poorer citizens. According to Sabates-Wheeler

and Roelen (2011:182), social protection must focus on reducing poverty by addressing the social structural constraints which impede people from attaining positive change that can reduce disadvantage and eliminate inequality.

Transformative social protection should be embedded by a robust political will and commitment to lead progressive and distributional objectives because poverty and vulnerability result from unequal social, economic and political systems, (Sabates-Wheeler and Roelen 2011:182). In terms of children, this includes actions that safeguard their rights as well as guaranteeing that all children participate in issues affecting them across all spheres, including their homes and local societal institutions, without discrimination based on disability and or any other social, economic or cultural factor (Jones and Holmes 2010:1). Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux (2007:24) assert that the vision of transformative social protection needs to empower the affected people to voice their needs and claim genuine accountability from different stakeholders implementing social or public policies.

According to Devereux, McGregor and Sabates-Wheeler (2011:8), this social protection element has powerful implications for social relations in local, national and global governance because it promotes social justice. Browne (2013:8) indicates that transformative social protection plays a part in reconstructing the public's trust in state institutions especially in fragile states, hence augmenting the state-citizen relationships. Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux, (2007:24) mention that the range of social protection interventions should concentrate more on the transfer of assets than cash and food to lessen dependency on handouts, but promote sustainable livelihoods among poor people. This means that social protection must enable people to work and produce more for themselves to attain self-sufficiency. Social protection as perceived by Devereux, McGregor and Sabates-Wheeler (2011:1) needs to achieve more than just relieving poverty and vulnerability, rather it should be concerned with attaining economic and social privileges for all. These scholars assert that social protection ought to be life-changing, it must be conceptualised from a larger perspective of vulnerability not economic risk only. When perceived from this view, individuals are empowered through asset building initiatives to promote self-reliance and self-sufficiency, also to reduce dependency on government and enhance human dignity.

Transformative social protection should encompass the issues of structural inequalities and support development both social and economic. According to Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux (2007:23), transformative social protection creates the policy environment that considers the poor and the governance structures that are answerable and receptive to the needs of all citizens. This is evidently a developmental approach centred on the pursuit of social fairness and economic equity. Transformative social protection views social protection not necessarily as resource transfers but as a way of delivering appropriate social services. Therefore, Devereux, McGregor and Sabates-Wheeler (2011:1) point out that since many causes of deprivation are social and political, it is vital to comprehend the socio-political environment and to engage with those in authority in order to achieve socially equitable outcomes from social protection interventions.

The four functions of social protection are critical for a socially and economically equitable society. The political will to fund social protection programmes is imperative because the objectives served by these functions can only be realised when the government acts to assist the people. Self-reliance and relief from deprivation are some of the core purposes served by the social protection programmes.

The Lesotho National Social Protection Strategy paper of 2021-2025 outlines that besides reducing poverty amongst the direct beneficiaries and their families, social protection also advances wealth distribution and reinforces economic growth within local communities while preserving national financial resources (GoL 2014: iv). This makes comprehensive social protection an imperative policy mechanism, not only from a social perspective but also from an economic one. Importantly, social protection yields significant gains in social areas such as human dignity, social cohesion and political stability (GoL 2014: iv). This statement is corroborated by Köhler et al (2009:236-237) social protection interventions serve several purposes apart from alleviating poverty. Inclusive economic growth, social cohesion and solidarity are also improved. Cash transfers cushion households and individuals from risks and shocks and encourage social and political reintegration.

(b) Social Protection as a Basic Human Right

Human rights are the rights that all people, regardless of their race, gender, age, religion, disabled or not, natives or migrants are entitled to, purely because of being humans (United Nations 1948: v). These rights are natural and absolute; all humankind requires them to live dignified lives irrespective of their social status, spiritual beliefs, or sexual orientation (United Nations 1948: v-vi). According to Köhler et al (2009:239) social protection is an inalienable right which entails the duty of the government to distribute resources to individuals and households and provide basic socioeconomic security for livelihood. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 22) enshrined the right to social protection for all. Social protection has a crucial role in promoting the actualisation of general rights, the right to survival and, development and learning, especially for children (UNICEF 2012:3).

According to Piron (2004:3) the human rights-based approach defines social protection not as charity rather a right and an entitlement which the states have the responsibility to provide for as stipulated in the various international human rights instruments. The fundamental principle in a rights-based approach is that people have a legitimate right to claim social protection as an entitlement. At the same time states are the duty bearers accountable for providing social protection (Newton 2016:6). It regards citizenship and the importance of acknowledging the socio-political context as the core of the reason for the provision of social protection. Citizens therefore should be able to claim their social protection rights, with the government establishing accountability mechanisms, and strengthening administrative capacity to ensure the proper planning and implementation of social protection programmes (Piron 2004:14). A human rights-based approach to the provision of social protection should take cognisance of the values of fairness and non-discrimination, participation and accountability. When properly designed and implemented, social protection interventions can support the fulfilment of human rights for the destitute and the needy as long as its provision is considered as social justice and entitlement for those who benefit from them (Piron 2004:3-4).

Social protection arrangements have to be based within a rights-based approach and be connected to the broader development agenda rather than being treated as charity.

Therefore, social protection interventions should be strengthened through binding laws which make social protection a justiciable right, ensuring that programmes are planned and executed in a manner that really respects and empowers programme recipients (Devereux, McGregor and Sabates-Wheeler 2011:2). The programmes should empower the beneficiaries, protect their dignity and afford them opportunities for economic and social growth to become self-sufficient and reliant rather than being inert recipients of social assistance.

Therefore, states should consider social protection programmes as the mechanisms that can help them accomplish their obligations, ensuring that citizens attain adequate means of livelihood, housing and the right to social security as they have pledged such through being signatories to different international instruments (Van Ginneken 2011:3). Sepúlveda and Nyst (2012:17) indicate that social protection systems are also a way in which states can comply with their other commitments towards human rights for people living in poverty. Social protection expedites the realisation of many other rights: the right to obtain acceptable quality healthcare and education, as well as the right to partake in civic matters (Van Ginneken 2011:3).

According to Sepúlveda and Nyst (2012:17), social protection programmes also encourage the attainment of various economic, social and cultural rights. This means that by allocating resources to the poor and giving them opportunities to generate income, protect their possessions and accrue human capital, they will be able to acquire an acceptable standard of living, sufficient food, clothing, and shelter, as well as education and health care (Sepúlveda and Nyst 2012:17).

The observance of the principles of human rights should be central to the planning, execution, monitoring and evaluation of social protection programmes (Van Ginneken 2011:3). Furthermore, according to Van Ginneken (2011:9), social protection that is sensitive to people's basic rights suggests that countries must execute programmes in a way that permits people to be aware of and understand (a) "the qualifying criteria, (b) the specific assistance they will receive, and (c) ways to lodge complaints and redress mechanisms".

According to Garcia and Moore (2012:19), the rights-based perspective on social protection argues that cash transfers permit the state to amend the inequities in its society resulting from characteristics such as ethnicity, gender, or parents' socio-economic status. Garcia and Moore (2012:19) indicate that individuals born into poverty have fewer opportunities to thrive and maintain acceptable levels of living, therefore the state has to provide them with cash transfers to make up for their income deficiency. The rights-based rationale promotes cash transfers. They are less authoritarian than other forms of public support and give the beneficiaries the autonomy to use the funds for their own reasons, unlike the in-kind social assistance packages.

4.4.1 Social Assistance

(a) The Rationale for Implementation of Social Assistance (Cash Transfer) Programmes

Social assistance to vulnerable groups, particularly in the form of cash transfers has gained increased recognition as a practical policy option to respond to the extreme poverty that characterises the Southern African region (Nino-Zarazua et al 2012:163). Vincent and Freeland (2008:101) also attest that social protection, particularly social cash grants, has rapidly arisen as a main policy agenda in responding to and addressing the scourge of poverty plaguing the world mostly in Africa, Asia and Latin America. As they put it, social protection is founded on the view that poor people are capable of making the decisions that are essential to improving their welfare if given a chance. This is a commendable shift within the development discourse because it seeks to empower the marginalised by making them partners in development.

Traditionally, according to Vincent and Freeland (2008:101), the idea was that development could only be prompted by economic growth at a macro-level, which would then trickle down to the poor at the grassroots, thereby alleviating poverty. The multilateral institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund used to lend countries money to help them improve their economies at the macro-level, while only providing emergency aid to the poor in cases of crisis, because they believed the poor could not affect their own development (Vincent and Freeland 2008:101). However, in recent years the increasingly persisting numbers of continuing

poverty in Africa, has made it evident that this approach is failing, prompting a new thinking towards an inclusive and pro-poor development strategy (Vincent and Freeland 2008:101). Pro-poor development recognises that macro-level economic growth does not automatically assist the deprived masses at the grassroots.

The idea of including people experiencing poverty in growth by providing comprehensive social protection helps to generate economic growth and self-reliance at the grassroots level; reducing poverty and in turn lessening the burden and cost of endlessly providing social protection as relief. Using social protection to promote self-sufficiency by encouraging economic investments and asset building for income generation, eventually lessens the emergency situations where reactive emergency relief is required from donors (Vincent and Freeland 2008:101). A developmental approach to social protection endeavours to tackle the causes of chronic vulnerability.

More and more evidence is available to prove that cash grants are efficacious in reducing enduring poverty and improving living conditions (Barrientos and DeJong, 2006:537, Farrington and Slater 2006:503). Vincent and Freeland (2008:102) further maintain that when provided regularly and in a predictable manner, cash transfers give the beneficiaries the autonomy to use the funds in a manner they deem fit as well as providing the opportunity for investment in productive activities. According to Davies and Davey (2007:8), these cash transfers accrue considerable progressive effects for the beneficiary families and communities; promote self-worth and status and bestow on vulnerable people the freedom to make decisions in relation to their individual circumstances. Consequently, people become respected household and community members.

According to Garcia and Moore (2012:20), cash transfer programmes inspire productivity and enhance income-generating activities that can lessen poverty and vulnerability. Poverty and vulnerability can have long-standing damaging consequences on children such as malnutrition, so cash transfers are also seen as vital for tackling immediate problems such as lack of means of livelihood in families raising young children (Garcia and Moore 2012:20). Financial inclusion is another important factor for implementing cash transfers; the poor are integrated into the

financial system because they can have access to goods and commodities essential for daily living. Garcia and Moore (2012:32) indicate that the growing acceptance of the significance of social protection for the welfare of vulnerable individuals and households and for the country's overall economic strength has led to growing attention on how the programmes can safeguard the poor and promote their inclusion in the economy.

Cash transfers are more recently generally understood as an imperative element of strategic poverty reduction efforts to lessen economic, social, natural and other shocks and strains that affect humankind (UNICEF 2009:7). Vincent and Freeland (2008:103) further mention that evidence indicates that social grants are key in ensuring access to education, both by enabling families to afford school fees and other materials required and related to school attendance such as uniforms, books and stationery. Education is a powerful means to reverse inter-generational poverty and inspire development. The Lesotho Child Grants Programme (CGP) intends to increase the nutritional, health care and educational demographics of vulnerable children (GoL 2014:1). Significantly, the receipt of cash transfers offers small amounts of capital for investment in productive activities, giving beneficiaries the chance to improve their economic well-being (Vincent and Freeland 2008:103).

The cash transfers are particularly crucial for children, considering their increased vulnerability as compared to adults. While the main idea of providing social assistance is to alleviate poverty and deprivation, evidence also confirms that it enhances a broader array of development outcomes including those specifically benefiting children (Kadam 2016:30). For example, UNICEF (2009:19) and Kadam (2016:30) indicate that there is considerable evidence that cash transfers empower poor families to invest in their children because they can pay for education and health care and provide good nutrition, thereby contributing to human capital development. Consistent and regular cash transfers help families afford food, education and healthcare without having to sell their properties or take on debt, but rather save up to buy productive assets which will help rescue the family from entrenched poverty (Kadam 2016:30). Increased numbers of children from poverty-stricken families use health services and eat nutritious food, resulting in improved health of children and other members of the

family (UNICEF 2009:19). This is because social transfers reduce financial burden and enable people to access basic social services, children's rights to education and health care are fulfilled, and school dropout rates decrease, largely in the case of girls (UNICEF 2009:19).

Furthermore, an important point indicated by UNICEF (2009:7), is that cash transfers are not only protective by securing a household's level of income and expenditure but are another way of stopping families from turning to harmful survival means which are unsafe to children. Kadam (2016:37) notes that cash transfers lessen the pervasiveness of child labour. Poverty exposes children to violation of their rights like being forced into child labour, but cash transfers counteract such incidences by stimulating domestic production, increasing household income and supporting children's proper development thus breaking the cycle of poverty (UNICEF 2009:7).

Besides increasing productivity within households, cash transfers may generate many benefits at the local level; improve the community-level economy and add to the growth of the local market (UNICEF 2009:9). Kadam (2016:37) further corroborates the idea that cash transfers enhance livelihood opportunities, enabling families to avoid poverty traps by increasing labour productivity and incomes, and stimulating the local markets for trading. Cash transfers therefore, safeguard living standards, reduce destitution, promote wealth creation by supporting a shift to more viable livelihoods, while also helping these households to deal with unexpected shocks (Kadam 2016:30). More importantly, cash transfers enrich relations within the society and the citizen-state relations (Kadam 2016:30).

(b) Targeting for Social Assistance Programmes

Social transfers are needed in poor countries because these countries are characterised by high poverty headcounts and large social inequality gaps (Slater and Farrington 2009:1). Governments in poor countries have inadequate financial resources to allocate across the range of public expenditure necessities, therefore, there are restrictions on what governments can invest in cash transfers (Slater and Farrington 2009:1). Concentrating benefits on poor households is a priority in low income countries and therefore targeting is the main mechanism by which this priority

can be realised to guarantee that cash transfers are received only by those considered needy or eligible (Slater and Farrington 2009:1).

Targeting as defined by Devereux (2021:150) determines who qualifies to receive social assistance benefits and who does not. García-Jaramillo and Miranti (2015:2) mention that targeting ensures that the resources of social protection programmes benefit those who need it most. According to Devereux (2021:151), it is economical and justifiable to allocate these resources to people who are most in need in order to make up for budget constraints especially in fiscally challenged countries. Eligibility standards for identifying, verifying and registering those who qualify for social benefits and those who do not, are set (Devereux 2021:150). Targeting further involves periodical validation, re-enrolling or dis-enrolling of programme beneficiaries as the eligibility status of some tends to change over time (Devereux 2021:150).

Means testing is commonly considered to be the most appropriate mechanism for targeting. It is, however, also very costly to administer (Devereux 2021:156). The data collected for means testing is the characteristics of households such as housing surroundings, access to public services such as water and sanitation, and the characteristics of household members such as age and education (García-Jaramillo and Miranti 2015:2). These are used to predict the poverty levels of different households.

Slater and Farrington (2009:1) emphasise that targeting ensures that inclusion and exclusion errors are avoided and the services are only received by the targeted beneficiaries. Smith (2014:106) mentions that for effectiveness, targeting approaches and mechanisms need to satisfactorily cover those who are destitute without producing considerable inclusion and exclusion mistakes, and be easy to use, successfully register emerging needy individuals or families, and be well understood and accepted by the citizens.

Proper targeting requires the data to be validated because applicants can under-report their income and assets (Devereux 2021:156). According to Devereux (2021:156) it is

imperative to realise that proxy means targeting needs credible data to properly classify prospective beneficiaries.

García-Jaramillo and Miranti (2015:26) suggest ways in which inclusion errors can be minimised while using the proxy means testing mechanism for targeting:

1. Data verification systems should be in place to validate the information given by families,
2. Include data that are not easy to manipulate.
3. Having a centralised information system to decrease the risks of political manipulation.
4. Make the selection procedure transparent by publicly publishing the lists of beneficiaries and
5. Have a well-established beneficiary re-certification process so as to find those who are no longer eligible.

Garcia-Jaramillo and Miranti (2015:27) note that basic elements of a selection process that minimise the exclusion errors are identified by:

1. Having a robust sensitisation systems (campaigns) on programme eligibility.
2. Having permanent registration spots so that registration is undertaken continuously.
3. Having easily accessible registration spots.
4. Being cautious with documentation requirements because sometimes people are excluded due to the lack of essential documents like birth certificates.

According to Slater and Farrington (2009:2) targeting happens in four different ways:

1. Means testing that uses household poverty indicators in terms of income.
2. Proxy indicators, which use scorecards based on range of asset indicators which determine cut off for qualifying,
3. Community-based targeting (CBT), which, according to Smith (2014:106), creates community and local ownership because it involves the community members and
4. Self-targeting which occurs when programmes are designed so that only the poor will want to participate.

Targeting methods for poverty relief often concentrate on household living standards, and use conditions of income, expenditure and property status to qualify the households (Slater and Farrington 2009:14). However, Sabates-Wheeler and Szyp (2022:10) mention that effectiveness in targeting for social assistance remains complex and challenging. For example, while using PMT, stale data tends to provide wrong statistical scores indicating inappropriate poverty tallies which result in substantial inclusion and exclusion errors (Sabates-Wheeler and Szyp 2022:10). This is because the registration of families is done as an event or conducted infrequently. The newly established households are excluded because they are not yet registered. This is more common in emergency relief programmes (Sabates-Wheeler and Szyp 2022:10).

Using PMT techniques to target beneficiaries for social assistance is extremely challenging; the exclusion and inclusion errors are high and there is often little understanding and acceptance of the method by the community (Sabates-Wheeler and Szyp 2022:11). As indicated by Smith (2014:106), a major challenge of PMT is that the database has to stay up-to-date so that those who fall into poverty are identified but this is impractical looking at the cost implications for data updating. Further, besides the data accuracy, the statistical formulas for classifying qualifying people are difficult for communities to understand, resulting in mistrust of the method among the communities (Smith 2014:106).

Sabates-Wheeler and Szyp (2022:12) mention that the other method is community-based targeting (CBT), which also has its own intrinsic challenges and risks. It tends to lack transparency, thus there is a high chance of exclusion of the poor who are considered 'undeserving' while the powerful individuals are selected to benefit. Lack of solidarity and social integration leads to faulty targeting while using the CBT. However, all targeting methods emit errors; not one is faultless and therefore trade-offs need to be made. The key ought to be reducing errors whilst being simple and cost effective to administer and acceptable to the community (Smith 2014:106).

Understanding targeting procedures for social grants programmes is important in the context of this study because it seeks to understand the overall implementation of the

CGP issues, such as issues of eligibility for enrolment and a general understanding of how those who are eligible are selected. Targeting is one of the critical components of the programme, therefore one of the issues that is analysed is how it is handled in the case of CGP.

(c) Social Assistance Payment Modes

Delivery or payment modes comprise a very significant part of the implementation of social assistance programmes (Inter Agency Social Protection Assessment Partnerships, ISPA 2016:16). There are various payment delivery mechanisms for social protection programmes which can collectively be categorised into either manual where the beneficiaries report to the local pay point to receive the money physically, or electronically, where various digital methods are used to pay the cash transfers. According to the ISPA (2016:16) the quality of the technique used to deliver payments to the beneficiaries influences the programme's performance, success or failure. The implementation of the whole programme is bound to be flawed if the correct people do not get the payments at the right time, and in an effective manner which involves receiving the correct amounts (ISPA 2016:16).

The payment system, therefore, must put the recipients first by ensuring that the recipients are not required to incur costs to collect the payment. These costs can either be in cash or time spent queuing for money or having to travel long distances to access the money (Kidd, Anderson and Bjork 2018:6). This suggests that the payment methods need to be well-designed and relevant to the setting in which the programme is implemented. The payment delivery mode also has an impact on the programme donors, recipients and the wider community of non-beneficiaries (ISPA 2016:16).

The payment delivery mode is also an important component of the administrative budget of most social protection programmes so needs to be cost-effective so that it does not affect the programme's sustainability (ISPA 2016:16). Further, the payment mode can diminish the worth of the grant if it is too expensive for beneficiaries to access it; for example, if there are fewer payment sites and beneficiaries have to incur high travel costs. The payment mechanisms need to consider the issues of access by

the beneficiaries so that a well-designed programme is not undermined by its payment method.

The ISPA (2016:30) suggests that to identify the most suitable payment method for a social protection programme, three aspects need to be assessed: accessibility, robustness and integration.

□ **Accessibility**

The first criterion, accessibility, should be considered from the view of the beneficiaries of the programme. This aspect is essential because of the typical vulnerable nature of social assistance beneficiaries. According to the ISPA (2016:31) accessibility concerns the convenience of the payment mode to the beneficiaries, especially with regard to the cost of accessing the grant, the payment point proximity to the beneficiaries' homes and or easiness of access.

Kidd, Anderson and Bjork (2018:6) corroborate the convenience of a payment system. A payment system needs to be efficient and convenient in terms of cost, both from financial and time perspectives. Recipients want to save time on collecting the grant as this may cause them to lose working time while queuing consequently losing wages (Kidd, Anderson and Bjork 2018:6). Payments also must be delivered in locations convenient to the recipients. A payment method that is expensive to access decreases the worth of the grant as well as the programme's impact (ISPA 2016:85). It crucial to consider how much it costs the beneficiaries to access the money to so that the policy makers' programme goals are not jeopardised by an expensive payment mode (ISPA 2016:85).

Accessibility also has to be assessed in terms of the appropriateness of the payment mode, and the rights and dignity of the grant beneficiaries. Payments should be easily available to all recipients by guaranteeing that a suitable payment mode is used, considering the rights of the poor, elderly, illiterate and more importantly not posing significant obstacles for persons with disabilities (Kidd, Anderson and Bjork 2018:6). Appropriateness also considers whether the mechanism has been communicated to

the beneficiaries and if they are offered a choice in terms of their preferred payments mechanisms (ISPA 2016:31).

According to lazzolino (2018:18), the payment has to offer protection to the beneficiaries which is based on privacy, trust, transparency, choice and redress. The payment system that has clear complaint handling and grievance redress mechanisms augments the programme's credibility (lazzolino 2018:18).

□ **Robustness**

Robustness concerns the design and use of a payment method that is dependable to deliver transfers regularly and to the correct recipient (ISPA 2016:31). It is understandable that when the payment method is reliable programme implementation will run smoothly. Programmes will appear credible in the eyes of its beneficiaries. Reliability is also based on a timetable of payment dates that is fixed, well communicated and followed. Dependability also aligns with regularity which is important as unpredictable and late delivery of benefits weakens the programme impact and erodes public confidence in the programme (ISPA 2016:89).

Governance and security are other important aspects when deciding on a payment mechanism. The safety of the payment method and the threats it might pose to the beneficiaries should also be considered.

□ **Integration and financial inclusiveness**

The payment method that bolsters financial inclusion for the beneficiaries integrates them into the economy and assists the implementers by guaranteeing smooth payments across a variety of social protection programmes seeking to deliver cash transfers (ISPA 2016:31). A well-designed payment delivery mechanism can be an entry point to a variety of financial services. This is especially important in an age where the financial sphere is continually transforming into contemporary cash-handling methods. lazzolino (2018:9) makes an example and indicates that digital cash transfers facilitate financial inclusion by allowing the users to transact, introducing them to a broader range of opportunities for financial facilities including savings accounts, payment of utility bills and money transfers. Generally, a payment system

should be able to include citizens ordinarily excluded from formal financial services (Lazzolino 2018:9).

Using the payment method that promotes the inclusion of low-income people increases their opportunity to enter the modern financial environment (Handayani et al 2017:3). An example of an inclusive financial system is given by Handayani et al (2017:3). Mobile network operators have set up large, low cost distribution networks which provide cash-in and cash-out services to consumers. These are widely used to include the unbanked population in contemporary financial systems, functioning as a complete transaction account while ensuring ease of payments for the policy implementers (Handayani et al 2017:3).

The International Organisation of Migration (IOM 2019:5) indicates that the delivery mechanism should also be selected in relation to the financial infrastructure available in a particular country. Other aspects to consider are preferences of people and resource availability. The infrastructure includes the financial institutions, accessibility of roads, network connectivity and adequate cash availability of the network agents (IOM 2019:5).

The discussion on the payment modes for social grants programmes is relevant to this study as the CGP in Lesotho uses two different payment modes, and the discussion provides an explanation of to assess the merits and challenges of each payment method.

4.5 Challenges Affecting the Delivery of Social Assistance Programmes

Andrews et al (2012) identify four main factors that impede the implementation of social protection programmes: poor administrative capacity, weak financial capacity, poor infrastructure and poor governance.

(a) Low Administrative Capacity

Administrative capacity is usually weak in poor countries, making it difficult to effectively coordinate and respond to the demands of social protection programmes (Andrews et al 2012:13). Bharadwaj et al (2021:27) indicate that countries with low

income and lower literacy levels tend to have limited numbers of skilled and competent personnel to manage social assistance programmes. Programmes are usually understaffed, and as a result, perform poorly. The professionals in such countries are normally insufficiently skilled in crucial programme tasks such as programme conceptualisation and formulation, strategic planning as well as monitoring and evaluation (Bharadwaj et al 2021:27). According to Bharadwaj et al (2021:28), the execution of social assistance programmes like cash transfers and social pensions need considerable management capability to coordinate issues of programme targeting and enrolment, compliance and payments.

Most countries also have capacity shortages regarding the competence to formulate, implement and evaluate cash transfer programmes resulting in difficulties with expanding the programmes (Nino-Zarazua et al 2012:172). Schubert and Beales (2006:21) also indicate that social protection schemes in poor countries face expansion challenges due to lack of resources and people with necessary skills. The result of this shortage of resources is the fragmentation and lack of coordination for social protection interventions which is detrimental to the efficiency and reliability of the programmes.

The possibility of poor delivery of social assistance programmes in countries with poor institutional capacity is rather high (Bharadwaj et al 2021:28). Nonetheless, Barrientos and Hulme (2009:456) mention that to assuage the challenge of delivery capacity limitations, institutional partnerships are important since each of the agencies can contribute its strengths including financial, analytical and monitoring capacity, for instance.

(b) Low Financial Capacity

The African nations face a huge challenge in terms of financing social transfers programmes, deficits in public finance are large and often do not prioritise social assistance in national revenue distribution (UNDP 2019:21). Bharadwaj et al (2021:28) indicate that sustainable funding for social assistance programmes is a grave problem in countries with low-income status. According to Andrews et al (2012:13), the fiscal ability of poor countries does not allow them to spend more on

social protection. Social protection programmes in such countries cannot be sustainable because of intra-governmental competition for resources, especially because social protection is traditionally not a priority (Andrew et al 2012:13).

Schubert and Beales (2006:19) indicate that financial constraints and competing demands on national budgets prevent most governments from investing in social protection programmes. Bharadwaj et al (2021:29) provide the example of South Sudan; countries with little domestic revenue experience difficulty in spending on social assistance. Sizeable proportions of funds spent on social assistance in such countries come from donors because they encounter problems in accumulating enough funds to invest in social assistance due to their small income base (Bharadwaj et al 2021:29).

According to Barrientos and Hulme (2009:454), funding is correctly considered as a significant challenge to increased coverage of social protection in poor countries because of the countries' low revenue mobilisation capacity. Revenue mobilisation in Sub-Saharan African countries is so poor that the fiscal space for financing programmes that target the poor is very limited (Barrientos (2010:16). To address this problem Barrientos and Hulme (2009:455) suggest developments in the effectiveness of tax accumulating agencies to increase the tax revenue percentage in the GDP in low-income countries and also to shift spending from poverty reduction programmes that perform poorly.

Watkins and Quattri (2019:21) mention that low levels of revenue to gross domestic product ratios which remain too low to finance the critical investments that are needed like the social protection programmes, greatly constrain policy decisions in Sub-Saharan Africa. Therefore, the measures to increase tax compliance, expand the tax base and deter tax evasion need serious national action so that the gross domestic product (GDP) is increased significantly enough to promote public finance equity (Watkins and Quattri 2019:21). According to Watkins and Quattri (2019:21), public finance equity can create an enabling environment for eradicating child poverty through increased spending on programmes that address the problem namely social protection programmes.

(c) Limited Infrastructure

A majority of the population in poor countries live in rural areas, with difficult access to roads, telecommunications and electricity (Andrews et al 2012:14). Bharadwaj et al (2021:29) mention that as a result, social protection interventions encounter severe challenges in terms of the logistics needed to reach the beneficiaries. Infrastructure deficit puts extra strain on administration capacity by increasing the financial costs of service delivery (Andrew et.al 2012:15). According to Bharadwaj et al (2021:30), weak infrastructure makes universal coverage of social assistance programmes challenging because important aspects of programme implementation like targeting sometimes become flawed.

(d) Poor Governance

Governance challenges are not unique to poor countries alone. However, various reasons, including weak administrative and financial capacity make governance issues difficult to manage anywhere. Low-income countries primarily reflect worse on governance pointers such as public participation, accountability, political stability, governance efficiency, law enforcement and fighting corruption (Andrews et al 2012:15). Factors like political disorder, armed conflicts, corruption, inadequate human capital, poor physical infrastructure and shaky administrative systems jeopardise the poor because they all affect the delivery of social assistance (Bharadwaj et al 2021:28).

Government commitment is also critical for building sustainability of social protection programmes, both by securing funds and increasing institutional capacity for delivery through hiring staff with needed expertise, providing training to the existing staff, and building partnerships with competent organisations and development partners. According to Schubert and Beales (2006:21), institutional strengthening is very important for government departments mandated with social protection duties; attention must be given to investing in developing the capacity of human resource and enhancing systems in planning and implementation.

This discussion on the challenges to the delivery of social assistance programmes is relevant to this research as it relates to the research question which seeks to explore the issues confronting the Government of Lesotho in implementing the CGP.

4.6 Conclusion

Implementing social grant programmes like other policy options needs to follow the theories, approaches and mechanisms that enhance the policy's effectiveness and success. The different policy implementation approaches, namely the top-down and bottom-up approaches are deemed necessary for the effective implementation of public policy. Elites are crucial for high-level decision making while the street level bureaucrats at lower levels are important because of their implementation skills, competence and closeness to the service users. The frontline workers who deliver the services are the ones who know how to adapt policy to the local needs. More importantly it is indicated that the street level bureaucrats can augment or disrupt policy implementation as they are responsible for co-ordination, execution and monitoring of activities.

Implementing social assistance programmes face various challenges including finance, infrastructure limitations, and technical and administrative capacity. Other factors such as the disposition of the implementers towards the policy hamper its implementation, as well as political interference, poor communication between implementers, and lack of inter-organisational commitment among the implementing organisations.

Various factors are important for successful policy implementation: effective resourcing which includes financial, material and human resources; commitment towards the policy; multi-stakeholder involvement for skills and knowledge sharing as well as effective monitoring. Programme monitoring and evaluation are crucial parts of implementation in tracking progress and assess whether results are being achieved. Programme beneficiaries' opinions are critical in this regard, and the feedback they provide on the programme should be used for reform and or modification of implementation processes and systems.

Social problems have become more complex over the decades, requiring effective expertise and decision-making abilities. They need multi-actor collaborations because governments need help to tackle them. The policy networks are indispensable to achieving policy goals through concerted efforts in undertaking the various responsibilities of executing the policy. These networks are formed by public agencies together with the private entities. Private institutions have become an important part of public policy implementation over the years; the adeptness they bring to the partnerships shows the government in a better light before the eyes of the users of public goods and services.

Public policy partnerships have become prominent in addressing public needs, goods and services. They require every actor to have the requisite competence to deliver to create public value: efficiency, effectiveness, responsiveness, accountability and transparency. These are enhanced by the fact that the partnerships are usually formed or entered into based on the mutual benefits accruing from taking part in such partnerships.

Social protection is a human right acknowledged in various international and regional legislative and policy frameworks. Its overall function is to enhance the social status of needy individuals by providing them with livelihood income to maintain daily living basics. The main idea behind the provision of social grants is to reduce poverty, meet health, educational and nutritional needs, more especially for children and other vulnerable groups within the society. Social protection initiatives basically serve four functions: promoting living standards, protecting individuals from vulnerability shocks, transforming the social relationships within the society by way of reducing inequality as well as preventing individuals and or households from resorting to harmful practices for survival.

Social grant programmes are usually targeted and means-tested. There are commonly defined criteria to select the beneficiaries. Targeting of these programmes usually happens in African countries because of the limited funding allocated, due to the huge demands on already strained national budgets. Targeting is a challenging exercise characterised by errors, particularly exclusion and inclusion errors. Measures used to

rectify these errors include validating beneficiaries before their enrolment into the programme, as well as periodically re-certifying those already defined as eligible. The targeting mechanism however must be precise and acceptable to the wider community to reduce dissatisfaction among those who may not meet the criteria. The communities need to be mobilised and sensitised to the programme so that they understand and can give support.

The payment modes for social grants are a crucial component of programme delivery. They affect both the implementer and the beneficiaries. However, this study assessed them by focusing mainly on the programme beneficiaries. Issues of accessibility in terms of the cost of access, suitability, reliability and security are considered as well as whether they offer opportunities for financial inclusion. The financial landscape is forever changing, evolving, and therefore, new financial services are emerging hence giving opportunities for financial inclusion even for the previously disadvantaged and excluded groups.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design employed in conducting this study. The research design employed is qualitative research, which involves the exploration of respondents' perceptions, experiences, understandings, opinions and views of the implementation of the CGP. The qualitative data collection methods used to gather data on the experiences of the CGP implementers and beneficiaries were in-depth individual interviews and focus group discussions.

The study used a qualitative research design of a case study. A case study of the Lesotho child grants programme was undertaken and three districts were sampled as well as two community councils in each district. The non-probability purposive sampling method for the qualitative paradigm selects the study respondents relevant to the study's topic and research questions. The data analysis method employed to analyse the study findings is content analysis, specifically using thematic analysis to categorise the data into main and sub-themes for analysis. These themes and sub themes were derived from respondents' views, perceptions and experiences and are related to the theoretical and conceptual framework guiding this study.

5.2 Research Design

The interpretivist paradigm guides this study. Thanh and Thanh (2015:24) mention that the interpretive paradigm is used in qualitative research because it permits scholars to comprehend a social phenomenon through the participants' experiences and perceptions. Interpretivism is predominately associated with qualitative methods (in-depth interviews and focus group discussions), because the participants share their own experiences, understandings, motivations and perceptions about the subject of investigation (Ritchie and Lewis 2003:3). Using open-ended questions in qualitative research gives the participants the liberty to express their views as extensively as possible, there are no limitations. Therefore, the researcher is bound to obtain rich information because of the ability to engage with the participants and probe deeply.

Generally qualitative research permits the investigator to ask open ended questions which encourage broad exploration or explanation of the issues under study. Participants elaborate on their reasons or understandings on the topic (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al 2014:173).

Since interpretivism is qualitative, it is suitable for this enquiry as the study seeks to learn about the experiences and the perceptions of the beneficiaries of the child grants programme and gather the perceptions and understandings of the various policy actors implementing the CGP, including the private firms collaborating with the government in the delivery of the programme. The thoughts, experiences, and perceptions of all the participants are crucial to achieving the goal of this study which is to investigate and understand how it is implemented, learn about the successes, challenges and limitations, and therefore ultimately suggest measures for improvement. The information that will be used to analyse the implementation of CGP needs to come from the participants freely expressing themselves and not by being directed to choose specific answers, as the researcher intends to understand, among other things, how the beneficiaries view the programme.

According to Creswell (2003:18), the researcher collects data through open-ended questions which allows for the development of themes and concepts that form the basis for understanding the phenomenon under study in terms of how it affects the participants. Pope, Ziebland, and Mays (2000:43) also indicate that qualitative research aims to unearth meanings that help us to understand a social phenomenon, drawing insights from the meanings, experiences and views of those affected by it. As a result, the nature of qualitative research allows researchers to create an agenda for change or reform (Creswell 2003:19). This is significant because social circumstances evolve, requiring adaptations with time to match modern-day demands. In this case, gathering the information that can influence policy reform in the implementation of the CGP will go a long way in enhancing the efficient and effective use of already strained government resources.

5.3 The Case Study

This study uses a case study approach. Babbie and Mouton (2001: 288) define a case study as “an intensive investigation of a single unit, with its context being a significant part of the investigation”. Baxter and Jack (2010:544) defines a case study as “an approach to qualitative research that allows for an investigation of a phenomenon within its setting using various data sources to ensure that the issue is broadly investigated to allow many aspects of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood”. Njie and Asimiran (2014:36) mention that the case study allows the researcher to acquire as much detailed insight as possible about an event, person or process. Du Plooy-Cilliers et al (2014:179) mention that the case study portrays an actual situation by describing it in its context; this exploration allows a deep understanding of the particular and lived experiences of those involved. The case of investigation in this study is the child grants programme in Lesotho. The researcher interviewed the various government officials and private organisations involved in the implementation of the CGP and the beneficiaries to garner their perspectives, views, understandings and experiences pertaining to the various aspects of the implementation of this programme.

5.3.1 The Political and Geographical Demarcation of Lesotho

Lesotho comprises ten districts namely Botha-Bothe, Leribe, Berea, Maseru, Mafeteng, Mohale’s Hoek, Quthing, Qacha’s Nek, Mokhotlong and Thaba-Tseka. The governance structure in Lesotho comprises the central government, district or urban councils and the community councils at the local level. The local governance structure comprises one municipality, eleven urban councils and 64 rural community councils. The districts have different numbers of community councils depending on their area size, ranging between five and 13 community councils (Government of Lesotho 2017:114).

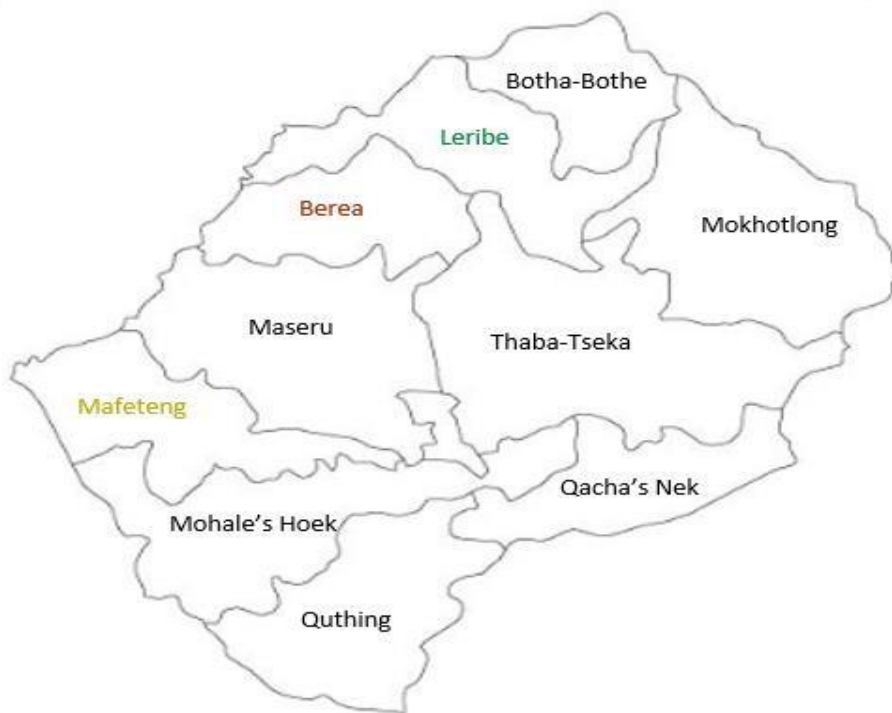
These districts are also divided into various community councils.

1. Botha-Bothe: - Ngoajane, Nqoe, Likila, Tsale-Moleka, Urban.
2. Leribe: - Maa-Mafubelu, Tsoili-Tsoili, Manka, Hleoheng, Litjotjela, Ramapepe, Bolahla, Sephookong, Maisaphoka, Matsoku, Menkhoaneng, Maputsoe Urban, Hlotse Urban.

3. Berea: - Tebe-Tebe, Kanana, Senekane, Motanasela, Koeneng, Mapoteng, Makeoane, Urban.
4. Maseru: - Mhlakeng, Mazenod, Ratau, Lilala, Makhoalipana, Likolobeng, Makhoarane, Manonyane, Qiloane, Likalaneng, Semonkong Urban.
5. Mafeteng: - Mamantso, Tsana-Talana, Qibing, Ramoetsana, Makoabating, Metsi-Maholo, Lehlakaneng, Urban.
6. Mohale's Hoek: - Khoelenya, Siloe, Qhoasing, Senqunyane, Lithipeng, ThabaMokhele, Mashaleng, Urban.
7. Quthing: - Telle, Qomo-Qomong, Mphaki, Mtjanyane, Tosing, Urban.
8. Qacha's Nek: - Qanya, Tsoelikana, Patlong, Ntsupe, Urban.
9. Mokhotlong: - Seate, Menoaneng, Mphokojoane, Sanqabethu, Urban.
10. Thaba-Tseka: - Bokong, Linakeng, Khutlo-se-Metsi, Litsoetse, Tenesolo, Urban, (Government of Lesotho 2017:114).

Figure 2: Geographic Map of Lesotho.

Source: d-Maps.com



The case study for this research is three districts: Leribe, Berea and Mafeteng. Leribe has 13 community councils, Berea has nine community councils and Mafeteng has eight community councils. Two community councils were selected from each of the

three districts and were investigated in this research. The population for these districts is displayed in Table 5.1 inserted below. Leribe is home to 361,595 people, Berea is home to 269,290 people while Mafeteng is home to 170,061 people (Bureau of Statistics (BoS) 2023:18).

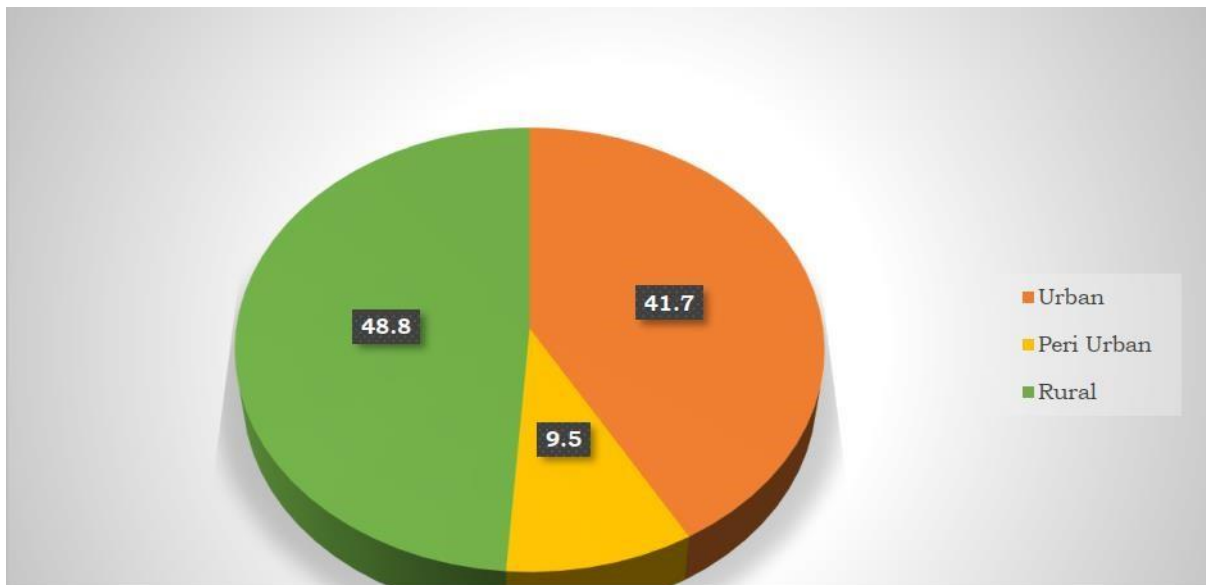
Table 1: Lesotho Population Distribution by District

District	Male	Female	Total
Botha-Bothe	59,990	62,510	122,500
Leribe	174,412	187,183	361,595
Berea	131,709	137,581	269,290
Maseru	269,512	296,865	566,377
Mafeteng	83,536	86,525	170,061
Mohale's Hoek	78,675	80,462	159,137
Quthing	54,714	55,932	110,645
Qacha's Nek	37,251	39,901	77,152
Mokhotlong	51,839	50,006	101,845
Thaba-Tseka	68,759	69,308	138,066
Total	1,010,397	1,066,272	2,076,669

Source: www.gov.ls Bureau of Statistics.

Table 1 above indicates Lesotho's population by district, sourced from the Lesotho Demographic Survey of 2021 (published in 2023). The overall population of Lesotho is 2,076,669 people (BoS 2023:18).

Figure 3: Lesotho population by place of residence.



Source: www.gov.ls Bureau of Statistics 2021 Lesotho Demographic Survey (LDS) (BOS 2023:17).

The highest percentage of Lesotho's population lives in rural areas (48.8%). The country is mountainous and predominantly occupied by poor rural people. Lesotho's economy is completely dependent on imports from South Africa (Hassan and Ojo 2002:1). According to Hassan and Ojo (2002:1-2), the country's economy used to depend on limited agriculture, light manufacturing (textiles, clothing, and leather) and the remittances from the Lesotho miners who worked in the Republic of South Africa. Royalties from exporting water to South Africa through the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) also contribute to the country's economy.

5.3.2 Employment and Unemployment

Table 5.2 below shows the employment status (age 15+) by district and place of residence

Table 2: Lesotho employment status

Place of Residence	Employment Status		Total
	Employed	Not Employed	
District	26,229	51,591	77,820
Botha-Bothe			
Leribe	93,868	134,407	228,274
Berea	73,564	108,220	181,784
Maseru	159,164	198,774	357,938
Mafeteng	43,631	77,162	120,793
Mohale's Hoek	33,473	74,835	108,307
Quthing	29,403	46,717	76,119
Qacha's Nek	16,733	30,431	47,164
Mokhotlong	21,098	42,196	63,294
Thaba-Tseka	24,285	60,992	85,277
Total	521,445	825,325	1,346,770
Settlement	254,949	230,659	485,608
Urban			
Peri-Urban	40,138	65,248	105,386
Rural	226,359	529,417	755,776
Total	521,445	825,325	1,346,770

Source: www.gov.ls Bureau of Statistics *Lesotho Labour Force Survey* (BOS 2019:20).

As shown in the table above, the high number of unemployed people in Lesotho live in the rural areas (BoS 2019:20). The overall number of unemployed people across the country exceeds the number of employed people (BoS 2019:20). The unemployment rate in Leribe is the highest of the districts selected for this study.

5.3.3 Education and Health

The government of Lesotho introduced the universal free primary education policy in the year 2000, aimed at achieving its economic, social and political objectives (BoS 2023:24). The Lesotho National Strategic Development Plan II (2019-2023) highlights education as an important aspect of human capital development, and crucial in the eradication of poverty, as it impacts the national socio-economic development issues (BoS 2023:24-25). According to Bos (2023:25) about 89 per cent of Basotho youth are literate, with females making up the higher proportion of the population that attains higher levels of education.

The report published by UNICEF Lesotho (2019:1) indicates that about 25 per cent of adult men and women aged 15-49 are living with HIV/AIDS. However, the report released by UNICEF (2023) indicates that the prevalence of HIV has declined to 22.7 per cent even though Lesotho is rated second highest in the world in terms of HIV

prevalence (UNICEF 2023:2). Adolescents aged 10-19 years account for 3.8 percent of the infected population in Lesotho, nonetheless, improvements have been realised in the coverage of adolescents who are on antiretroviral treatment, an increase from 53.5 percent in 2018 to 81 percent in 2023 (UNICEF 2023:2).

The demographics given above indicate that unemployment is high in Lesotho. HIV/AIDS has also exacerbated vulnerability in Lesotho, compelling the government to introduce the CGP intended to improve the living standards of orphans and vulnerable children. The beneficiaries for this programme are selected through a Proxy Means Test using the NISSA as discussed in Chapter three.

5.4 The Political, Social and Economic Profile of the Kingdom of Lesotho

Lesotho is a small nation found in the southern part of Africa and is landlocked enclosed by the Republic of South Africa. Lesotho is a constitutional monarchy with a bicameral parliament. The head of state is His Majesty King Letsie III whose role is predominantly ceremonial (Matlanyane 2013:33). Politically, the country is governed under the leadership of the Prime Minister. The size of the country is 30 355 square kilometres and the population as per the LDS 2021 is 2 076 669 people, (BoS 2023:18).

The Central Bank of Lesotho (CBL) 2021 report on the economic outlook for 2020-2023 indicates that the domestic economy likely contracted by 6.1 per cent in 2020 (CBL 2021:1). The country has been affected by a combination of adverse domestic and external shocks including the national lockdown measures and travel restrictions due to Covid-19 which led to a dramatic economic decline. The lower remittances and capital inflows have also contributed to shrinking economic growth as per the CBL report. However, the report indicates that the economy is expected to recuperate steadily, growing by 4.3 per cent in 2021 and by an average growth of 5.2 per cent in 2022 – 2023 (CBL 2021:1).

A report by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (2022:1) also indicates that since early 2020, Lesotho has been concurrently affected by the Covid-19 epidemic, falling transfers from the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), climate shocks, and the

impact of the war in Ukraine. The fallout from the pandemic caused supply chain disruptions, layoffs in the textiles sector and weak external demand which has greatly impacted on the social and economic development of the country (IMF 2022:1). The country's economy has however stagnated since 2016 and is estimated to have shrunk by almost 10 per cent. According to the IMF (2022:4), the country's export base which is concentrated in textiles, and mining, has been losing competitiveness. In terms of agriculture, the country is also battling increased poverty and food insecurity due to intense climate shocks that lead to natural disasters that affect food production. The health indicators also remain relatively weak, with 21.1 percent of adults infected by HIV and maternal mortality at over 1,000 for every 100,000 live births (IMF 2022:4).

Lesotho's fiscal landscape is characterised by gaps in Public Finance Management (PFM) and a heavy dependence on the unpredictable transfers from the SACU (IMF 2022:5). Private sector employment is scarce; the public sector is the major employer with a high public wage premium. According to the IMF (2022:5) private-sector development and job creation are hindered by limitations in financial access, human capital, governance and corruption and the overall business atmosphere. Political instability and governance issues have also inhibited the government from reaching consensus on the needed reforms to bring the economy back onto a sustainable growth path.

5.5 Qualitative Research Methodology

5.5.1 Qualitative Sampling Method

Qualitative studies often use non-probability sampling and this study used the purposive sampling method. According to du-Plooy-Cilliers et al (2014:131), sampling helps researchers to determine who or what can best assist in providing the answers to the research questions. There are two types of sampling: probability sampling which refers to the fact that all units in the population have an equal opportunity to be part of the sample and non-probability sampling where the researcher uses the discretion to select the units that are most relevant to the research problem (du-Plooy Cilliers et al 2014:136-137). This study used non-probability sampling, specifically purposive sampling. There are six non-probability sampling techniques according to du-Plooy

Cilliers et al (2014:142-144): accidental sampling, convenience sampling, purposive sampling, quota sampling, snowball sampling and volunteer sampling.

According to Teddlie and Yu (2007:80), purposive sampling “is choosing the units of study depending on the specific goal of the study and focuses on certain features of the population of interest”. It involves choosing individuals or groups of people who are adept and knowledgeable about the study subject. However, after knowledge and experience, participants must be prepared to take part and willing to share their understandings and views (Etikan, Musa and Alkassim 2016:3). The idea with purposive sampling is the belief that each participant will offer exceptional and valuable information to answer the research questions.

Tongco (2007:147) indicates that purposive sampling is a method that does not need causal theories or a set number of informants; the researcher decides the issue to be investigated and selects people who are familiar with and have experience and are conversant about the topic. Etikan et al (2016:2), indicate that purposive sampling needs knowledgeable and informed people regarding a phenomenon of interest. According to Tongco (2007:147), the purposive sampling technique is also called judgment sampling, as it is the intentional selection of participants because of the attributes he or she possesses. Etikan et al (2016:3) mention that purposive sampling targets people with certain characteristics relevant to the research issue.

The CGP operates in all ten districts and councils of the country but only three districts were selected. The rationale for this selection related to their accessibility. Two councils from each of these three districts were selected in order to compare the experiences and views of the beneficiaries from the different councils in the districts. Notably, in the community councils, only those who are beneficiaries were sampled as they are informed and relevant to the study to provide more reliable experiences and views regarding impact of the programme.

For this study, a non-probability purposive sample of respondents was selected. These included the government officials who were involved in the delivery of CGP, private

organisations who partnered with the government in the implementation of the programme and the household representatives of the families which receive the CGP. The Department of Social Development is responsible for the implementation of the CGP, and it has various sections and personnel within it. However not all of them are involved in the implementation of the programme, therefore, the researcher intentionally selected only the government officials who are directly involved in the programme implementation to participate in the study. They include Director Social Assistance, Director Planning, Manager Social Assistance, District Managers, Senior Social Assistance officer (Case Management), Senior Social Assistance Officer (Payments) and Auxiliary Social Workers. The directors and the manager of social assistance work at the policy formulation level and are responsible for overall programme decision making, therefore, they are very important in this study. The three district managers are included in the study because they are responsible for co-ordination of payments at the district level, arranging and deploying the resources needed for the payment, as well as disseminating messages about the payment dates, and making sure that the auxiliary social workers fill in and submit the case management forms.

The auxiliary social workers work at the community level and are always present at the payment sites to oversee the payment process and receive queries and other issues presented by the beneficiaries. The total number of government officials interviewed was 23.

Since this programme is implemented in collaboration with private actors, they have also been interviewed. The private companies selected are also directly involved in the implementation of the CGP. These are UNICEF Lesotho, Vodacom Lesotho and Group 4 Securicor.

UNICEF Lesotho has worked closely with the government of Lesotho since the inception of this programme, providing technical and financial support. According to Ulrichs and Mphale (2016:45), UNICEF has supported policy formulation and assisted with various implementation resources, as well as financial and human expertise. Therefore, a social policy specialist at UNICEF was interviewed in this study. The

mobile network company, Vodacom Lesotho is also involved in the disbursement of the grant to the beneficiaries through its Mpesa mobile money service. The Mpesa Enterprise Specialist at Vodacom Lesotho was also interviewed to get the company's view of their partnership with government in delivering the grant. Lastly, the security company Group 4 Securicor (G4S), is also involved in transporting the cash to various pay points across the country. The assistant marketing officer at G4S was interviewed as she is the key person responsible for logistics to transit the CGP funds. G4S is included to obtain their views on their government partnership and to share their experiences in delivering the cash across the country. Their experiences of the implementation of the programme are explored and help to analyse the performance of the programme. One representative was interviewed per entity, so three people from the private sector were interviewed.

5.5.2 Qualitative Data Collection Methods

Etikan, Musa and Akassim (2016:1) emphasise that the collection of data is a key and core phase in research, as the information is intended to explain the theory on which the study is based. Various methods are used to collect qualitative data: 1. Document review; 2. Observation; 3. Interview and 4. Focus Group Discussion (Elmusharaf 2012:4 and Barrett and Twycross 2018:63). Document review involves the reading of journals, meeting minutes, strategic plans, policy papers and other various documents (Elmusharaf 2012:6). The collection of data through observation happens in two ways: participant and non-participant observation (Barrett and Twycross 2018:63 and Elmusharaf 2012:10). The use of this method allows the researcher to gather a wide array of information through verbal and non-verbal communication; the researcher gains the first or original picture or idea of the real situation of the study subject or phenomena (Barrett and Twycross 2018:64). Through the observation the field notes are taken, describing what has been observed while watching the participants and making a record of conversations (Barrett and Twycross 2018:64).

Semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews are the two qualitative data collection methods used in this study to collect the qualitative data. Interviews are the most preferred data collection method in qualitative research. They provide detailed and rich data as an interview is a conversation between the researcher and the

respondent. The researcher is able to probe for more insights while the respondent is also able to clarify the views he is giving (Barrett and Twycross 2018:64). Focus groups on the other hand also produce quality data; they are efficient as they permit the researcher to gather views of many participants at one time (Barrett and Twycross 2018:64). Discussions enhance the debate, leading to broad perspectives on the particular issue or topic.

This study used these qualitative data collection methods because it aims to procure as much insightful information as possible regarding the implementation of the CGP; the information must be as descriptive as possible so that the various aspects of the programme implementation can be analysed and broadly understood. Interviews allow the interrogation of issues in order to understand the respondents' views. The sample of the study was also large, therefore necessitated the use of focus group discussions for time and financial cost-effectiveness, as well as for maximising or augmenting the quality of the data collected. Focus group discussions encourages the respondents to speak up as they feel more comfortable expressing themselves when they share their views with others in the group.

The total number in the sample was 143 participants with 23 individuals being interviewed. There were 12 focus group discussions of 120 individuals in total.

□ **Types of Interviews in Qualitative Research**

According to Creswell (2003:21), the most significant source of evidence for a case study are the interviews. Creswell (2003:21) defines an interview as an exercise whereby the target population is interviewed via the phone or in a face-to-face situation. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:349) note that the flexibility of interviews eases collection of data because they promote different expressions; spoken and nonverbal. Importantly, interviews enable the participants to give answers in their own languages allowing greater opportunity to be able to express themselves even more clearly.

According to Alshenqeeti (2014:40), an interview is “an extensive discussion between two or more people that aims at producing detailed evidence concerning a certain topic

or subject". Social Sciences predominantly use four types of interviews: structured, unstructured, semi-structured and focus group interviews (Alsaawi 2014:150-151 and Alshenqeeti 2014:40).

Mack et al (2005:1) mention that the flexibility of qualitative data collection methods especially semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews, allow greater freedom and communication between the researcher and the study participants. For example, Mack et al (2005:4) remark that qualitative methods often do not ask questions phrased in the same manner with all the respondents, questions can be rephrased to allow the interviewee to understand the question being posed. Qualitative research questions permit insightful understanding of the research issue because they are not channelled to answer; they elaborate instead of giving a simple "yes" or "no" response. Mack et al (2005:4) further state that open questions provide answers that are comprehensible and socially important to the respondent and not predicted by the researcher but are rich and expressive in nature.

(i) Structured Interview

Alshenqeeti (2014:40) indicates that the main feature of the structured interview is the use of pre-set direct questions that involve mainly yes and no replies. Alsaawi (2014:150-151) describes the structured interview as a controlled method to obtain data. The researcher composes the interview questions before leading the interview, so that the interview focuses strictly on the target topic. This type of interview is almost the same as the 'self-administered' quantitative questionnaire. The information collected this way however, lacks detail and limits the availability of comprehensive data. The difference among the answers is restricted as a result of the stringent interview format that is used.

(ii) Unstructured Interview

Unstructured interviews are the opposite of structured interviews, they are flexible, and interviewees can elaborate on their views and provide unpredicted information (Alsaawi 2014:151). The interviewer in this type of research is more "keen to follow up interesting developments and to let the interviewee elaborate on various issues" (Alshenqeeti 2014:40). This type is like a dialogue in which the investigator might ask

a single question, and the respondent has the liberty regarding the point to which the he/she answers (Bryman 2016:471). This type of interview tends to produce enormous amounts of data; however, it is apposite for researchers who want to concentrate on a specific phenomenon in-depth (Alsaawi 2014:151).

(iii) Semi-Structured Interview

Semi-structured interviews are commonly used by social science researchers. The researcher uses predetermined questions, but allows the respondent the opportunity to clarify and elucidate on certain issues (Alsaawi 2014). Semi-structured interviews use open-ended questions. According to Alshenqeeti (2014:40), a semi-structured interview is a more amenable form of interview because it allows the researcher to obtain in-depth information and expand on the interviewee responses. Qu and Dumay (2011:246) note that semi-structured interviews involve organised questions directed by the themes identified, in a consistent and organised manner, including probes designed to produce more detailed responses. Since interviews are based in human conversation, they permit the interviewer to adjust the manner in which the questions are structured in order to draw out thorough answers from the interviewees (Qu and Dumay 2011:246). The focus is on the interview guide consisting of a sequence of extensive subjects to be discussed throughout the conversation to help direct the discussion toward the areas and topics that the interviewer wants to study (Qu and Dumay 2011:246).

According to Qu and Dumay (2011:239), semi-structured in-depth interviews are the best qualitative data collection method and have been used for many years. It should be noted that conducting in-depth interviews in qualitative research is not an inconsequential exercise, but rather an intensive endeavour requiring the use of various skills such as active listening, note-taking, cautious planning and making necessary arrangements (Qu and Dumay 2011:239). Preparing for the in-depth interview is particularly important because, if not well prepared, the researcher may end up with data that might not achieve what the study aimed to achieve. Essentially, interviews require a skilled interviewer who can take control of the interview and evoke the fullest responses from the participants (Qu and Dumay 2011:246).

In-depth semi-structured interviews were employed in this study because of their ability to produce comprehensive information. When the interviewer is present, the number of 'don't knows' or 'no' answers decrease because the researcher can clarify questions for the participant (Babbie and Mouton 2001:258-259). In-depth interviews, explained Ritchie and Lewis (2003:36), offer a deeper comprehension of the respondent's personal perspectives on the research phenomena allowing a thorough exploration of the issue. According to du Plooy-Cilliers et al (2014:188), this is possible because interviews are investigative, the researcher encourages the participants to provide more specifics on the opinion he or she is making.

This study is a descriptive study seeking an understanding of the implementation of CGP, therefore needs the type of interview that uncovers insights on how the programme is delivered. Semi-structured in-depth interviews are used because of their ability to produce detailed information. The researcher prepared an interview guide for and scheduled appointments with all the participants at times suitable to them and then conducted all the interviews face-to-face. The questions were open-ended and receptive to a wide range of views and perceptions that the respondents had. The researcher used the necessary skills to gather the data, listening and probing to encourage the respondents to speak freely and give information which would be as detailed as possible.

This study used interview guides with open-ended questions for the individual interviews and the focus group discussions. According to Gill et al (2008:291), research interviews entail the use of strategic questions that allow a wide exploration of the issue, while also allowing diversification in asking the questions in order to pursue more detailed responses. The versatility of this methodology allows the participants to explain the evidence that is significant but not recognised as germane by the researcher (Gill et al 2008:291).

Twenty-three participants who participated in the in-depth semi-structured face-to-face interviews were: the director of social assistance, director of planning, manager of social assistance, three district managers, senior social assistance officer, (case management coordination), senior social assistance officer (payments coordination),

auxiliary social workers and the representatives from the private organisations and or companies to articulate their views as permitted by the nature of the questions that the researcher asked.

(iv) Focus Group Discussions

According to Barbour and Schostak (2005:43), focus groups are an interviewing technique in which participants are selected because they are a purposive sample given the research topic. Collins and O'Brien (2003:142) define a focus group as a group interview led by a trained moderator to find useful insights on the topic of interest. Rabiee (2004:655) defines focus groups as 'a method of gathering data through selection of participants based on their specific relevance to the issue being investigated.' This means that a group of chosen participants should be familiar with the study subject as that determines the relevance of the information that will be gathered.

According to Nyumba et al (2018:20), focus group discussions are commonly used to derive an in-depth understanding of social issues, usually made up of individuals deliberately selected to obtain data from them. Like the individual semi-structured interviews, focus groups discussions are in-depth interview sessions whereby the facilitator or moderator uses a set of intentional open-ended questions to guide the participants in exploring a particular topic (Gundumogula and Gundumogula 2020:299). These participants are usually the individuals who are conversant and well informed about the issue which the researcher has an interest in, and can contribute insightful information (Gundumogula and Gundumogula 2020:299).

Gundumogula and Gundumogula (2020:299) mention that the data collection methodology is a fundamental feature of any research. The spontaneity of interaction among the participants in focus groups usually generates profound and richer data, therefore focus groups have become an advantageous way of collecting qualitative data (Gundumogula and Gundumogula, 2020:301). Qualitative research requires broad engagement to understand a phenomenon, therefore focus groups are suited to this purpose because of the different views, experiences and perspectives that the individuals can share or hold concerning an issue.

However, to gain useful data from the focus groups the sessions need to be well organised and planned, the venue should be accessible and convenient to all participants, there should not be any disruptions or noise in or around the venue used, and the participants must be as comfortable as possible (Gundumogula and Gundumogula 2020:299). Nyumba et al (2018:22) also mention a similar point, that the venue should be accessible and away from distractions. Seating arrangements also contribute to fruitful discussions. Gundumogula and Gundumogula (2020:299) suggest that the participants sit in a circle or a semi-circle to allow everybody to see, to listen to, and to engage with one another during the discussion.

It is important that the groups must be a manageable size. Different scholars have made suggestions concerning the size of a focus group. According to Kitzinger (1995:301) an ideal group size is between four and eight people. Rabiee (2004:656) also mentions that smaller groups show greater potential for successful interviews and suggests a group of participants between six and eight. However, even a group of ten participants is still controllable and reasonable for exploring diverse sets of viewpoints, while also small enough not to become disorganised or unmanageable (Rabiee 2004:656).

The attitude of the moderator towards the participants is crucial to the success of the focus group discussions. The facilitator needs to be friendly, a good listener, have a good sense of humour and possess a flexible attitude throughout the discussion to make it effective and successful (Gundumogula and Gundumogula 2020:300, Nyumba et al 2018:23). Nonetheless, he/she should avoid being too involved in the discussion so as not to influence the participants, which can lead to bias or non-productive discussions. The facilitator must be skilled enough to be able to balance the discussions because, if he is unable to keep control, the discussions might deviate from the topic and fail to gather the needed data.

The advantage of focus group discussions is that they do not exclude illiterate people, and encourage participation from people who are hesitant to be interviewed individually or who feel they have nothing to say (Kitzinger 1995:300). In focus groups, people are encouraged to talk to one another, to ask questions, comment on one

another's views and experiences as well as sharing stories. The idea behind the focus group method is that the groups help people to explore and clarify their views in ways which would not be easy in one-on-one interviews. Focus group discussions uncover views that are often not reached by other data collection techniques (Gundumogula and Gundumogula, 2020:299-300). The differences in opinions within the groups encourage participants to expound their points of view, thereby giving more insightful information on the study subject. However, according to Nyumba et al (2018:22) the group is best composed of homogeneous members in terms of gender, educational level and other traits because in that way participants feel more at ease and find it easy to interact.

Another important factor in administering the focus group discussions is considering the duration of the group meetings or interviews (Rabiee 2004:656). Participants get exhausted when conversations are lengthy. One to two hours are recommended based on the complexity of the study topic, the number of questions and the number of participants (Rabiee 2004:656). It is ethical and a good practice to notify the participants about their time commitment so that they are aware of how much time they will spend in the meeting.

Rabiee (2004:656) indicates that focus groups can sometimes be problematic, especially when the study group is composed of people who lack confidence and have low self-esteem, and thus find it difficult to participate in a group discussion. Another potential problem with focus groups is the number of non-attenders; it is important therefore to obtain a date suitable for the participants well ahead of the interviews so that the researcher can remind them a few days before the interview (Rabiee 2004:656).

This study utilised the focus group discussions to gather the information from the CGP beneficiaries. This method is appropriate for this study considering the size of the sample. Running individual interviews with all the beneficiaries could be time-consuming. This data collection method was preferred because of its time effectiveness. Also, some individuals are timid and could be uncomfortable answering questions on their own. Therefore, focus group discussions were utilised because the

researcher wanted to maximise the response rate given that focus group discussions encourage participation and willingness to give information because of the spontaneity allowed by the interaction of individuals sharing similar characteristics related to the study subject. Interestingly Mack et al (2005:51) mention that focus groups are usually chosen to determine the kind of service a particular population wants or would want to have. Such a method is usually used to illuminate opinion hence is suitable for socio-behavioural research in order to develop and measure services that meet the needs of a given population. According to Mack et al (2005:52), focus groups generate information depicting how an issue affects a community of people. In this case, the researcher wants to know how the CGP beneficiaries experience the delivery of the programme and their views about how it is delivered.

Two focus group discussions were held with the beneficiaries in each community council. A total of twelve focus group discussions were conducted with 10 people per focus group. The groups comprised both males and females. However, the sample was a bit biased in terms of sex; most of those who were willing to participate were female. The total number of people who participated in the focus group discussions across the three districts was 120. An open-ended focus group interview guide was used to lead the discussions.

In this study, the researcher accessed the beneficiaries at the CGP payment sites where the beneficiaries gather on the selected dates to receive their grants. The Auxiliary Social workers gave the researcher the platform to address the beneficiaries about the purpose of the study and then volunteers were solicited.

5.6 Data Analysis

De Vos et al (2011:397) describe qualitative data analysis as organising, structuring and giving sense to data. The process essentially includes reducing the bulk of the raw information, selecting the salient themes and categorising the prominent patterns to build a basis for explaining the gist of what the data reveals (De Vos et al 2011:397). According to du Plooy-Cilliers et al (2014:233), there are several data analysis methods: content analysis, discourse analysis, conversation analysis, multimodal conversation analysis and semiotic analysis.

However, in this study only content analysis is described as this was used to analyse the data gathered. According to du Plooy-Cilliers et al (2014:234), qualitative content analysis is used to explore and identify the explicit and inexplicit themes and patterns in the particular information. Liamputtong (2009:135) refers to content analysis as thematic analysis and as such, is the most common type of analysis in qualitative research where the researcher identifies, analyses and reports on the patterns or themes within the data.

Vaismoradi et al (2013:400) define thematic content analysis as a research analysis technique whereby the data is classified and the patterns or themes that develop from the collected information are explained. As the process of qualitative data analysis aims to provide an understanding of a phenomenon, the researcher familiarises himself with the data by listening to the interview recordings and transcribing them, and then reading and re-reading them to identify the themes (Liamputtong 2009:135 and Rabiee 2004:657). Pope, Ziebland and Mays (2000:115) and du PlooyCilliers et al (2014:229) also mention that the researcher first familiarises himself with the data, gets immersed in the raw data by listening to the tapes, transcribing the information and studying the transcripts in order to identify the ideas and the recurring subjects, and then describing the evident patterns of the meanings developing from the data. This is important for the researcher to get a sense of the interviews before breaking the information into parts which is called coding, whereby the themes begin to emerge (Liamputtong 2009:135).

In this study, the researcher translated and transcribed the recorded interviews to prepare for analysis. The data was thereafter organised and categorised according to the different meanings that emerged as it was read through and through. The data was then coded using the various themes, concepts and phrases. Du Plooy-Cilliers et al (2014:235) indicate that coding data makes analysis easy, therefore the themes were drawn from the dominant concepts which developed from the individual interviews and the focus group discussions. When coding data in this study, the researcher was cognisant of the research objectives, research questions and conceptual framework defining the study. This was to ensure that the researcher uncovers the meanings that are aligned with what the study seeks to investigate. Thematic content analysis was

preferred in this study because the diverse views, perceptions and experiences gathered from the respondents are meant to give meaning to what the study is investigating.

The different themes and concepts that emerged from the data and used for analysis are listed below and further discussed or explained in Chapter six and Chapter seven.

(i) Themes discussed in Chapter six

Main Theme: The rationale for the implementation of the CGP.

Sub-Theme: Reducing deprivation and vulnerability.

Main Theme: Targeting and enrolment of beneficiaries for the CGP.

Sub- Themes: Community mobilisation and sensitisation, quality of data and validation and re-certification.

Main Theme: Policy networks in the delivery of the CGP.

Sub-Themes: Efficiency and effectiveness, reciprocity and mutual benefit and communication and coordination.

Main Theme: Challenges facing the CGP networks: Implementers' experiences

Sub-themes: High delivery costs, logistical and operational issues, and unethical behaviour.

Main Theme: Barriers to effective implementation of the CGP.

Sub-Themes: Lack of public participation, lack of decentralisation, resource constraints and poor administrative capacity, and lack of political will.

(ii) Themes discussed in Chapter Seven

Main Theme: The CGP payment modes.

Sub-Themes: 1. Accessibility, (cost of access for beneficiaries, appropriateness of the payment mode, and rights and dignity of beneficiaries) 2. Robustness, (reliability of the payment mode and security of the payment mode) and 3. Integration or financial inclusion.

Main Theme: The impact of the child grant programme.

Sub-Themes: Unpredictability of payments dates and the low value of the grant.

5.7 Validity and Reliability in Qualitative Research

Qualitative researchers use different terminology to describe validity and reliability (du Plooy-Cilliers et al 2014:258). Validity in research refers to the accurateness and truthfulness of scientific findings (Brink 1993:35). According to Brink (1993:35) reliability means the consistency, stability and repeatability of the participants' views as well as the researcher's ability to collect and record information accurately. It refers to a research method's ability to produce consistent results that are consistent over repeated periods. However, Brink (1993:35) indicates that many qualitative researchers do not use the terms validity and reliability but use terms such as credibility, trustworthiness, truth, value, applicability, consistency and confirmability, when referring to the standards for assessing the quality of empirical qualitative research.

Du Plooy-Cilliers et al (2014:258) indicate that social researchers often measure the trustworthiness of their results in terms of their credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

- Credibility denotes the precision with which the investigator construed the information collected from the participants. Credibility is augmented by the duration the researcher devotes to being with the respondents so that he understands them to gain full insights into their lives. Using more than one data collection method also increases the credibility of the study results.
- Transferability means the ability of the study method to be applied to a similar situation and deliver the similar results; this can allow for generalisation of the results.
- Dependability is the quality of the process of integration that takes place between the data collection method, data analysis and the theory generated from the data.
- Confirmability refers to how well the collected data supports the researcher's interpretation and the general findings of the study.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data collected for this study, the researcher did not incentivise the respondents but clearly emphasised that participation was voluntary, meaning that they willingly gave the information especially in the focus group discussions. The participants were also informed that their identities would be protected as the information they shared would not be explicitly linked to them in the findings of this study.

The results of this study are highly reliable and credible. The researcher used multiple methods of data collection: one-on-one interviews as well as the focus group discussions where views are diverse, giving a broader understanding of the research issue. In the one-on-one interviews, the researcher used a consistent approach in interviewing the participants, asking follow-up questions and paraphrasing to probe for depth and gauging the consistency of responses given.

5.8 Ethical Issues

The researcher obtained ethical approval to undertake this research from the University of KwaZulu-Natal Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee. According to Orb, Eisenhauer and Wynaden (2001:95) researchers must be guided by the ethical principles which, among others, include respect for people's rights, participants must be correctly informed about the study and be given the autonomy to choose if they are willing to partake in the research or not; keeping the information provided confidential and protecting the identity of the participants. The participants were further given the freedom to withdraw from the study at any time if they wanted to.

(a) Informed Consent

According to Wiles (2013:25), informed consent is a crucial element in ethical research exercises, as it guides the professional conduct of social science researchers. It includes giving the participants clear information regarding their involvement in the study and also giving them the freedom to determine if they are willing to take part or not. Wiles (2013:25) further indicates that the participants need to be advised on the research topic, objective or purpose of the research, how the findings are going to be used, what their contribution will encompass, the possible dangers and advantages

and the matters of anonymity and confidentiality. Further, the prospective respondents should be fully aware that they are not obligated to participate, and that they are free to withdraw from the study if they are no longer comfortable participating in the study (Wiles 2013:25).

Fouka and Mantzourou (2011:5) mention that guidance for obtaining consent has to include the introduction of the study and its purpose and an explanation of the criteria for choosing the research participants as well as the process that will be used to gather the information. The researcher must be honest and disclose that participation is not compulsory but voluntary with no consequences for non-participation; participants must not be coerced to participate. Dooly, Moore and Vallejo (2017:353) note that as part of gaining consent, the researcher should explain in full the risks involved if any and whether the participants will be recompensed in case of occurrence of harm. The participants should further be assured that the data collected from them will only be used to complete the study and not for any other purpose and only personal data which is pertinent to the study will be asked (Dooly et al 2017:354).

The principle of informed consent has been observed in this study. The prospective participants were advised about the purpose of the study, made aware that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study if they were no longer comfortable with participating. No incentive was offered for participating. Most importantly, the respondents were advised about why their contribution was sought to inform this study.

(b) Anonymity and Confidentiality

Wiles (2013:42) mentions that issues of anonymity and confidentiality are important in ethical research as they reinforce the professional research standards in social science. The participants need to be informed about how confidentiality and anonymity will be ensured and what it means to participate; they must know how the data will be handled and reported, and if it will be possible for them to be associated with the information they provide or not and what the implications might be for them.

Confidentiality, according to Wiles (2013:42) means that the information collected from the respondents will not be disclosed and their identities will be protected by using

unique codes to represent them. Fouka and Mantzorou (2011:6) mention that anonymity is secured when the participants' identity cannot be linked with the responses they provide.

In this study the participants were further guaranteed that the data they provide would not be used to compromise them in any way as there is no intention to link them with the information gathered. The respondents were not requested to identify themselves by their names, sex and age as these were considered not significant to the findings of the study. The respondents' responses are coded with unique codes in the findings chapter. The informed consent form was translated into Sesotho for participants who do not understand English so that they could read and understand the research motive and intention. The gatekeepers' consent was obtained from the authorities of the implementing partners' institutions.

5.9 Conclusion

The chapter defined the study design and methodology. The researcher explained in detail and justified the sampling and data collection methods in relation to the research paradigm, the interpretivist paradigm which guides the qualitative research. The study used a case study approach. The units of investigation have been discussed and the demographic characteristics given. The study used two data collection methods: in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. Firstly, the data collection methods or types were discussed and justification given for the two used in this study. These methods are known for producing rich data in qualitative research; focus groups in particular are interactive hence encourage provision of information as the participants' debate on issues. As Ritchie and Lewis (2003:3) note, focus group discussions provide rich data because they allow participants to share experiences by giving varied opinions on an issue, therefore allowing deeper clarification of their perceptions, experiences, and understandings regarding a social phenomenon.

Purposive sampling was used to select the respondents in this study: CGP beneficiaries, government officials from the implementing department as well as private implementing partners. The research analysis method used in this research also fits the purpose of qualitative research. Thematic content analysis is explained

and justified for its relevance and appropriateness for describing the data collected in this research. It was indicated how the researcher has ensured the credibility of the processes of data collection which are imperative for the validity and reliability of the study results.

The researcher considered the ethical principles of qualitative research, accurately explaining the purpose of the research to the target population and obtaining consent from them to participate in the study. Participants were further assured of confidentiality and their liberty to withdraw from the study if they no longer felt comfortable participating. The informed consent form was translated into Sesotho for participants who do not understand English so that they could read and understand the research motive and intention. The gatekeepers' consent was obtained from the authorities of the implementing partners' institutions.

CHAPTER SIX

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHILD GRANTS PROGRAMME

6.1 Introduction

An implementation analysis of the CGP is discussed in this chapter with a focus on the responses of the implementers who include government officials, their implementing partners and the beneficiaries. The views of the implementers and beneficiaries on the rationale for the implementation of CGP are explored in the first part of this chapter in order to provide an understanding of the imperatives of the Government of Lesotho to consider CGP as a policy option for social development of children in Lesotho. The subsequent sections discuss the experiences of the implementers and the beneficiaries with the implementation processes of targeting and enrolment. This is followed by a discussion of the experiences of the implementers with their involvement in the policy networks, and the challenges facing the network relationships as well as the barriers in implementing the CGP.

Thematic content analysis is used to analyse the findings of the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews conducted with implementing agents namely government officials, the programme directors, coded as D-1 and D-2, the Manager for Social Assistance, coded M-1, the district managers coded DM-1 to 3. The street-level bureaucrats and senior social assistance officers were coded SSAO-1 and SSAO-2, and the auxiliary social workers were coded ASW-1 to 12.

The representatives of the private partner organisations were UNICEF Lesotho, G4Ssecurity company and Vodacom Lesotho. The representatives from the three organisations are coded PO-1, PO-2 and PO-3 respectively. The broad research questions investigated in this study were:

- a) What is the rationale for the implementation of child grants programme in Lesotho?

- b) What are the organisational arrangements (processes, structures, resources, systems, mechanisms and policy networks) that are in place to deliver the CGP in Lesotho?
- c) What are the issues confronting the government of Lesotho in the delivery of the programme?
- d) What are the views of the implementers on the CGP payment modes?
- e) What are the experiences and perceptions of the beneficiaries regarding the grant payment modes?
- f) How do the beneficiaries use the grant or what are the benefits of the grant on the children's lives?

This chapter will provide responses to three of the main research questions:

- (i) What is the rationale for the implementation of child grants programme in Lesotho?
- (ii) What are the organisational arrangements (processes, resources, and the policy networks) that are in place to deliver the CGP in Lesotho?
- (iii) What are the issues confronting the government of Lesotho in the delivery of the programme?

The last three questions pertaining to the experiences and views on the payment methods and impact of the grant are discussed in Chapter Seven. These questions are:

- iv) What are the views of the implementers on the CGP payment modes?
- v) What are the experiences and perceptions of the beneficiaries regarding the grant payment modes?
- vi) How do the beneficiaries use the grant or what are the benefits of the grant on the children's lives?

The conceptual explanations of social protection discussed in Chapter Four are used in the analysis of the views on the rationale for implementing the CGP programme. The policy network conceptual framework is used to analyse the advantages and challenges of implementing this programme through a network. Public policy implementation theory approaches and models are employed to explain the barriers

faced in the implementation of the programme. The analysis further employs Lipsky's theory of street-level bureaucracy to explain the theme of lack of decentralisation of CGP case management.

The theme used to analyse the first research question is "reducing deprivation and vulnerability." The themes analysing the second research question emerge from the programme processes of targeting and enrolment of beneficiaries include "community mobilisation and sensitisation, quality of data, validation and recertification". "Efficiency and effectiveness, reciprocity and mutual benefit, communication and coordination," are themes that are used to analyse the networks and partnerships used to deliver the CGP. The challenges facing the CGP implementation and the barriers to implementing CGP are analysed in relation to the third research question seeking to understand the issues confronting the implementation of CGP. Challenges are analysed under the themes "high delivery costs, logistics and operational issues and unethical behaviour" whilst the barriers identified from the implementers' responses are related to the implementation concepts of lack of public participation, lack of decentralisation, resource constraints and poor administrative capacity, and lack of political will.

6.2 The Rationale for Implementation of the CGP

6.2.1 Reducing Deprivation and Vulnerability

Deprivation and vulnerability mean that people are in a state of poverty; they cannot meet their basic needs because they lack income. Barrientos and DeJong (2006:537) indicate that substantial evidence exists showing that cash grants are successful in ameliorating vulnerability and enduring poverty. This is the understanding of the government of Lesotho who initiated the CGP to address poverty and vulnerability among children aged 17 years and below.

The government officials shared different views regarding the need for implementation of CGP:

Social grants are meant to improve people's livelihoods to maintain basic needs; in the case of CGP, it came as a response to children's vulnerability; children were left exposed to poverty by HIV/AIDS, living with grandparents,

others as household heads in child headed households, therefore children needed assistance to have their needs catered for, their education, food and healthcare (D-2).

The UNDP (2019:14) indicates that several governments have developed national social protection strategies, passed related statutes and also allocated increased national funding for social assistance. According to a representative from UNICEF Lesotho, the Government of Lesotho implements CGP and other social assistance programmes to respond to vulnerability across the life course:

The programme has been introduced to reach out and help the vulnerable households address their daily consumption issues. Poverty, food insecurity and HIV/AIDS are rife and GoL has mapped its programmes across a life course to address vulnerability in all stages of life (PO-1).

Referring to the issues that cause deprivation and vulnerability, another government official a district manager mentioned the following:

The country is faced by high HIV/AIDS, drought, unemployment; these issues contribute to a lot of incapacity in the society, therefore government came up with this programme to assist households care for their children (DM-1).

The CGP has been introduced to partly meet vulnerable households' needs with income to improve livelihoods; to make sure that children are secured with basic needs: food, clothing, education and healthcare. The senior social assistance officer gave the following view:

Children are amongst the most vulnerable in the communities; in Lesotho children were left vulnerable by the scourge of HIV hence the CGP became a policy option to assist the households meet children's basic needs, (SSAO-1).

The same opinion on the issue of HIV/AIDS having driven children into vulnerability is shared by one district manager:

The programme started because many people in Lesotho were affected by HIV/AIDS, young parents are died leaving their children under the care of the elderly people who are unable to work; so they needed to be assisted with the means to provide for young children (DM-3).

The programme beneficiaries also shared their views on why they believe the government decided to implement the CGP. The view shared in Focus Group-4 is similar to those shared by some of the government officials:

The government took responsibility to help children especially those whose parents have passed away since there is no one would take care of their daily basic needs. The government realised that people are poor and unable to take proper care of children and therefore created this program to meet families halfway. Most children do not have parents and have no means of living (FG-4).

According to Vonk and Olivier (2019:222), there is a growing understanding that social assistance is not just charity but a fundamental right which has gained recognition, at international and national levels, and therefore a constitutional responsibility of government. In responding to the question of why the government of Lesotho is implementing the CGP, one district manager indicated that the government is fulfilling its constitutional mandate to care for its citizens:

Lesotho like other countries took the responsibility to address vulnerability, to assist the poor. The government is obliged by the constitution to take care of the vulnerable groups within the society. Social assistance is a human right, though the government has not explicitly pronounced itself on the rights based approach to social assistance. The country is hugely stricken by poverty, young parents are dying leaving children under the care the elderly who struggle to meet their needs, therefore the CGP was introduced to meet

nutrition, education and health needs of vulnerable children; food, school uniforms and other necessities (DM-2).

Poverty and vulnerability have long-standing damaging consequences on children like malnutrition, so cash transfers are also seen as vital for tackling immediate problems such as lack of means of livelihood in families raising young children (Garcia and Moore 2012:20). One district manager indicated that CGP was introduced to meet children's nutritional needs among other issues:

CGP was introduced to meet nutrition, education and health needs of vulnerable children, transport to go to health centres, money to buy school uniforms and other needs (DM-1).

A similar view was raised by another district manager that the CGP is implemented to cater for the various needs of children:

Social assistance targets poverty reduction, addresses food insecurity, issues of social and economic inequality, therefore the CGP is implemented to support families with children have basic income to meet the basic needs, improve school enrolment and attendance (DM-3).

The respondents in one focus group also mentioned that they believe that the CGP is implemented to meet the children's basic needs because it is only given to families with children:

The government started this program to assist the poor children and their households; it is a very great help; we live with orphans whom we are able to meet their basic needs through this program. The programme was implemented to reach out to poor families to help them with essentials, like taking children to school, paying for bursaries has made a lot of difference in the lives of vulnerable children (FG1).

Education is believed to be a powerful means to reverse inter-generational poverty and inspire development. According to Vincent and Freeland (2008:103), evidence indicates that social grants are key in ensuring access to education, by enabling families to afford school fees and other materials required and related to school attendance, such as uniforms, books and stationery. Respondents in Focus Group-5 mentioned that the government is helping them to meet children's school needs:

The government is meeting us halfway to provide for the needs of the children, we are needy hence it is helping us. Government is trying to support us to be able to send children to school and meet other needs (FG-5).

Child poverty is common across the world and in Lesotho children are said to be multi-dimensionally poor, deprived in various dimensions of well-being (UNICEF 2018b:3). The country is, therefore, implementing the CGP to address the poverty that most of the children are facing, to meet the nutritional, educational and health needs.

6.3 The Delivery Processes of the Child Grants Programme

The processes that are in place for the delivery of the CGP include the targeting and enrolment of beneficiaries. These processes are the core of this programme. This section will discuss the findings pertaining to the processes used by government for identifying the beneficiaries for the CGP.

6.3.1 Targeting and Enrolment of Beneficiaries for the CGP

According to Slater and Farrington (2009:1), most countries are fiscally challenged as regards adequately financing social grants, therefore forcing targeting in the provision of grants. Targeting is used as the main mechanism to guarantee that cash transfers are received only by those considered needy or eligible.

The responses of the participants in relation to targeting and enrolment of beneficiaries' eligibility was analysed using the themes **community mobilisation and sensitisation, quality of data, validation and recertification**. The implementers, government officials and a representative from UNICEF noted that community mobilisation and sensitisation, quality of data, validation and re-certification are crucial

to the effective, reliable and credible targeting for the CGP. The beneficiaries also gave their views on how they were selected to be the recipients of the grant.

(i) Community mobilisation and sensitisation

The CGP uses the Proxy Means Testing (PMT) technique to target the beneficiaries. According to Slater and Farrington (2009:2), means-testing uses household poverty indicators in terms of income while the proxy indicators use the scorecards based on a range of asset indicators, with a cut-off for eligibility. However, Sabates-Wheeler and Szyp (2022:11) indicate that using the PMT for targeting is extremely challenging because the exclusion and inclusion errors are high. The PMT criterion is also less understood and accepted by the communities. The statistical formulas used for classifying eligible people are difficult for communities to understand, resulting in mistrust of the method among the communities (Thomas 2014:106).

Based on these arguments, a respondent from one private organisation which provides technical and financial support for the implementation of the CGP commented that:

A robust community mobilisation and awareness programme that constantly engages with the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries is important to sensitise the people about the programme targeting mechanism. We hear a lot of dissatisfaction from the public, people speculate because they are not aware how the beneficiaries are selected. When the people are not aware of it, they tend to speculate and sometimes generate unfounded theories leading to dissatisfaction among those who do not qualify (PO-1).

An auxiliary social worker also endorsed this view:

Most of the errors happen at the stage of NISSA data collection and also because verification of households generated as eligible by the system is not done. The ministry needs to make sure that Auxiliary Social workers are present during NISSA data collection because a lot of mistakes occur when officials are not part of that activity; the consultants who carry out the exercise tend to misinform the people about the intentions of NISSA which later causes problems because the people end up giving information that is incorrect. The

government needs to spend enough time to mobilise communities before engaging consultancy for data collection so that the communities clearly understand the importance and intention of NISSA data collection (ASW-5).

García-Jaramillo and Miranti (2015:27) mention that having a robust sensitisation system (campaigns) on programme eligibility minimises the exclusion errors. The CGP beneficiaries mentioned that the community was informed about the programme eligibility and involved in selecting the recipients. Those in Focus Group-3 mentioned:

Firstly, officers came to our houses registering us, they asked questions about how many people lived in the household including the children; how the family affords daily needs and many other questions. Again, the community members were involved in selecting people who are now beneficiaries; giving confirmations on how each family earns its living (FG-3).

The beneficiaries in Focus Group-10 confirmed that the community members knew how the selection of CGP beneficiaries was done:

Public gatherings were held after house to house registrations and the government officials informed us that only people who are needy will be chosen, people who lack the means of income and then the community members were asked to confirm who were poor (FG-10).

However, the participants in Focus Group-12 agreed that people feel bitter if they do not qualify, despite the fact that the community is engaged in confirming the status of the households. It is therefore best for government to decide on its own:

The grant has caused a lot of differences within the community, those who are not in the program have become bitter, so I think it would be better if the government decided on its own who qualify, make their own assessments (FG-12).

(ii) Quality of data

Proper targeting does not only depend on being understandable to the affected communities but also on the quality of the data used to identify the beneficiaries. Smith (2014:106) mentions that when using the PMT targeting method, the database needs constant updating to stay relevant, in order to effectively catch those who fall into poverty. According to Smith (2014:106), although it is so important, this is impractical. The cost implications of maintaining an up-to-date database are high.

The PMT data makes targeting difficult if the data are out of date (Smith 2014:106). According to Sabates-Wheeler and Szyg (2022:10), the statistical weights tend to provide inappropriate poverty scores which lead to high inclusion and exclusion errors. Further, the database should be updated regularly so that households that have been recently established are not left out of the programme (Sabates-Wheeler and Szyg 2022:10). Data used for targeting must be reliable and credible so as to minimise errors.

A respondent from the UNICEF admitted the importance of quality data but at the same time indicated the following:

No targeting methodology is perfect, it will always have errors, errors of inclusion and exclusion but what is needed is to be within an acceptable margin of error (PO-1).

Several government officials raised concern over the credibility of the database used for CGP targeting. The overarching impression is that NISSA is problematic for being used as a targeting tool for the CGP for different reasons.

According to one auxiliary social worker NISSA is not reliable:

The NISSA data is not reliable because the collection or household registration is done by the consultancy firms who hire people who do not know how to assess vulnerability and this leads to faulty enrolment of people who are not really needy excluding the needy (ASW-2).

The same view concerning reliability was shared by another auxiliary social worker:

The data in NISSA is not reliable because is not regularly updated and the fact that there is no validation of beneficiaries causes errors, there is a considerable number of undeserving people who are being enrolled into the programme (ASW-6).

One district manager mentioned that timeous usage of the data stored in the NISSA can minimise errors and improve the effectiveness of the system used for targeting the grant beneficiaries. However, targeting errors are huge for CGP.

The gap between data collection and enrolment of beneficiaries in to CGP is too wide hence affects the reliability of such data. NISSA needs to be updated regularly so that beneficiaries are enrolled using fresh data to minimise the exclusion and inclusion errors. Errors can be hugely minimised if the data collected through NISSA is used timeously; delays lead to errors (DM-1).

Besides the issue of reliability, one auxiliary social worker was of the view that NISSA should not be used as the only mechanism for targeting. The view is that the system at times qualifies households who are not necessarily needy while leaving out those who meet the criteria set out in the programme implementation plan.

Targeting through NISSA database creates problems because the households are no longer physically assessed to determine their vulnerability in a more practical manner, this leads to qualification of households which are not necessarily needy; exclusion and inclusion errors are huge in this programme (ASW-4).

In terms of the shortcomings of targeting by only using data from NISSA, the respondents suggest that validation and re-certification of beneficiaries are important for the credibility of this programme. According to some of the implementers of this programme, validation and re-certification can increase the efficiency of the programme targeting and minimise the exclusion and inclusion errors.

(iii) Validation and re-certification of beneficiaries

Concentrating benefits on the poor households is a priority in low-income countries and therefore targeting is the main mechanism by which this priority can be realised to guarantee that cash transfers are only received by those considered needy or eligible (Slater and Farrington 2009:1). The respondents have highlighted that validation and re-certification of beneficiaries are imperative for credibility of the CGP. In order to ensure that the programme remains relevant and serving the relevant clients, it needs to be regularly monitored through processes like validation to make sure that the right people are enrolled, and through re-certification to timeously address the emerging issues.

Validation is vital in enrolling the CGP beneficiaries, and targeting becomes more accurate, one auxiliary social worker suggests:

For targeting and enrolment to be properly done, the households need to be validated before being enrolled into the programme. What we learn from the programme is that some people have been enrolled as beneficiaries but do not deserve to be beneficiaries, while those who are really needy have been excluded. This can be minimised if beneficiaries are validated, However, validation used to take place but of late it is no longer done (ASW-2).

Nonetheless, the beneficiaries have indicated that they were enrolled in the programme after they were validated by the community members:

My family was categorised as needy by the community; I look after a number of orphans and I have no means of providing for them, therefore I was chosen as one of the needy people who are eligible for the program (FG-4).

A similar view was shared in Focus Group-1, that community members were involved in selecting those who qualified for the programme:

There were people who registered all the people in the community, however, we were later called to the 'Pitso', (community gathering) where the community

members were asked to choose the people who are needy. The households were categorised according to their wealth and those who were identified as poor were enrolled in this program (FG-1).

According to Devereux (2021:156), proper targeting requires the data to be validated because applicants can under-report their income and assets. The implementation of CGP involves beneficiary validation as indicated by the respondents. The beneficiaries in Focus Group-7 also endorsed the process:

We believe that involving the community in the selection of the beneficiaries is good because the people themselves are able to confirm or disconfirm those who are not eligible for the programme (FG-7).

García-Jaramillo and Miranti (2015:26) indicate that having a well-established beneficiary re-certification process is crucial to find those who are no longer eligible. The need for re-certification was also emphasised by the respondent from UNICEF who was adamant that re-certification can improve the programme because only eligible people will remain in the programme:

Lack of recertification of the beneficiaries' compromises the programme credibility; NISSA assessments need to be done timeously in order to re-certify the beneficiaries, update the NISSA and check whether they still meet the programme requirements, in a minimum of three years and a maximum of five years, data needs to be re-collected because the premise is that within that time the socioeconomic landscape may have changed affecting the lives of households; some beneficiaries might not be qualifying anymore and therefore having to be released from the programme (PO-1).

The view that some people's socio-economic status changes over time was supported by one district manager, therefore reiterating the need for re-certification of the beneficiaries over time to ensure that the programme covers people who are really needy:

The living standards of people change over time; others improve while others deteriorate, therefore recertification is necessary in updating the data so that targeting can be done efficiently, the recertification will relief the programme of the beneficiaries who no longer fit the programme's specifications while helping to identify those who have fallen into vulnerability (DM-1).

The auxiliary social workers also mentioned that re-certification can help to ensure that only deserving people are in the programme. Apparently, there are people who are receiving the grant even though they have sufficient means of supporting themselves.

It can help if the database is updated through recertification at least every two to three years so as to identify people who may no longer be qualifying for the programme so that they are replaced with the those who meet the programme criteria (ASW-6 and ASW-11).

The importance of re-certification of beneficiaries is continuously underscored by the respondents, especially the ones who come in contact with the beneficiaries at the payments points more often. Another auxiliary social worker mentioned that people who were previously not categorised as needy may fall into the category of the needy over time, while those who qualified may no longer fit the programme criteria.

The standards of living change therefore assessments and recertification are necessary to continuously check whether beneficiaries are still eligible for the programme and to check whether those who were categorised as not needy have not fallen into the needy categories over time (ASW-8).

Validation done by engaging the community members is good, but should be carefully managed. All the community members should be encouraged to participate and engage through mechanisms that allow even the disadvantaged to contribute.

This was noted by an auxiliary social worker:

Even though validation by community members is good, the needy or the poor people usually do not feel free to participate in community activities, they are

reluctant to voice their views hence are likely to be could be excluded from the programme (ASW-2).

Public participation in policy formulation and implementation legitimises the policy. The wider community, as well as those affected by it, get to understand and appreciate its usefulness and the need for its implementation. In the case of monitoring the CGP through validation and recertification, the beneficiaries will understand the processes if they are mobilised and engaged.

Sabates-Wheeler and Szyp (2022:12) corroborate the views of respondent ASW-2: community-based targeting has shortcomings such as a lack of transparency, discriminatory practices, and exclusion of the poor who are considered 'undeserving' because the elite tend to capture the process of validation.

Communities need to be mobilised and sensitised about the CGP so that everyone understands the process. García-Jaramillo and Miranti (2015:27) indicate that having a strong communication system (campaigns) about social programmes is useful so that potential beneficiaries know about the programmes and can register. However, no targeting mechanism is without limitations, because evidence indicates that the proxy means test used for the CGP has shortcomings, namely inclusion and exclusion errors as mentioned by the respondents. Communities are not well sensitised and mobilised for data collection, and the firms engaged in the exercise weaken the credibility of the data by not explaining the purpose of the activity correctly.

Reliability of data from NISSA is questionable because it is not updated regularly; targeting is flawed because of usage of old data. Processes like validation and recertification must be considered so that the programme is continually improved. These processes reduce targeting errors and ensure that only eligible people remain in the programme.

6.4 Policy Networks or Partnerships in the Delivery of the CGP

In this section the views and experiences of the government officials and the representatives of the private organisations implementing the CGP, are analysed to understand the relationships of the partners and benefits of the formation of the partnership to deliver the CGP.

Collaborative and cross-sectoral networks are used to implement public policy (Rosenau 2000:85). The reasons that compel governments to seek inter-agency networks for public policy implementation relate to governments' resource constraints and lack of technical capacity. Networks for implementation of public policies usually include other government departments, private sector actors, non-profit organisations and the public (Eduardo et al 2013:369). Private companies bring efficiency to public policy delivery (Brinkerhoff 1999:126), policy collaborations produce better and more effective outcomes than when organisations work independently.

Parsons (1995:494), who introduced the notion of delivery mixes in public policy delivery, indicates that collaborations are inevitable because government is under pressure to deliver and cut bureaucratic control which usually compromises service delivery. In this study, the policy network included the following stakeholders: Government of Lesotho, UNICEF Lesotho, Vodacom Lesotho and G4S security company. According to Streck (2005:20), the policy networks are formed to increase programme performance and achieve the envisaged outcomes, as well as share benefits accruing from the partnership. The quality of outcomes gained through collaborative actions is often the motivation for the establishment of collaborative networks (Eduardo et al 2013:370).

Efficiency and effectiveness, reciprocity and mutual benefit, communication and coordination are the common reasons which the government officials and the representatives of the private organisations articulated as the main reasons for the formation of CGP networks.

(i) Efficiency and Effectiveness

These two themes were articulated by all the respondents regarding the use of networks in delivering the CGP. Rosenau (2000:85) indicates that social problems have become more complex, resources are scarce and yet the government has the obligation to be responsive. Therefore, the networks formed to deliver public policy, increase and / or augment government's ability to successfully provide the goods and services that meet public demands. According to Keast et al (2006:7), networks are placed under the label of the New Public Management in which the emphasis is on attaining efficiency, effectiveness and economy.

The senior social assistance officer alluded that the government lacks capacity to deliver CGP:

Government of Lesotho does not have the capacity to deliver the grant on its own, resource capacity is limited; the human resource and transport in particular, so engaging an independent company to deliver the grants is a move to guarantee efficiency and effectiveness. Issues of accountability and transparency are critical for effective implementation, so the networks or the public private partnerships are important to secure this, especially for big programmes like CGP, (SSAO-1).

The Director of Planning made the point that efficiency and effectiveness depend on the issues of transparency and accountability because if they are compromised programmes tend to fail.

If the government works on its own, audit reports are poor, sometimes they are not done hence poor performance and collapse of most of government programmes. For example, there are a lot of flaws in the delivery of the Old Age Pension grant and the Public Assistance programme simply because government is working on its own with limited resources and no checks and balances for accountability (D-2).

The collaborative actions of the partnership actors produce synergistic effects, more and better outcomes are attained maximising programme efficiency and effectiveness in realising the desired goals. Swe and Lim (2019:304-305) indicate that efficiency relates to cost-saving and time-saving ways to achieve the desired output, while effectiveness is the measurement of governmental performance associated with the achievement of the ultimate results of public services.

One official, the senior social assistance officer, made the following statement in relation to the efficiency and effectiveness of using networks for service delivery;

It has been proven good practice to use the third party in the delivery of grants, it relieves government because government does not have capacity to efficiently and effectively handle programmes of this magnitude, it cannot provide quality service if it administers the grant on its own, it is a lot of work. Government is not flexible enough to operate a program like CGP on its own, for example the fleet of cars needed to run the programme cannot be maintained and afforded by government. Besides, government is rigid, follows strict procedures to secure resources needed for operation but the third party is flexible enough to solve the hiccups any time that they may arise (SSAO-2).

This multi-actor cooperation in the delivery of a public programme like CGP increases value for money because of the ability of actors to combine effort, and share roles and responsibilities. This is supported by Streck (2005 :5) that social problems have become increasingly complex and require quick responses and effective decision-making; hence, can only be addressed through multi-actor cooperation. Cooperation, as defined by Brynard (2009:559), refers to concerted efforts between stakeholders to a policy, and willingness to share expertise and information. Working together increases efficiency and effectiveness and thus policy success.

One official, the director in the department of planning, indicates that policy collaborations usually produce effective policy outcomes because the private companies in particular use innovative methods to deliver their services.

Companies have expertise; the technical know-how and are innovative hence their efficiency in delivering their various goods and services. Therefore, the government had to engage these companies in order to effectually handle this programme, otherwise it would suffer massive inefficiencies (D-2).

The same sentiments on the issue of efficiency and effectiveness of the public-private networks were shared by another director:

Doing business with the private sector is very efficient because it is far better and competent than the government when it comes to delivery. Government is too relaxed and has no sense of urgency but the private sector is, since it is bound to commit to the terms of the agreement establishing its partnership with government to secure their business (D-1).

CGP is a huge programme, and as has been indicated above, complex programmes require multi-actor involvement for efficiency and effectiveness; the two companies inevitably add great value to the successful delivery of the CGP. The material resources in terms of vehicles are never lacking for this programme because the contracted firm always deliver as scheduled.

The respondent from the Cash in Transit company indicated that they always ensure that they perform their task effectively:

Our responsibility is to transit the money to the pay points and we have to make sure that we do that in a very safe and secure manner; to make sure that the right people are paid and paid the correct amounts as per the payment lists. We believe that our company brings great value to the delivery of this programme, looking at the places where we have to go, we do not believe government would manage on its own. But we manage, despite the bad terrain of our country we are able to make it to the pay points and successfully pay the beneficiaries (PO-2).

The mobile company is a stakeholder in delivering the CGP through Mpesa. According to Bold, Porteous and Rotman (2012:1), mobile money transfers substantially lessen

the implementation costs associated with providing manual cash transfers. Aspects of financial inclusion, transparency and accountability are highlighted. According to Devereux and Vincent (2010:371), e-payments have several advantages such as efficiency and cost-effectiveness in terms of personnel utilisation, because staff are not required to expend the pay-outs physically, therefore saving on money and time, and they are released to perform other tasks which would otherwise be neglected.

The mobile payments are cheap, greatly reduce the operational costs, increase efficient use of programme funds and the government benefits. The senior social assistance officer indicated that the government pays very little in service charges for Mpesa:

The government is already realising some savings because the service charges it pays for mobile payments are very low and the savings realised so far can be used to expand the coverage to more people and in the long run increase the grant value (SSAO-1).

In view of reducing costs and enhancing the efficiency of the delivery of the programme, the respondent from UNICEF indicated that the organisation is committed to supporting the GoL to increase the number of beneficiaries paid through Mpesa:

My organisation wants to support GoL to gradually increase the number of households paid through mobile payments because the method is cost effective, far cheaper than the CIT. Mobile payments make things easier, it can even increase productivity and allow us to move from quarterly payments to monthly payments (PO-1).

The government is clearly benefiting in terms of efficiency and effectiveness in delivering the CGP through the network it formed with the private institutions. The resources and technical support offered by the private partners in delivering this programme are valuable because they enhance its implementation.

(ii) Reciprocity and Mutual Benefit

Junki (2006:22) mentions that network governance has the key characteristic of transactions being conducted among the relevant players on the basis of mutual benefits, trust and reciprocity. This mutual cooperation is maintained because the players are part of a long-term relationship influenced by the gains each actor gets from the partnership.

A number of government officials acknowledge that government cannot manage a programme of this magnitude on its own, due to inadequacy of resources both human and material. Successful delivery of CGP depends on the relationships that the Government of Lesotho is able to maintain with its partners. The ability of the CIT company to deliver the cash to the various pay points eases the burden of the lack of resources (vehicles) on the side of government, while also ensuring safety for the cash.

According to Brinkerhoff (2002:325), partnerships are pursued specifically because the actors have unique offerings such as resources, skills and expertise. The respondent from the CIT company made the following statement in regard to the benefit of safety that they provide in delivering the cash to pay CGP beneficiaries:

We are familiar with cash security, we have enough resources; material and human therefore it is easy for us to carry out the work of this nature. Our company owns vehicles installed with modern technology security devices, therefore we have never encountered any heists and or hijackings. That is a great deal on the side of government, their money is always safe (PO-2).

The company further indicates that their partnership with GoL is good because they are able to deliver according to their agreement with the government. The mutual gains of the partnership enhance efficiency and effectiveness because each partner seeks to protect its organisational identity, thereby strengthening the synergistic efforts to maintain the partnership (Brinkerhoff 2002:325).

According to the security company, they are trying by all means to maintain their relationship with GoL to secure their business:

The part we play in the delivery of this programme is very huge but the rates at which we charge the government are very low; looking at the places we serve; we have not increased the percentage of what we charge for this service because we are trying to make it easy for the government to reach its people while we also benefit. Other companies would increase the fees annually, but we do not (PO-2).

According to the security company, the good thing is that the government also honours its commitments, it pays the company timeously thereby maintaining an acceptable level of trust between itself and the partner, ensuring effectiveness of the programme delivery. Successful partnerships are reliant on partners' trust for each other, trust enhances the development of the inter-dependent relationships resulting in mutual benefits (Junki 2006:230). The specialisation and experience of the company in handling cash security issues increases GoL's trust in its services, hence, the continued partnership over the years.

The director in the social assistance department indicated that the role played by the company in their partnership cannot be underestimated:

G4S is a big company and therefore is the best option to deliver CGP, their resource base in terms of vehicles and personnel is better than of any other company in the country, it is doing far better than the government itself would to deliver this programme (D-1).

The mobile network company has brought significant and remarkable value to the delivery of CGP. This company possesses expertise in mobile money operations and has greatly lowered the operating costs of the CGP as some of the programme beneficiaries are now paid through mobile money thereby cutting the costs incurred of physically paying the beneficiaries through the CIT company. The GoL is benefiting from this partnership as more beneficiaries are moving to the mobile payment mode.

The government is striving to digitalise the payment of CGP and other grants through mobile money as it is more accessible than other methods.

The respondent from the mobile network company indicated that their company increases the efficiency and effectiveness of the programme delivery by making the grant easily accessible to the beneficiaries:

Our company is helping GoL in making financial services accessible to all segments of the society. Also to reduce the operating costs as well as reducing fraud associated with physical handling of money. Mpesa is safe (PO-3).

The respondent further indicated that their company has gained invaluable clientele since the introduction of Mpesa to the delivery of CGP:

More people are getting used to using Mpesa, therefore increasing the network client base and therefore more financial gains because people end up using the network service for other purposes (PO-3).

The respondent further indicated that because of the gains they accrue from their engagement in the delivery of this policy, they ensure that the beneficiaries have access to the service by giving them free sim cards and providing the Mpesa agents with phones to help beneficiaries who do not have phones:

We offer free sim cards to the beneficiaries, give our agents a phone which they use to help the beneficiaries withdraw their money if they do not have their own. We are trying to make the service accessible. More importantly, we make sure that we educate our agents on how to service the beneficiaries, (PO-3).

Brinkerhoff (2002:325-326) defines partnership as “an active affiliation amongst the different actors who share the mutually approved objectives that are pursued through a common understanding of the most rational division of labour based on the respective comparative advantages for each partner”.

The respondent from Vodacom Lesotho indicated the advantage of reduced costs on the side of GoL in using Mpesa mobile money to pay the beneficiaries. At the same time the company increases its client base. This has been a crucial move for GoL to reduce the operating costs for the delivery of CGP:

Above all, this partnership mainly for government is a move to reduce delivery costs and to increase transparency because in this way there are no leakages of funds because Mpesa makes it easy to trace the payments. It is an advantage however even on our side as the company, we are increasing our client base. We all benefit (PO-3).

The issue of delivery cost reduction has also been widely acknowledged by several government officials. The government benefits in terms of resource redistribution. Personnel utilisation becomes efficient because the staff are no longer needed at the pay points since the mobile company was engaged. They are able to attend to duties which would otherwise be neglected throughout the payment period. According to the Director of Planning, time and money savings have been substantial through using Mpesa to pay CGP beneficiaries:

Government officials are able to use their time efficiently to perform other duties other than spending days at the payments sites while other things wait. The workload is no more on the government, there is no worry about massive resources needed to deliver the grants (D2).

The issue of effectiveness in respect of releasing the human resources to perform other duties beside the delivery of CGP, is further emphasised by one district manager:

Digital payments have many advantages; resources are used efficiently, unlike in manual payments because too many people get involved in manual payments, compromising the core functions of the officers especially social workers with their different responsibilities to help people with their different problems. Mobile payments relief usage of resources and increases

effectiveness since resources are channelled to other functions other than paying the grants (M-1).

(iii) Communication, Commitment and Coordination

Junki (2006:25) mentions that although governance is undergoing a transformation from a bureaucratic administration to network governance and thus witnessing roles changing significantly, the government still needs to play a key role in governing the network. Brynard (2009:558) states that commitment and coordination are indispensable for successful policy implementation. Further, commitment is enhanced by the coordination of all actors involved, therefore the policy objectives are met (Brynard 2009:560).

The two payment companies indicated that there are issues that need to be considered in their partnership with GoL, namely communication, commitment and coordination. These elements are core to successful policy implementation as indicated above. The respondent from the security company mentioned that service delivery networks depend on clear communication and coordination so that every actor fulfils their role:

We need structured meetings and engage more on our partnership, we need to review our work and rectify issues, at least after every payment cycle. The government needs to take responsibility to initiate such meetings, they are the policy owners after all (PO-2).

According to Bryson, Crosby and Stone (2015:6), working together requires elements of trust, commitment and communication amongst the partners. The respondent from the mobile network company shared these sentiments that they need to communicate as partners:

We need frequent engagements as partners so that we are able to timeously address hitches whenever they occur, (PO-3).

The government officials commend the policy networks formed for the implementation of CGP for the value they bring in this programme in terms of efficiency and

effectiveness. The government alone would not manage this programme due to its magnitude; the partnerships enable better access. The partners in the delivery of this programme perform their roles accordingly; the benefits they gain necessitate commitment to their contract terms. However, communication and coordination need to be enhanced so that the trust is maintained among the partners ensuring sustainable relationships.

6.4.1 Challenges Facing the CGP Networks or Partnerships: Implementers' experiences

According to Eduardo et al (2013:369), governments are now reliant upon other governments, private sector actors and non-profit organisations, to plan, implement and manage government programmes and services. Giacchino and Kakabadse (2003:144) explain that the policy implementation requires commitment. Commitment refers to a noticeable and evident political and organisational determination to deliver a policy, backed up by a strong coordination of all the stakeholders, while making sure that the implementing organisation takes absolute ownership (Giacchino and Kakabadse 2003:144).

The CGP network face challenges said the government officials and the implementing partners. According to Eduardo et al (2013:369), network collaborations have challenges related to time, costs, logistical issues, and issues of mistrust arising from different organisational principles and management.

In this section, the government officials discussed the challenges they experience in implementing the programme, and note the concerns with the Cash in Transit (CIT) company relating to the high costs of delivering the grant money to the pay points, logistics and operational issues and the unethical behaviour of the CIT company staff.

(i) High Delivery Costs

The CIT company has the monopoly of delivering CGP because there is no other company with sufficient resources to deliver a programme of this magnitude. The high costs of delivering the CGP is a huge challenge for the government they are seeking

more cost effective delivery modes besides the CIT. Most of the government officials indicate that it is too expensive to deliver this grant through the CIT company.

One official, the director of social assistance, was of the opinion that using the CIT to deliver CGP is way too expensive for the government:

Delivering this grant through a CIT company is far too expensive and inefficient in a way, the delivery costs take up to a quarter of the total annual budget of the programme. And that money could be used to cover more people but we cannot add more people because the budget is too strained (D-1).

The view shared by this government official above suggests that consideration of alternative payment methods is necessary to reduce the costs of the programme and at least increase the benefit. It was further indicated that the Government of Lesotho (GoL) is not receiving value for the money it spends in hiring the services of the CIT company. The director in the planning department indicated that the company is extremely expensive and sometimes GoL is not always getting the service for its money:

The CIT company has no competition so it tends to be expensive, it will be better once we have transferred most of our beneficiaries to digital modes (D-2).

The issue of high costs indicated above suggests that the GoL needs to transition to more affordable delivery modes to save money and perhaps assist in increasing the coverage or even the value of the grant.

According to Devereux and Vincent (2010:368) and Vincent and Cull (2011:38), delivering grants manually is inefficient and problematic for the implementing agency, disbursement cost become very expensive. Government officials further highlight the fact that the manual payment system is expensive in terms of the financial costs and other resources and the time needed to effect or facilitate the payment. Two district managers indicated that the system was too costly:

The operational costs for financing the manual payment system are very expensive; the government is reducing the bulk of beneficiaries getting paid through this method because it is attempting to reduce the operational costs; the mode is extremely costly, demands too much in terms of financial, material and human resources. Hiring a security firm to transit the money is expensive (DM-2 and DM-3).

According to Andrew et al (2012:15), the infrastructure deficits put extra strain on the financial costs for delivering grants. The CGP is largely delivered manually because of the lack of the infrastructure needed for digital payments in the rural areas where most of the beneficiaries reside. The poor road network also contributes to the high cost of paying the beneficiaries manually. This mode of payment is discredited by the CGP implementers for being exorbitant.

One government official, the senior social assistance officer, shared the following view:

The government is incurring a lot of expenses for delivering the grant manually. Therefore, what is more important for the government is to reduce the operating costs of the CGP so as to save money and invest in increasing the number of households receiving the grant (SSAO-1).

The programme is using a large percentage of the overall resources of the Ministry. Other departments are compromised because the CGP is given priority over other programmes. Officials prioritise payments times mentioned one district manager:

The programme is expensive in terms of time; government officials also get involved in the payments for the duration of the payment period therefore compromising the core functions of their work especially social workers who have the responsibility to help people with their different problems. Other services suffer because most of the time they are put on hold to attend the payments; vehicles breakdown and have to be maintained time and again (DM-2).

Reducing the operational costs is also crucial for the sustainability of the CGP. However, Bharadwaj et al (2021:28) indicate that sustainable funding for social assistance programmes is a grave problem in countries with low-income status. Government officials raise concerns over the sustainability of the programme in the coming years. The high costs paid to the cash in transit company prevent the expansion of the programme, and its sustainability is questionable.

The Manager of Social Assistance raised a concern regarding the sustainability of the CGP:

The programme cannot increase coverage due to high costs incurred to transition the money to the pay points, and this will affect the sustainability of the program in the long run (M-1).

Payment methods should guarantee cost effectiveness for the implementing agency so that the programme is sustainable and allows opportunities for improvements (World Bank 2016:16). In the case of the CGP the government is unable to increase the value of the grant due to what it considers to be extortionate operational costs. The Director of Social Assistance was of the view that the CGP will face a funds deficit in the long run:

The program will be at a greater risk if partners withdraw support, government will struggle to keep the program running because of excessive costs especially those incurred to pay the company transiting the money to the pay points (D-1).

(ii) Logistics and operational issues

The CIT company delivering the CGP is based in Maseru but pays all the community councils across the country. This is a huge challenge for the efficient delivery of the grant. The respondents from government raised concerns over the fact that beneficiaries are sometimes paid late due to delays on the part of the company because of the busy schedule of the payments. The senior social assistance officer indicated that the CIT company operated on a very tight schedule:

The problem existing with the CIT is that the beneficiaries sometimes delay in getting the money because the company has a hectic payment schedule moving from one council to another across the country taking time to reach other payment sites (SSAO-1).

Another senior social assistance officer corroborated the above statement:

Each and every day the CIT staff depart from Maseru to the furthest pay points across the country, they get tired and sometimes their work is not good; their reconciliations often do not balance probably because the errors occurred as they disburse the payments under pressure of time (SSAO-2).

The Director of Planning shared the concern that the CIT company sometimes fails to adhere to the contract conditions:

The company compromises on release of resources like transport where they release fewer cars for payments making them to work hastily in trying to reach more pay points on a particular day. This reflects when reconciliations are done and the funds do not balance (D-2).

The official therefore indicated that government has to investigate alternative delivery options to maximise payment effectiveness because the company takes too long to access all the pay points and the beneficiaries complain about the unsatisfactory treatment they get from the security company personnel.

The CIT company indicated its willingness to continue working with the GoL but mentioned that government causes delays that affect the company's preparation for the payments. The company's efficiency in sorting the money and preparing for accurate disbursement is affected. The representative mentioned:

The government sometimes delays to transfer the money to us causing us to also delay in packaging the money, it is a lot of work to package the money and we experience immense pressure if the money does not reach us on time

and sometimes we end up labelling the envelopes incorrectly such that the amounts do not correspond (PO-2).

The programme has grown tremendously over the years and as a way of managing accessibility, the GoL has been increasing the number of pay points which in turn increases the pressure on the side of the CIT company. One official indicated that increasing pay points causes delays in reaching some. It is obviously beneficial to improve grant accessibility by locating the pay points closer to the beneficiaries, however, that puts immense pressure on the CIT company. This was mentioned by one senior social assistance official:

Government increases pressure on the CIT company by increasing payments sites meaning that more time is needed to access them, therefore leading to delays in reaching some payment sites, delays in finishing payments causing them to pay in late hours which is not safe both for the company and the beneficiaries (SSAO-1).

Challenges related to the mobile payment operations are not so dire. Government is able to maximise value for money and reach more households with this programme. However, there are still some issues related to efficiency as noted by a senior social assistance officer:

There are delays in passing the payments sometimes, the mobile company takes time to solve the glitches that occur and interrupt the payments. Another issue is the cash availability at the mobile money agents; it is a problem; they usually do not have enough money to meet the beneficiaries demands of money (SSAO-1).

(iii) Unethical Behaviour

Bovaird (2004:210) mentions that policy network partnerships must be characterised by ethical and honest behaviour, where staff act legally and within professional codes of conduct. According to Bovaird (2004:210), ethical behaviour is considered a core value in the working partnership. However, professional ethics appear to be a problem

in the delivery of the CGP, government officials point to several issues of unethical behaviour on the side of the CIT company staff when dealing with the grant beneficiaries.

The manner in which the CIT company staff communicates with the beneficiaries is unacceptable. One district manager indicated that clients are sometimes harassed verbally; they do not handle the beneficiaries professionally:

Our ministry serves very vulnerable people, people who are already insecure and cannot explain themselves well if there are problems, particularly because most of them are not educated, so the CIT staff do not know how to handle them, in terms of talking to them in acceptable manner, (DM-1).

The issue of improper communication is attributed to high staff turnover within the company resulting in some of the staff going to the payment points without a proper orientation on how to communicate with the clients. This was mentioned by the senior social assistance officer:

The CIT company staff sometimes harass our clients verbally; I think this is because of the high staff turnover at the company. This results in some of the staff going to the payments without proper training hence are not professional in dealing with the beneficiaries, shouting at them and not guiding them properly on what is needed to receive the money (SSAO-2).

It is evident that the issue of the conduct of the security company staff towards the beneficiaries is a serious concern among the government officials and it was noted by the ASWs as well. One auxiliary social worker indicated:

The security company staff do not know how to approach our clients, they do not talk to them in a good manner, they scold them, use harsh words that intimidate the beneficiaries, and do not give them chance to explain themselves where they need to. They usually dismiss them without taking time to listen to them and understand what they have to say (ASW-3).

The sentiments that the beneficiaries are not being treated well by the payment officials was shared by another auxiliary social worker:

“G4S staff does not communicate with the beneficiaries in an acceptable manner, they shout at them (ASW-1).

Challenges are inevitable in policy networks and partnerships. This is reflected in the analysis of issues indicated as challenges in this study. The delivery costs are high, and the engagement of the CIT company escalates the cost of delivering CGP which impacts on the value of the grant since a large proportion of the grant funds are consumed by the operational costs. There are concerns with logistics and operational issues on the side of the CIT company, delays in reaching the pay points are sometimes worrying. The release of fewer cars to undertake the payments when the pay points are many and far apart from each other makes travelling tedious. The government also needs to improve on its processes for preparing the payment lists to allow for timely transfer of funds to the payment companies. The partnerships need to maintain respect for each partner. In the case of the CGP, the concern is that the G4S personnel do not maintain professionalism in dealing with the CGP beneficiaries.

6.5 Barriers to Effective Implementation of the CGP

The government officials and partner organisation UNICEF, (the organisation which provides technical support for the implementation of the CGP) have articulated the barriers that face the implementation of the CGP. The findings are discussed under the themes of lack of public participation, lack of decentralisation, resource constraints and poor administrative capacity and lack of political will.

The bottom-up theorists underscore the importance of policy beneficiaries and the frontline workers who actually deliver the service, arguing that policy is actually made at the local level (Matland 1995:148).

The barriers identified by the government officials in relation to the implementation of the CGP are discussed below:

(i) Lack of Public Participation

Lack of public participation in the formulation of the policy was emphasised as having an enduring impact on how the programme is received and perceived by the wider society. The bottom-up approach proponents of public policy implementation maintain that proper policy implementation occurs when the policy recipients are actively involved in the formulation and execution of the programmes, because in that way, they can understand the full range of the implementation's complexities (deLeon and deLeon 2002:470).

The respondents discussed the lack of participation by the programme beneficiaries in the inception and conceptualisation of the CGP. Said one district manager:

Successful policy implementation starts at the policy formulation stage, wide consultation and participation of the entire public is necessary. CGP is a good programme but it lacked public participation in its formulation, the issues that are being encountered in its implementation show that it lacked public participation in its conception. People do not fully understand its purpose hence name it shameful names indicating that they do not understand its conceptualisation or purpose because they were not involved in its formulation (DM-1).

When the policy is not understood by the public, it lacks the support needed for successful implementation. The involvement of the public in influencing public policy implementation increases transparency, quality and success of policies as well as engendering the acceptability of the public policy (Anderson 1997:70). One government official, the senior social assistance officer, mentioned that the purpose of CGP is not well understood by the public because they did not participate in its formulation:

Lack of public participation affects policy implementation, for instance the CGP is labelled as a programme that promotes dependency and encouraging people to have more children especially the youth because the youth get grants without working for them, if consultations were made in formulation of

this policy, may be the public might have advocated that the youth be engaged in programmes which they could work for the money they earn (SSAO-1).

Further assertions made by the respondents indicate that public participation is a crucial aspect for successful policy implementation because it creates support as well as ownership. Another senior social assistance officer shared the following view:

Successful policy implementation starts at the policy formulation stage; wide consultation with stakeholders particularly the public is very critical in promoting support and ownership (SSAO-2).

The argument raised by the bottom-up theorists that proper policy implementation occurs when the policy recipients are strongly involved in the development and execution of the programmes, appears valid in the case of CGP. The respondents repeatedly indicated that the problems emerging in the delivery of this policy are due to a lack of participation by the beneficiaries. One district manager indicated that people do not fully appreciate CGP:

The public still do not understand the purpose of this grant, public participation is very crucial for policy appreciation, if people are aware of the policy intent, they understand it but if they do not appreciate it, it cannot realise its intended results (DM-1).

Public participation is necessary in public policy formulation because it affects how the policy is received by the beneficiaries as well as the wider public. It fosters acceptability and support, increasing its legitimacy and therefore success in attaining or achieving the goals and objectives it is formulated to achieve (Anderson 1997:70).

The above was supported by the view of one district manager who indicated that consultation with the policy recipients creates acceptance and understanding of who the intended policy beneficiaries were and why they are beneficiaries:

Consultations create buy in and acceptance or understanding among the public to understand who qualifies to benefit from the program and why. If not engaged, people tend to reject the policy, conflicts arise therefore policy results cannot be realised if the people do not support the policy; lack of consultation reduces the credibility of the program, (DM-3).

(ii) Lack of Decentralisation

The respondents, particularly the ASWs who work at the community level where the programme is being implemented, firmly pointed out that the centralisation of the programme's operations makes its implementation difficult. The auxiliary social workers are the policy implementers whom Lipsky calls the 'street level bureaucrats. They are closer to the service users and are crucial to the service delivery (Lipsky 1980:14). According to them, their lack of access to the Management Information System for Social Assistance (MISSA) compromises the effectiveness of the delivery of the programme. The general perception is that the MISSA needs to be decentralised so that people at the district and community councils can respond swiftly to clients' queries or issues. One auxiliary social worker highlighted the importance of having access to the system:

Having access to the MISSA as officials at the community level is important, so that we are able to check client information and address emerging issues and queries timeously (ASW-1).

As it stands, the officials at the districts and in the community councils have no access to the MISSA, they depend on central officers to check clients' information in the system and that jeopardises case management. Another auxiliary social worker indicated that cases take too long to be resolved due to their lack of access to the MISSA:

Cases are not cleared on time because we rely on central office to reply to beneficiaries' issues and as result some cases are long dragged some of which never get resolved (ASW-3).

Matland (1995:147-148) argues that the top-down approach to policy implementation has shortcomings. Considering implementation as a purely administrative process, and law makers as the only key actors in the process is flawed, because the service deliverers are closer to the public, hence have knowledge and true comprehension of public problems.

According to Khan and Khandaker (2016:540), the management policy model of implementation indicates that communication must be quick and clear to everyone for a policy to be delivered effectively. In the case of the CGP, the auxiliary social workers are at the community level and are the immediate role players or officials that the beneficiaries encounter. These officials, according to Lipsky (1980:14), are the real policy makers because of the opportunity they have to make discretionary decisions over how they provide a service and / or enforce the policy guidelines.

However, they indicate that communication between themselves and the central office is often flawed and in turn affects the communication between themselves and the beneficiaries. They indicate that they find themselves in a position where they fail to provide necessary explanations to the programme beneficiaries due to the centralisation of the information. Apparently, most of the beneficiaries' queries are hardly ever solved due to the rigid approach to the case management system.

One auxiliary social worker made the following statement:

Programme operations are centralised, particularly the MISSA therefore making case management impossible at the local levels whereas implementation happens at the community councils. We need to be given the rights log in into the MISSA and access clients information in order to respond to their queries immediately, central office fails to effect changes accordingly and on time, this undermines the programme credibility (ASW-3).

Another auxiliary social worker shared similar sentiments that inaccessibility of the MISSA affects the service delivery very badly:

Inaccessibility to the MISSA hampers case management; for example, at the payments people are dismissed without clarity on their issues because when

there is a query an Auxiliary Social Worker at the payment site has to call central office to seek explanations but most of time that fails because of lack of network coverage or because the officer has no airtime to make calls leading to the dismissal of the beneficiary without explanation why they do not appear in the payment list for example or why their grant value has decreased (ASW-1).

According to Makinde (2005:63), communication is a crucial element for successful implementation of public policy, orders must be accurate and consistent, and communicated in a clear, appropriate and timely manner. However, flawed communication between the central level and the staff at the district and community council level is seemingly hampering the implementation of the CGP. Delays in resolving beneficiaries' complaints and issues are common because they are being handled through a hierarchy where the central office officials who are not close to the beneficiaries are the ones having to provide answers. Cases evidently pile up and others end up unattended, affecting the programme's credibility in the eyes of the recipients.

Another auxiliary social worker in one community council further indicated that queries about cases take too long to be answered:

Having no access to the MISSA makes our work difficult, we depend on central officers to answer the beneficiaries about whatever queries they have and what is even more stressing is that the officers at the central office are not always readily available to check household's status in the MIS, causing delays and dragging the cases for too long to be resolved (ASW-2).

Another auxiliary social worker reiterated the same point that it takes time for changes to be effected, and issues to be resolved due to the information system that is only accessible to certain officials:

Changes are not effected timely; case management forms take too long to move from the district offices to the central office so much that most of the time

a succeeding payment may proceed while changes from the previous payment have not been effected (ASW-6).

The ASWs are the street-level bureaucrats in the implementation of this programme, they need to be well equipped and able to address issues on the ground. According to Onyekwelu et al (2015:15), these officials can advance or retard the policy implementation as they are the ones responsible for the coordination and execution of activities at the local level. However, their role in the implementation of this programme is evidently undermined by their lack of access to the MISSA. This causes delays and inefficiencies while also further weakens the trust beneficiaries have in them as government officials, because of the red tape encountered in the addressing of the issues and queries of the beneficiaries.

These delays can be avoided only if the street level bureaucrats, the auxiliary social workers, can access the MISSA. One of the ASWs maintained that the case management needs to be decentralised in order to improve the delivery of the CGP:

Case management needs to be decentralised and local officials be granted the rights to update the beneficiaries' details, however it needs to be monitored for quality assurance. Case Management is compromised because the central fails to effect changes accordingly and on time, this undermines the credibility of the programme controls. Some cases end up falling between the cracks and not attended to; programme delivery can be hugely improved if case management is properly done (ASW-9).

The district managers also shared the perceptions that the top down approach to the implementation of CGP and centralisation of operations particularly the MISSA is impairing the efficient implementation of the programme. The responsibility and accountability of the officials in the district and community councils is diluted because they cannot respond to clients' queries and issues, indicated one district manager:

Centralisation of the programme creates problems in that officers in the districts do not take full responsibility over the implementation of programme,

they do not handle cases well or take responsibility for hiccups because since the inception of the programme the responsibility for programme management has been placed at the central level (DM-2).

The idea of decentralisation in service provision or in the implementation of a policy is to ensure that service providers who are closer to the service consumers are able to take responsibility for programme efficiency. However, this is not case with the implementation of CGP and evidence indicates that there are a lot of problems as a result.

One respondent, the senior social assistance officer, indicated that accountability for proper implementation of CGP lies mostly with the frontline workers at the community level:

Decentralising the programme, especially case management will ensure timely update of the beneficiaries' information. This will increase ownership of responsibilities and increase accountability of the district and community council officers (SSAO-1).

This view was shared by another senior social assistance officer that the programme operations need to be decentralised, more especially the MISSA, because it will help in ensuring that the payment lists are credible as the information will be quickly updated where necessary:

The programme operations need to be decentralised, particularly the case management. This will allow timely updating of the beneficiaries' statuses in the MISSA so that payments are processed with credible information (SSAO-2).

According to the interviewees, there are a lot of errors in the implementation of the CGP due to delays in making the necessary changes to the beneficiaries' information, sometimes leading to over payment or underpayment of beneficiaries. One senior official, the Director of Social Assistance mentioned that decentralisation of some

functions will also relieve the workload of the officers at the central level, there was a huge staff shortage and the programme is suffering:

Devolving some of the responsibilities to the districts and to the community council level will relief the pressure that the officers at the central level experience which sometimes lead to a lot of mistakes especially because we are understaffed (D-1).

Decentralisation is an item in the management model of policy implementation. The management model requires that communication channels are well established, quick and effective for proper delivery of the programme (Khan and Khandaker (2016:540). The lack of proper communication between the central and districts officials causes major delays in the delivery of CGP.

The district managers pointed to the issue of delayed communication as causing complications and poor planning affected the proper execution of the programme activities. One district manager indicated that centralised decisions affects the work at the local level:

Lack of proper communication between the districts and the central office leads to complications which sometimes make our work very difficult. All major decisions like payment dates are made at the central level which unfortunately rarely considers the reality at the local level leading to clashes of activities thereby leading to segregation of other activities of the district (DM-2).

Another manager added that the delayed communication affects their district plans. The central office does not engage them in deciding on activities to be undertaken at the district level. Schedules for payments, for example, are imposed without consideration of activities happening at the district and community council levels:

We sometimes have to abandon our district plans because CGP activities are planned at the central level and they normally clash with our plans. But if the

programme operations can be decentralised, we can do better, plan accordingly and ensure that things go well (DM-1).

(iii) Resource Constraints and Poor Administrative Capacity

Availability of funding and resources are the preconditions for successful policy implementation (Signe 2017:20). According to Makinde (2005:63), lack of resources poses a huge threat to policy implementation. Implementation resources should comprise of sufficient human and material resources, such as sufficient staff who are well qualified to carry out the implementation, people with relevant skills and expertise who have undergone the necessary training to implement the particular policy.

According to the literature, social protection programmes in most African countries suffer because of staff shortages and skills deficits in policy implementation, needs assessment, programme design, monitoring and evaluation (Bharadwaj et al 2021:27). The CGP faces the challenges of limited human resources both in terms of numbers and competencies as noted by some of the programme implementers. The senior social assistance officer was of the view that skills and competence are lacking:

The financial capacity and human resource in terms of skills and competence to guide this policy are lacking (SSAO-1).

The same view about the shortage of skills and competence was shared by another senior social assistance official:

The human resource capacity and competence to guide and drive the implementation of this programme is limited because there is only a few of us and we are not adequately capacitated (SSAO-2).

Implementation of any particular policy requires sufficient technical knowledge and skills from the implementers. According to Brynard (2009:560), policy implementers have to possess the requisite skills, extensive experience with adequate training, and qualifications in order to practically approach policy management. However, Bharadwaj et al (2021:27) indicate that countries with low income and lower literacy

levels tend to have limited numbers of such skilled and competent human resources to manage social assistance programmes. Programmes are usually short-staffed and as a result perform poorly. This appears to be a major problem for CGP; the issue of a shortage of skills for proper implementation of the programme was repeatedly emphasised by the respondents. The representative from the UNICEF had the following view:

There is challenge of leadership in the ministry in terms of skills and competence, the ministry has to make sure that when it identifies people to fill strategic positions, it identifies people with requisite skills, people who understand what social assistance is about and also increase the workforce in the department so that people are not overwhelmed by work but most importantly address the issue of personnel capacity. The shortage of key personnel is a threat to this programme (PO-1).

According to Bharadwaj et al (2021:28), the implementation of social assistance programmes like cash transfers and social pensions needs considerable management capability to coordinate issues of the programme, targeting and enrolment, compliance, payments and other various technical aspects of the programme. According to Brynard (2009:556) effective resourcing means a focused deployment of skilled and motivated human resources, is crucial for policy success.

However, the CGP is poorly resourced in terms of skills and quantity of staff needed for implementation and this undermines the effectiveness of its delivery.

A respondent from UNICEF noted this issue:

Human resource capacity both in terms of skills and quantity is a huge short coming in the implementation of CGP, for example, the NISSA unit which is responsible for data management is manned with one person; the manager who has to manage a database of about 500,000 households. This is one of the key challenges and it is risky; it compromises programme efficiency because if the NISSA manager can decide to leave, no one can readily take over (PO-1).

The Director of Social Assistance corroborated the lack of adequate staff:

There is no enough staff, the sections are manned by one person; for example, there is one person working on payments, one person on case management and one person on NISSA management. This makes delivery very difficult because if the particular person is unavailable for whatever reasons the work suffers. However, the development partners support to make up for shortage of staff by contracting temporary staff to work on other aspects of the programme (D-1).

The problem of skills and competencies exists not only at the technical level but also at the level of the frontline workers. They are not adequately trained and inducted into the programme implementation, so most of them lack the capacity to address the beneficiaries. The bureaucratic model of policy implementation explains that frontline workers must possess adequate skills and competence to implement a given policy or programme. Implementation is flawed if implementers do not have the ability to deliver. In the case of CGP some of the respondents, especially the district managers, indicated that there was a challenge with the competence of the auxiliary social workers who are the frontline workers in the delivery of the programme.

There are problems with frontline staff, there is no orientation of staff especially the Auxiliary social workers, some of them especially the newly employed have no clear idea of what they should do at the payment sites, they cannot confidently educate and remind the beneficiaries about the programme objectives, regulations and handle issues of case management; responding to queries. As a result, there is a visibly steep decline in the quality of work (case management) because the frontline workers are lacking in competence (DM-3).

Another district manager indicated that efficiency in the delivery of the CGP depends in large measure on the skills of the frontline workers who need adequate training for their role in implementing the programme:

Lower level officers need to be trained to enhance their skills in handling the beneficiaries to bolster efficient delivery of the programme (DM-2).

The same point was raised by another district manager:

The frontline staff need to be continuously trained and educated on how to talk to the beneficiaries, to ensure that they are able to respond efficiently, they are the face of GoL. The newly recruited ASWs have not been oriented on CGP, it poses challenges because they cannot even address the beneficiaries properly (DM-1).

Finance is a huge part of the many resources required for policy implementation. Scholars indicate that low income countries struggle to sustain funding for social assistance programmes. According to Andrews et al (2012:13), the fiscal ability of poor countries does not allow them to spend more on social protection because of competing national demands. Lesotho is ranked amongst the poorest countries in the world hence the value of grants provided for the needy is still very low and programme coverage is mostly means-tested.

A respondent from UNICEF indicated that financial resources are limited for wider coverage of the programme:

Even though GoL allocates more funding to social assistance than any other country in the Southern African region, it still needs to do more and better; budget is still somehow limited, many children are still left out of the programme (PO-1).

Besides excluding many needy children, the programme has insufficient funding to increase the benefit values, resulting in limited impact on the lives of children. This was mentioned by the senior social assistance officer:

The programme started as fully funded by donors, government took over but the financial capacity is still very low to increase the benefit amount. The value

of the grant is not increasing yet the cost of living is increasing every day (SSAO-2).

Financial resources are a challenge, so much that the programme faces the risk of collapse if the development partners ever decided to withhold their support. This was mentioned by a government official:

There are financial limitations obviously. We have been stuck with the same number of beneficiaries for years, not because there are no more people who are eligible for this programme but because government budget is tight. Over and above that the benefit amount cannot be increased (D-1).

(iv) Lack of Political Will

Although the government of Lesotho took over the programme from donors and increased coverage, some respondents have indicated that the government is not doing enough to improve the programme. Most respondents indicated that it has been many years since the inception of the programme but it is not given priority in terms of increasing its budget to increase the benefit amount and fund the processes necessary for the effective delivery of this programme. According to Brynard (2009:559) and Giacchino and Kakabadse (2003:144), political support is vital for policy success, commitment to deliver effectively needs to come from the authorities and they need to show commitment in terms of political and administrative determination to deliver the policy.

In the case of the CGP, activities like the re-certification of beneficiaries are not done and yet they are very important for the efficiency of this programme to ensure that only deserving people are benefiting from this programme. The respondent for UNICEF indicated that the political will to expand the programme is questionable:

The political will to improve the programme in terms of raising the benefit amount is lacking, there is no increment in the value of the grant even though the living costs are ever increasing. The government has not reviewed the transfer amount since 2013, the value of the grant has depreciated a lot and

therefore too little for a household to buy anything for a child. Also, the government needs to review the model of grouping the children to offer one amount for a group of children, the children need to be unbundled such that each child has their own amount (PO-1).

The same thoughts about the cost of living escalating, making the current grant value too insignificant to make a difference in the lives of the beneficiaries were shared by one district manager:

Even though GoL has committed itself to this programme, it is evident that there are challenges to increasing the benefit amount, the budget is not increased yearly, the amount remains the same and the beneficiaries no longer find the grant useful because the costs of living are ever increasing (DM-1).

The political will to allocate more funding to this programme is lacking, it has stagnated because it is not inflation adjusted. The programme is not prioritised hence it is not making the difference as is intended to the lives of the beneficiaries, mentioned one of the senior social assistance officers:

CGP is not prioritised like the AOP; the benefit amount is not adjusted yearly like the OAP; the funds are sometimes not released on time making the payment of grant unpredictable. This badly affects the beneficiaries; decreases their trust in the programme, also it affects their economic plans because they cannot make important decisions when they are not sure when they will get paid (SSAO-2).

The same opinion is echoed by one district manager. Political will is low for this programme, making it very unpredictable and inefficient because critical exercises like re-certification are not done leaving vast numbers of people who are no longer needy, benefiting:

There is no political will to drive this policy. Government must release funds to cover more people and increase the benefit amount; people are needy. Many aspects jeopardise proper implementation of this programme because of limited funding. Therefore, the ministry needs to sensitise the high powers to understand this programme and disburse the money to do the processes like recertification in order to update the beneficiaries' data and target effectively (D-1).

Another official acknowledged that the benefit amount is very low and appears that it will not be increased anytime soon:

The benefit amount has remained the same for years and we have been stuck at 49,000 households, beneficiary households cannot be increased because the government is not increasing the budget. The grant no longer has considerable impact on the lives of the beneficiaries and this is concerning because the standard of living is ever increasing (M-1).

The important exercises like re-certification are compromised, yet it is necessary for proper implementation of this programme. Government does not allocate funding for this exercise, mentioned the UNICEF representative:

The beneficiaries need to be continuously recertified and update the NISSA. This helps in assessing whether the beneficiaries still qualify or meet the programme requirements and those who no longer meet the criteria can be terminated as beneficiaries (PO-1).

Similar thoughts that re-certification is important were acknowledged by one district manager:

Lack of recertification jeopardises this programme; recertification is not happening because funds are not being allocated, the government is not doing enough for monitoring of this program as a result undeserving people continue to benefit from this program (DM-3).

The issues of lack of public participation, lack of decentralisation, resource constraints and poor administrative capacity impact negatively on the implementation of CGP. The public does not understand the programme conception. Political will to provide more funding for this programme is also lacking.

6.6 Conclusion

This chapter aimed at analysing the information collected from the different programme participants to get a view of how they understand, perceive or experience the various aspects of its implementation. The in-depth interviews and the focus group discussions produced extensive information that explained the programme. CGP is a comprehensive programme through which the GoL is fulfilling its obligation of social protection of vulnerable and needy children. Development agencies are continuously urging governments to prioritise budgeting for children to address a myriad of issues affecting the survival and development of children. This is a targeted or means-tested programme, but it experiences a lot of challenges in terms of enrolling the beneficiaries as well as monitoring and managing the implementation because critical aspects are compromised due to budget limitations. Extensive community mobilisation and sensitisation are crucial for credible data collection. Quality of data reduces the chances of targeting errors. It has been emphasised that processes like re-certification as a means of monitoring the programme can improve its effectiveness but it is not done and evidently leaves people who are not eligible for the programme benefiting while those who may be eligible are excluded.

Implementation of public policy has dramatically transformed from the conventional strategies where government alone used to manage programmes, to contemporary public management strategies have been devised and governments are collaborating with the private sector to deliver public goods and services. The policy partnership that GoL has formed to provide this programme is indispensable and needs to be maintained and improved. Efficiency and effectiveness are realised in the programme implementation because both the government and the private organisations are adhering to their contractual obligations.

Nonetheless, challenges are inevitable such as high operating costs, logistical issues, insufficient human and financial resources, and others. Government itself also poses a challenge to the effective implementation of this programme. Issues of public

participation, decentralisation, resource capacity and political will, are very important in the implementation of public policy; absence of any one of these undermines the policy intent. The above issues have been Respondents have pinpointed the above issues as lacking in this programme, thereby compromising the programme.

Communities continually need to be consulted on issues related to CGP, operational systems need to be decentralised, officials need to be capacitated, staffing adequately resourced and budget increased. Most importantly GoL needs to prioritise all aspects necessary for efficient and effective implementation of this programme, including monitoring and evaluation exercises.

The administrative capacity and skills of the policy-makers for this programme are regarded as lacking and therefore affecting its effectiveness. On the other hand, the overall capacity of the human resources in terms of numbers is limited; the programme is under-staffed thus putting a lot of pressure on the few officials available. This leads to burnout and possibly a lot of errors. Most of the respondents indicated repeatedly that issues of case management are poorly handled in this programme.

CHAPTER SEVEN
THE EXPERIENCES OF THE IMPLEMENTERS AND BENEFICIARIES OF THE
DELIVERY MODES AND THE USEFULNESS OF THE CHILD GRANTS
PROGRAMME (CGP)

7.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the rationale for the implementation of the CGP, the targeting processes, the policy networks or partnerships, the challenges facing the partnerships and the barriers to the effective implementation of the CGP. This chapter analyses the findings relating to the experiences, views and perceptions of the government officials, implementing partners and the CGP beneficiaries of the delivery modes of the CGP programme. The beneficiaries' views on the impact of the grant in their lives is also analysed. The chapter presents the findings and analyses for the following research questions:

1. What are the implementers' views on the CGP payment modes?
2. What are the beneficiaries' experiences and perceptions in accessing the grant?
3. What are the beneficiaries' views on the usefulness of the CGP?

The above research questions are analysed under two main headings: the CGP payment modes and the usefulness of the Child Grants Programme. The analysis uses the concepts and themes discussed in the dissertation's conceptual and theoretical chapter.

The findings for the first two research questions are presented and analysed using the three delivery concepts of Accessibility, Robustness and Integration or financial inclusiveness.

Accessibility is analysed in terms of the following aspects: (i) cost of access to the beneficiaries, (ii) appropriateness of the payment mode, and (iii) respect for the rights and dignity of the beneficiaries. Robustness is analysed in terms of the (i) reliability of the payment mode and the (ii) security provided by the delivery mode.

Finally, integration in this discussion refers to the payment method's ability to permit the beneficiaries to use modern financial systems (World Bank 2016:31).

The findings for the last research question on the usefulness of the grant on beneficiaries' lives is presented and analysed using the themes unpredictability of payments and low value of the grant.

Twenty-three in-depth face-to-face interviews were conducted to collect data from the implementers, government officials and the implementing partners. The government officials were the Director of Social Assistance, Director of Planning, Manager of Social Assistance, district managers, senior social assistance officers and the auxiliary social workers. The implementing partners are UNICEF Lesotho, Vodacom Lesotho and G4S Lesotho. The programme directors' responses are coded as D-1 and D-2, the manager of social assistance is coded MSA, the district managers are coded DM1 to 3, while the street-level bureaucrats comprising the senior social assistance officers are coded SSAO-1 and SSAO-2, and the auxiliary social workers are coded ASW-1 to 12. UNICEF Lesotho is coded PO-1; Vodacom Lesotho is coded PO-3; G4S Lesotho is not part of analysis in this chapter.

Twelve focus group discussions were conducted with the CGP grant recipients. The beneficiaries were sampled from six community councils in three districts in Lesotho; two in Leribe district (Maoa- Mafubelu and Ramapepe Community Councils), two in Mafeteng district (Tsana- Talana and Ramoetsana Community Councils) and two in Berea district (Tebe-Tebe and Senekane Community Councils). Two focus group discussions comprising of ten participants were conducted in each of the six community councils. The responses from the grant beneficiary focus group discussions are coded FG-1 to FG-12.

7.2 The Child Grants Programme Payment Modes

According to the World Bank (2016:16) the quality of the method used to deliver payments to the grant beneficiaries influences the programme's performance and success or failure. The CGP uses the electronic (mobile money) and the manual payments systems through a cash in transit (CIT) security company. According to the World Bank (2016:22-23), the viability of the payment method must be assessed in

relation to its accessibility, robustness and its ability for integration of grant beneficiaries into the modern financial system.

7.2.1 Accessibility of the CGP Payment Modes

According to World Bank (2016:31) accessibility of the payment method has to be considered in relation to the cost of access to the beneficiary, its appropriateness and respect for the rights and dignity of the grant recipients. Several scholars indicate that the beneficiaries usually incur high costs to access the grants which include transport costs to and from pay points as well as other costs of wasted time due to travelling, waiting and queuing for the money (Devereux and Vincent 2010:370, Barca et al 2013:15 and Gronbach 2020:12).

(i) The Cost of Access for CGP Beneficiaries

The cost of access is defined in terms of the direct and indirect costs to the grant recipient. The direct costs are transport money to get to the payment site while the indirect costs mainly include the amount of time spent travelling and waiting for the payment (World Bank 2016:85). According to the World Bank (2016:85) a payment mode with high cost of access undermines the value of the transfer and therefore the programme's impact.

The CGP beneficiaries who receive the grant manually mention that they incur high costs to access the grant directly and indirectly. The direct costs they incur relate to high transport costs to get to the payment sites due to some payment sites being located many kilometres away from their homes which necessitates travel either by public transport or on foot. Indirect costs incurred are related to the amount of time that they spend travelling and waiting at the pay points. Participants in Focus Group-6 described the direct costs that they incur:

Coming here is too much, we come from far and we need to have money for transport which is expensive and cuts the money we get here (FG-6).

Incurring high travel costs to access the grant was also observed by a government district manager:

Manual payments are expensive for most of the beneficiaries; some spent more on travel costs to the payment sites since some are sometimes very far (D-2).

Some of the beneficiaries also indicated that they preferred to get their grant through Mpesa (mobile money) to reduce the expenses they incur for travel to the pay points:

I would like to get it through Mpesa because coming here is too much; we come from far and we need to have money for transport to come here but Mpesa will cut such costs (FG-6).

Another beneficiary also commented on the indirect costs:

I also want Mpesa because we waste a lot of time coming here and waiting to get the money. Mpesa allows that I can get the money whenever I have time to go and withdraw it; we cannot even miss our payments while with manual payments sometimes people miss the payment because they did not get the messages about the payment dates (FG-6).

According to Kidd et al (2018:6), the payment method must put the recipient first, ensure that pay points are easily accessible and do not require the beneficiary to suffer high costs in terms of collection.

A beneficiary from another focus group commented that Mpesa is convenient and cheap:

Mpesa is good because we do not incur travel expenses; transport is expensive to come here; I pay over 60 Maloti to come here; it is too much considering that I only get 360 Maloti. Mpesa is better (FG-11).

Kidd, Anderson and Bjork (2018:6) corroborate the convenience of a payment system, mentioning that a payment system needs to be efficient and convenient in terms of cost because costs of access become expensive if recipients have to travel long

distances. Therefore, payments need to be easily accessible and in a convenient location for the recipients (Kidd et al 2018:6).

According to the respondents, manual payments are inconvenient, time-consuming and exhausting since people have to travel to the designated pay points to get the money. This causes the beneficiaries to neglect other important duties that they have to carry out as they are obliged to spend hours travelling and waiting in queues to get the money. Kidd et al (2018:6) provide the example that travelling to access grant payments is an obstacle to the disabled and those who have caregiving responsibilities. One auxiliary social worker argued that:

Travelling to the pay points interferes with other commitments the beneficiaries have in their day to day responsibilities. And unfortunately sometimes payments are postponed because payment vehicles cannot reach the pay points due to bad weather and ultimately other beneficiaries miss announcements for new dates (ASW-6).

A beneficiary pointed out that the convenience of Mpesa was better for her health condition:

Mpesa can very convenient for me because I have ill-health, so I will no longer have to travel to come here (at the payment site) but can get the money closer to where I live (FG-4).

(ii) Appropriateness of the CGP Payment Modes

According to the World Bank (2016:12), an accessible payment system also needs to be considered for its appropriateness considering the varied and particular needs of the grant beneficiaries such as the elderly, illiterate, disabled and other vulnerable groups. Appropriateness also needs to be considered by the beneficiary. The respondents in this study, the officials and the beneficiaries, indicated several times that manual payments are more appropriate for rural areas, particularly for the illiterate and the elderly living there.

One government official noted that poor network coverage and the difficult topography of the country still necessitate the continued use of the manual payments:

Manual payments are still widely used and ideal for the rural areas because the network coverage is still a challenge and most people are not exposed to the usage of mobile phones, particularly for transacting. Also, the topography of the country maintains the usage of manual payment system; the remote areas have a challenge of cash liquidity because of the reluctance of the business people to locate their businesses to the hard to reach areas (SSAO-1).

According to Andrews et al (2012:15), most of the population in poor countries live in rural areas, with difficult access to roads, telephones and electricity. As a result, social protection interventions face serious logistical problems which include the increase in the fiscal costs of the service delivery. In the case of the CGP one of the district managers pointed out that:

The manual payment is relevant for the most remote areas because of network challenges, scarcity of mobile money payment agents and also the unfamiliarity of usage of the service by most of the beneficiaries who are mostly illiterate and old as well. The elderly people are prone to being cheated by individuals who can take their pins to fraudulently withdraw their money if they are paid through mobile money (DM-3).

The illiterate and older recipients are not comfortable with mobile payments. Some of the beneficiaries mentioned that they preferred manual payment because they believe that it is not complicated:

We are fine with the envelope because we do not know how to use Mpesa, we think we will be cheated and we do not have cell phones. We to get our money physically because we are sure that we will get it when we come here. But with Mpesa we will not know who to ask if it happens that we do not get the money (FG1).

Another beneficiary added that they were not comfortable with mobile payments:

We are happy and satisfied with manual payment, mobile is not ideal for most of us, especially us the elderly people, we do not even have phones, (FG7).

One auxiliary social worker working in a remote community council mentioned that they found manual payments more appropriate in those areas,

The manual payments are preferable in the rural areas where most of the beneficiaries do not have cell phones and are not conversant with how to use phones to withdraw the money, already we hear stories of people who are sometimes being cheated by their own children or people they send to withdraw the money who claim that their money was never deposited in their mobile phones (ASW-1).

Illiteracy is another challenge that mobile payments pose for the beneficiaries living in remote areas, especially the elderly and uneducated people who cannot use the Mpesa service independently. An auxiliary social worker commented that:

Some people especially the older people and those who are illiterate are likely to be cheated by youngsters who might claim that the money has not been paid if they are sent to withdraw it. Also those who do not have cell phones may not realise when the payment has been done since they will not be using their sim cards for other purposes but the payments only (ASW-10).

One government official indicated that manual payments are even more appropriate for elderly people as they are not acquainted with the use of mobile phones. She mentioned that the elderly can easily be cheated of their money by family members:

In the rural areas mobile payments are bound to be challenging because not everybody is conversant with the use of mobile money; particularly the older people, it is not safe for them since they will have to rely on grand children to

help them to transact. They are likely to cheat them; claim the payments have not been done while they have withdrawn the money (DM-2).

Another government official maintained the view that mobile payments have delivery challenges for beneficiaries living in remote areas as they have to travel long distances to get to Mpesa agents, agents being scarce and having low financial capacity to disburse the grant:

The payment agents are scarce in the remote areas; beneficiaries still have to travel a bit long distances to withdraw the money. And where agents are available they tend to lack money therefore leaving beneficiaries stranded (SSAO-1).

The use of mobile payments in the rural areas is also discredited due to the fact the mobile money agents in some areas tend to defraud people; forcing them to spend a portion of their money in their shops as condition for allowing them to withdraw the money. This was mentioned by one district manager:

It is true that the people get their money anywhere they want with mobile money but the problem is that the payment agents in some areas take advantage of the beneficiaries by demanding that they spent portion of the money from their shops after withdrawing. This compromises their liberty to use their money as they wish, which is not right (DM-3).

The Senior Social Assistance Officer further noted that mobile money was suitable for beneficiaries who have easy access to the service:

Mobile money is good in the lowlands and the semi-urban areas; people living in these areas already use the services because the network infrastructure is there to allow them to use them (SSAO-1).

Andrews et al (2012:15) indicate that most of the population in poor countries live in rural areas with difficult access to telephones and electricity. In the case of the CGP,

it is evident from the government officials that manual payments are ideal for the rural areas due to infrastructure challenges, scarcity of mobile payment agents and the calibre of the majority of beneficiaries in those areas most of whom are elderly and illiterate people. Mobile payments are deemed to be appropriate in the lowlands where infrastructure permits wide usage of cell phones and people are familiar with Mpesa.

(iii) Respect for the Rights and Dignity of the CGP Beneficiaries

Accessibility of the payment method must be considered in accordance with people's rights and dignity. According to the World Bank (2016:12) sufficient training must be provided to ensure that the beneficiaries understand the payment process as well as how they can raise grievances and lodge complaints. They argue that communication is important to safeguard rights and dignity, to make sure that the beneficiaries understand when payments will be delivered as well as changes that are introduced to the process.

Respecting the rights and dignity of beneficiaries also requires that the payment mechanism respects human dignity and rights. According to Gronbach (2020:12), the challenges associated with manual payments especially in the rural areas is that the pay points usually lack protection from rain or heat, do not offer benches or waiting areas, or even basic ablution facilities for beneficiaries. This is the reality faced by most of the CGP recipients who receive their grant manually through the CIT company. Most of the payment sites are government buildings at the community council offices, but the beneficiaries are usually denied access to the toilets or else they have to pay a fee to use a toilet where payments are dispensed at a private property.

Two auxiliary social workers made the following point:

There are no toilets at some of the pay points and it appears very degrading when the people have nowhere to go if they need to relieve themselves. In other places where the payments happen at the private properties, they have to pay to use the toilets (ASW-5 and ASW-11).

Kidd et al (2018:6) indicate that payments should be easily available to all recipients and payment modes must consider the rights of the poor, the elderly, the illiterate and more importantly, not pose significant obstacles for persons with disabilities.

The auxiliary social workers who are always at the pay points with the beneficiaries mentioned that the manual payments system expose the beneficiaries to harsh weather conditions:

When it is raining or it is cold, the beneficiaries are exposed because there are no shelters at the pay points, people's health is put at risk, others especially the elderly get sick from the harsh weather conditions they endure while waiting or queuing for the money (ASW-5).

Another aspect related to rights and dignity is that the manual payment system exposes the beneficiaries to health risks. The pay points are usually crowded and some people are suffering from communicable diseases which they can easily transmit to other people. One auxiliary social worker mentioned:

Gathering people in one place is risky for their health, lately we fear Covid 19 and other communicable diseases which are easily passed from one person to another, it is better to move all the beneficiaries to Mpesa so that everyone gets their money at their own time (ASW-5).

The experiences of beneficiaries in relation to the cost of accessing the grant indicate that they prefer the mobile money payments. Manual payment requires a lot in terms of money and time. The implementing officials also acknowledge the efficiency of mobile payments in reducing costs both for the beneficiaries and the government. Views on the appropriateness of the payment mode vary given the different circumstances of beneficiaries including the country's topography in rural areas and specific issues for some of the people covered by the programme; network coverage and the availability of payment agents. Manual payment is considered as appropriate for beneficiaries living in remote areas while Mpesa is suitable for those living in urban and semi-urban areas. Mobile networks are reliable in these areas and the payment agents are widely available. The issue of rights and dignity appears undermined by

manual payments as payment sites lack shelter from vagaries of weather, the health of beneficiaries is at threat because of weather conditions they are exposed to, as well as from overcrowding while waiting to be paid.

7.2.2 The Robustness of the CGP Payment Modes

Robustness refers to the dependability of the delivery mode in terms of delivering the grant efficiently and reliably to the correct beneficiary. The payment method's credibility is also determined through its safeness for both the grant beneficiaries and the agency implementing the grant programme, (World Bank 2016:31).

(i) Reliability of the CGP Payment Modes

According to the World Bank (2016:23) the payment method has to be reliable. Reliability means the beneficiaries are able to get their grants on the designated dates that are communicated in advance and adhered to. According to the respondents in this study, both government officials and the grant beneficiaries, the CIT company is not always reliable, mainly due to extreme weather conditions and distances it travels to reach the grant beneficiaries. One auxiliary social worker indicated that beneficiaries sometimes miss payments because the vehicles cannot reach the payments sites due to bad weather.

Manual payments are problematic because sometimes the beneficiaries miss payments when the vehicles fail to reach the pay points due to flooding rivers and slippery roads. People end up having to go home without money on that particular day as payments have to be rescheduled to another date (ASW-9).

Another problem with CGP payments is that there are no pre-set dates; the dates are scheduled haphazardly, often causing the beneficiaries to miss payments as announcements are sometimes made at short notice. This issue seriously affects the beneficiaries, particularly those getting the grant manually because the grant is paid quarterly basis. This was mentioned by one government official:

The major disadvantage is that some beneficiaries sometimes miss payments because they did not get announcement on the payments dates and once they

miss a payment it means they will wait three more months to get the money since they are paid on a quarterly basis (SSA0-1).

Beneficiaries discredit manual payments because if they miss the payment date they forfeit the payment because the CGP is not back-paid.

The problem with the manual payment is that it is only for one day and if one has other commitments on that particular day he/she cannot attend to them because he/ she has to come here and if one misses the payment, it is a loss to them but with Mpesa one cannot miss a payment or be under pressure to withdraw the money (FG-10).

Mobile payments are commended by the programme implementers and some of the beneficiaries, for reliability, especially for being unaffected by bad weather conditions. One district manager made the following point:

With mobile payments, it is a sure case that beneficiaries definitely get their money on the designated dates regardless of the weather conditions; whether it is raining or snowing a notification for payment will be made. This saves them the stress of having to travel in the cold or rain to access the grant on the designated day (DM-1).

However, the mobile money is deemed unreliable for beneficiaries living in the rural areas. Mpesa agents are said to be very few and widely dispersed in rural areas, and sometimes not available at all meaning the service users have to travel long distances to access the service. A beneficiary commented:

I do not like to get the money through Mpesa, I want an envelope because Mpesa is not available in my village, it is only in town and it is far, I will have to pay for transport but with the envelope I get it right here, I am happy (FG-6).

Other beneficiaries raised the issue of mobile money unreliability especially in rural areas:

I prefer manual payment because Mpesa agents are scarce in our communities and they do not have money most of the time; people are usually turned away but when we come here (at the pay point) we are sure that we will leave with the money (FG-2).

Reliability of the payment is crucial for various reasons, if not reliable, beneficiaries suffer. Manual payments are affected by weather conditions, they are inflexible and the variable payment schedule increases unreliability as the beneficiaries miss payments due to not receiving information timeously regarding the payment dates. Mobile payments are commended for being reliable although still challenging in rural areas.

(ii) Security of the CGP Payment Modes

The delivery mode's security and the risks associated with it need to be assessed when deciding on the manner through which the grant beneficiaries are to receive their payments (World Bank 2016:31). In the case of delivering the CGP through the cash in transit company (CIT), concerns have been raised about the risks that the beneficiaries face especially due to bad weather conditions, flooding rivers, snow falls, and payment during late hours. This issue of lack of security was raised by the government officials and the beneficiaries alike.

One auxiliary social worker indicated that some people have died while crossing flooded rivers to access their grant.

With the system of CIT some people have died trying to cross over flowing rivers, the snowfalls are common in winter and the roads become slippery in rainy seasons making it hard for the beneficiaries to reach the payments sites, the payment vehicle also sometimes fail to reach some pay points in such conditions (ASW-7).

According to the World Bank (2014:10), recipients of cash payments are vulnerable to crime because some have to travel considerable distances to receive their money at publicly known points. Respondents have maintained that physical payments are risky in different ways. A respondent from one focus group discussion said that bad weather and long distances affect them badly and make the manual payment unfavourable. Risk is considerable and sometimes they fear for their lives:

The problem is that we come from far places even though we prefer the envelop and believe it is reliable but we travel in unsafe places where we even fear the possibilities of being robbed or killed, and when it is raining it is hard to travel down the hills. If the weather is bad on the payment day, it is daunting to come here. Another challenge is that sometimes, especially in winter we leave the payment sites very late and we get afraid to meet criminals, the paying officers arrive late and cause us to travel late (FG-6).

Manual payments expose the beneficiaries to attacks by criminals. One respondent from FG-8 indicated that they fear getting robbed as it has happened with some people:

Coming here exposes us to criminals. The incidents have occurred where people have been robbed because people know when we come here to get the money, it is not safe at all (FG-8).

The distance travelled by the payment company on a daily basis to reach the various pay points is excessive. The company is based in Maseru but pays in all districts nationwide including those with a difficult topography. The beneficiaries who live in places far from the pay points face problems as the payment officials arrive late at the sites. One auxiliary social worker mentioned that beneficiaries sometimes get robbed:

The manual is not safe for the beneficiaries; payment company often reaches other payment points late as it pays more than one in a day causing problems for beneficiaries who live from far from the pay points who sometimes get mugged (ASW-3).

This was also raised by two district managers. According to them this payment method is also unsafe as the cash itself as it is susceptible to heists and leakage at the hands of those paying it.

Manual payment is unsafe and risky; the money is prone to heists and leakage at the hands of the paying officers, the beneficiaries also face risk of being robbed because they travel long distances; mostly on foot and sometimes travel late if the payment is delayed (DM-2 and DM-3).

Most grant beneficiaries indicated that they are concerned for their safety while collecting their payments at the pay points. They travel long distances; others go to areas that are clearly not safe. Some of the beneficiaries in FG-8 made the following point:

Even though we prefer manual payments, coming here exposes us to criminals, also it gets hard to access the payments sites in rainy days because some of us come far from here (FG-8).

The issue of risk and safety of the manual payments was also raised in FG-5:

Other people come from far places, sometimes when it is rainy and the rivers and the streams are overflowing they miss payments. Once one misses the payment it means they have forfeited the money. Sometimes the paying officers fail to reach the payment sites and therefore we have to be postponed; it is frustrating (FG-5).

The government officials and most beneficiaries indicate that paying the CGP through the Mpesa is a good idea for safety reasons both for the government and the grant recipients. Two participants from one focus group discussion stressed that they find the Mpesa very easy and safe for them, preferring it over the manual payment:

Mpesa is easy and safe, we do not have to travel long distances in unsafe areas. We just go to the local shop and withdraw the money. Another thing is

that with Mpesa we will not have to come here, coming here wastes our time to attend to other important tasks because we wait for hours here to get the money (FG-12).

A similar view about safeguarding the beneficiaries from muggers is shared by one auxiliary social worker. The payment dates are not known by everyone, only the beneficiaries themselves know when they have been paid and when they will withdraw money, meaning that criminals cannot easily target them:

Digital payments are safe because payments remain secret to the beneficiaries, that is to their advantage because they cannot easily fall target of criminals when payments are public like when they have to collect them from the payment sites. Further beneficiaries are not bound to travel in bad weather conditions, where on other occasions they have to cross over-flowing rivers and streams, which is very risky (ASW-10).

The government benefits from the security point of view when grants are delivered through the digital platform. Devereux and Vincent (2010:369) and Vincent and Cull (2011:38) note that the physical delivery of cash is very risky due to the liquidity of the resource and the cash is susceptible to leakages through fraud and cash in transit robberies. In the case of this study, the government officials indicated that paying CGP through Mpesa is secure because there is no risk of leakage or robberies as with other grants like the Old Age Pension (OAP) which criminals often target.

Digital payments are secure, Mpesa is safe for government there is no risk of leakage or heists, physically moving the money to the pay points is not safe, look at the AOP, millions have been lost to robbers. However, there needs to be thorough verification of the contacts given for payments so that the money is paid to the right people (DM-3).

Preventing opportunities for fraud increases the programme's effectiveness and efficiency because the programme funds are utilised correctly since the payments can

be traced. The GoL is bound to increase the CGP's credibility through wide implementation of the mobile payment system.

Mobile payments are ideal considering the challenges related to manual payments. This was raised by one district manager who pointed to the issue of the mountainous landscape of Lesotho making it difficult and unsafe for people to travel to the payment sites:

Our country is too mountainous, pay points are too far for some people especially the elderly, it is not safe for them to travel long distances; so binding them to travel to the payment sites is hectic, especially in winter and during rainy seasons. The problem is that they have to be there on that particular day, otherwise they miss the payment (DM-1).

Security in relation to mobile payments was also discussed in terms of the fact that the cash is safeguarded from leakage, from robberies and in terms of the beneficiaries not being so easily targeted by criminals who rob them of their money.

Participants in FG-5 emphasised that they wished to get the money through Mpesa because they believed it was safer:

In rainy seasons rivers overflow and it is risky crossing flooding rivers, we travel in awkward places and incidences have occurred where people have been robbed. Mpesa is safe and we will never miss our grants (FG-11).

The issue of safety in terms of mobile payments also means that the beneficiaries are not obliged to queue for the money at the pay points and sometimes leaving payment sites very late leaves them susceptible to being robbed. Some of the participants in FG-7 indicated:

Mpesa is safe because we do not have to travel long distances, we do not wait long hours and robbers cannot easily target us (FG-7).

Besides being susceptible to being robbed, beneficiaries are defrauded by hawkers and loan sharks. These people have the tendency to flock to payment sites where

payments are done manually. Beneficiaries, especially the elderly, are tricked into taking debts that become so exorbitant that they struggle to repay them.

Related to this issue one district manager raised the point that Mpesa protects the beneficiaries:

Mobile money helps the beneficiaries to avoid getting into debts from loan sharks and hawkers who usually flock the payments sites with highly priced goods. It is better to use mobile money because those loan sharks even go to the extent of confiscating the beneficiaries' identity documents in demand for payment of their loans. So mobile money saves them from such stress (DM-2).

Several issues were raised about the robustness of the delivery modes of the CGP which threaten the safety of the beneficiaries and the cash being transported by a vehicle from one pay point to another. Flooding rivers and being mugged threaten the lives of the beneficiaries. The security of the money is also at risk due to its being handled by different payment officers as well as the likelihood of heists by criminals. Mobile payments guarantee safety for both beneficiaries and the government. Reliability of the payment system is paramount. Beneficiaries have to be assured of receiving their payments at the time that they expect to get them. Mobile payments are applauded for their reliability as beneficiaries are sure to get the money irrespective of the weather conditions. Reliability of the payments is important because the beneficiaries are able to plan how they use the money.

7.2.3 Integration or Financial Inclusiveness of the CGP Payment Modes

Integration in this regard refers to financial inclusion, the payment mode's ability to include the individuals previously excluded from the modern financial environment.

According to the World Bank (2016:30), integration concerns the payment system's ability to facilitate financial inclusion by allowing the users to transact and possibly use it to save. Handayani et al (2017:3) mention that integration helps to increase the unbanked population's access to financial services. According to the World Bank (2016:31), the payment method that bolsters financial inclusion for the beneficiaries integrates them into the economy and assists the policymakers by ensuring ease of

payments across a variety of social protection programmes seeking to deliver cash transfers.

A respondent from the mobile payment company noted that Mpesa is a great service for financial inclusion of the masses especially the low-income people:

Mpesa users are usually unbanked so this method is the easy way to help people who are not in the formal financial sector. Banks are not accessible especially for the unemployed and the people living in the rural areas, so Mpesa bridges the gap existent in the financial sector; digitising the payment fosters financial inclusion because people can easily transact with those who are in the formal financial sector (PO3).

According to Gronbach (2020:24), mobile money is seemingly playing a significant role in improving financial inclusion on the continent, it is mostly effective in countries with a weak or underdeveloped traditional financial sector, comprising mainly of the poor and 'financially excluded' people who are usually the recipients of social cash transfers.

Lesotho is a poor country, with challenging topography which jeopardises different aspects of both social and economic development. The use of mobile money services is gradually bridging the divide between people living in urban areas and in rural areas. The UNICEF representative shared the following view:

The use of Mpesa to disburse CGP is increasing the opportunities for citizens who were previously excluded from the modern financial services to access various services (PO-1).

The World Bank (2014:10) emphasises that digital transfers are usually the first point of entry into the financial system for individuals. Other than receiving payments, they have other opportunities for financial inclusion such as savings, loan access and easy payment of bills and other transactions. Iazzolino (2018:9) indicates that a payment system should generally be able to include citizens ordinarily excluded from formal financial services.

The senior social assistance officer attested to the fact that mobile payments make life easier for the beneficiaries:

Getting money through Mpesa allows the beneficiaries the convenience to pay for services, and to send money to their children who might be studying away from home (SSAO-1).

Kidd et al (2018:6) indicates that using modern payment modes like banks or mobile phone networks can be a way of establishing and providing services in remote areas and increasing access to financial services to the communities at large.

Ford (2017:12) notes that mobile money transfers offer lower transaction charges, better control over one's finances and bigger opportunities for economic inclusion for individuals and families in receipt of cash assistance.

Related to Ford's point, the respondent from UNICEF mentioned the issue of economic justice within the society, which she asserts can be fostered through the use of financially inclusive payment modes in social assistance:

Financial inclusion is very vital for a socially and economically equitable society. Mobile money facilities like Mpesa bridge the gap in the financial infrastructure, providing people who do not have bank accounts an alternative to transact and to receive their money a bit more easily and conveniently (PO-3).

O'Brien et al (2013:25) mention that mobile money has become commonplace because of its usability for various daily business transactions, including payments to individuals, buying foodstuffs or paying service bills.

This view is shared by one government official who noted that beneficiaries enjoy convenience when their grant is paid through Mpesa:

With mobile payments, the beneficiaries never miss the payments, they transact however they want like paying for services and or sending money to children who might be studying away from home. Beneficiaries are not bound

to wake up early, travel and wait in the lines to get the money, they conveniently access it at their own time, when they need to use it (SSAO-1).

The different points analysed above are essential for the efficiency and effectiveness of the CGP. Accessible, reliable and secure payment modes increase the programme credibility. Safety of the payment mode is for the benefit of both the implementer and the beneficiary; leakage of the programme funds is reduced, fraud, corruption and criminality are reduced. The issue of financial inclusion for low income individuals is crucially important for both their social and economic development.

7.3 The Usefulness of the Child Grants Programme (CGP)

This part of the chapter analyses the worth of the grant in terms of its usefulness in helping vulnerable children and their households. The CGP is provided to reduce malnutrition, improve health and increase school enrolment and attendance among orphans and vulnerable children (GoL 2014:1). The respondents who engaged on the usefulness of the grant identified two issues that undermine the usefulness of the grant: **unpredictability of payment dates and the low value of the grant.**

7.3.1 Unpredictability of the CGP Payments

The grant beneficiaries in the various focus group discussions acknowledged that CGP was making a little difference in their households. However, the issue of the unpredictability of the grant in terms of the consistency of payment dates was a concern. According to Kadam (2016:30) cash grants must be paid regularly and predictably to address the vulnerability of poor families. According to Devereux (2006:15) predictability of social transfers can encourage improvement in the lives of beneficiaries in terms of their being able to save up to purchase productive assets and access credit for inputs or small enterprises.

However, participants in FG-8 indicated that payments are delayed and do not have fixed dates. As a result, they are unable to plan on how they use the grant:

It is very frustrating not knowing when to expect the money; it takes too long before we get the money and we get into debts. We are told that we get it after

three months but sometimes it takes longer than that. And sometimes we ask for loans from other people promising to pay when we get the money only to get it later than we expected, it is frustrating and embarrassing (FG-8).

Kadam (2016:30) mentions that consistent and regular cash transfers allow beneficiaries to save to buy productive assets and sustain daily living without having to sell their properties or take on debt. According to Smith et al (2013:86), predictability is significant to guarantee that the grant has the utmost possible impact on recipient's lives. When the payments are consistent and predictable, the recipients are able to budget, plan and identify opportunities for investing in productive activities (Vincent and Freeland 2008:102). Investing in productive activities maximises the usefulness of the grant thus fulfilling the promotive function of social protection which aims to boost the household income capabilities and self-reliance. In this manner; dependency on government is reduced as people become productive and can achieve dependable livelihoods.

However, the CGP beneficiaries indicated that the grant was barely useful because they are never able to save anything from the grant. Participants in FG-4 maintained:

We hardly see the difference because it comes infrequently, once in three months and most of the time it goes to settling debts that we incur as we try to provide for the children (FG-4).

The respondents from FG-9 also note that waiting for payment without certainty is frustrating because sometimes they miss payments due to lack of fixed dates:

There are no fixed dates for the payment of this grant which is not good, we wait in anticipation for the next payment which we have no idea when it will be; I think it would be better if we are told the date for next payment while we are here, especially because sometimes we get messages very late, people even miss payments because of that (FG-9).

The CGP is in its fourteenth year of implementation in Lesotho, but still faces operational challenges such as the unpredictability of payments, which undermines the impact of the grant as the beneficiaries indicated. This problem, according to one government official, the issue of unpredictability of the payments, is linked to the weak internal capacity in terms of leadership and management within the ministry:

CGP is not prioritised like the Old Age Pension hence its payments are unpredictable, funds are usually not released on time. This affects the beneficiaries' economic plans because they cannot make important decisions when they are not sure when they will get paid (SSAO-2).

The respondent from UNICEF also mentioned that the unpredictability of payments is due to the poor internal management of the programme because leadership is lacking:

Delayed payment reconciliations and requisitions for next payment affect the time that the beneficiaries get the grant, it is a matter of internal efficiency, which seems to lack in the ministry, this negatively impacts the beneficiaries because they do not receive the grant at the time that they expect to get it (PO-1).

According to Bharadwaj et al (2021:28) implementation of social assistance programmes like cash transfers and social pensions need considerable management capability to coordinate different programme issues including payments. When the managerial capacity is weak it becomes difficult to effectively coordinate and respond to the demands of social protection programmes consequently affecting the attainment the programme purpose (Andrews et al 2012:13). The level of competence in the technical leadership of the CGP needs to improve so that this programme can be implemented satisfactorily. This is mentioned by the UNICEF representative:

The ministry has to make sure that it identifies people with requisite skills when it comes to filling strategic positions; leadership that takes a stance and ensure that program activities are undertaken as they should because that will increase its effectiveness (PO-1).

7.3.2 Low Value of the CGP Allowances

Cash grants help alleviate the vulnerability of poor families, help households meet their basic needs and distribute the economic benefits across the society to reach even the neediest. The CGP beneficiaries understand that government is implementing this programme to meet the needy families halfway to address food insecurity and meet other basic needs for children and their families. However; most of the beneficiaries who took part in this study indicated that the grant does not make much difference in the lives of children because it does not fully meet their needs.

Kadam (2016:31) notes that grant transfers can only enhance household consumption when the value is substantial enough to make a difference. The CGP value is too low according to the study participants and one participant made this point:

The grant helps here and there because we are able to buy essentials for the household when we get it; maize meal, washing powder, vasline and other small things but children still do not have clothing because one simply cannot buy food and clothes with so little money (FG-1).

Regarding children, grants should promote their healthy development by ensuring their access to education, healthcare needs and general care and protection (Jones and Holmes 2010:1). However, the participants in the focus group discussions maintained that the value of the grant is so little that it does not cover the household needs.

This grant is very little honestly, and most of all it comes after a long time and mostly caters for debts because we incur debts trying to provide for these children. We only manage to buy a few things and it is frustrating because children are expecting more from us (FG-12).

Social protection in the form of cash grants is meant to decrease child poverty (Thomas 2005:3). The reality is that the opposite is true as indicated by some of the beneficiaries:

The grant hardly meets the needs of the children, so we do not see improvement in their lives and in our families, it only manages to buy a few food items and if you buy clothing, there is nothing for food (FG-6).

The sentiments expressed above were also shared by the members in FG-1:

The grant value is too low; it could be better if we get the money on monthly basis. Other families care for many children and the money is just too little to cover all their needs because everything is expensive these days; food, clothing and school needs. Families are struggling. Another respondent adds, the 360 Maloti I get after three months amounts to 120 Maloti monthly, it is too little, what can I do with it especially when it comes after three months, nothing honestly. When it comes we are already in debt; I wish that the government can increase the money and pay it on monthly basis because the cost of basic needs is ever increasing (FG-1).

The dominant view across all the focus groups was that the benefit amount of the grant has to be increased; the frequency of the payments and payments schedule need to be set so that they know exactly when they get paid:

The money is too little, it would be better if the grant could at least come every month even if it is not increased, I think we could see a little more difference, currently it does not help, (FG-2).

Beneficiaries in another focus group mentioned that they wished the government could consider increasing the benefit amount for this programme. They insist that the money is insufficient and it is paid irregularly thus making it difficult for them to provide for the children.

We plead with the government to increase the money because it is not enough, it gets finished the same day we get it and taking three months again waiting is very difficult, we are struggling and end up in debts trying to provide for the children (FG-5).

The amount of the grant that each household gets depends on the number of children in that household; however, each child does not receive an amount dedicated to them. This also hugely degrades the value of the grant because in families with two or more children, it becomes difficult to cover all their needs.

The beneficiaries in FG-4 shared the following views:

The grant should not be tied to the number of children in the household, it should be a standard amount across or if not so children must not be made to share the amount, every child should be allocated an amount; two children cannot be expected to share 360 Maloti, it is too little, therefore each must get that 360 Maloti (FG-4).

However, some of the beneficiaries acknowledged the difference that the grant makes:

We appreciate the grant and the little difference it makes but now that food items are expensive, it is as though it is not there; if you buy a child a pair of shoes you are not able to buy food and other needs (FG-2).

One beneficiary in FG-5 also appreciated the contribution that the grant made in meeting their basic needs:

I am satisfied because I am able to buy my children what they need even though it is little but it makes a difference because when we get it we are able to buy food (FG-5).

The views expressed by the beneficiaries concerning the benefit amount were also raised by the officials and the partners. The overall impression of the value of the grant earned by the CGP beneficiaries was that it needed to be higher to make any meaningful impact in improving the livelihoods of children and their households.

The representative from UNICEF indicated that the value of the transfer amount needs to be reconsidered because it is too low and has depreciated over time hence is too little to meet children's needs:

One of the key elements that need to be taken in to account in this program is the transfer amount; it is too low, giving a family of two children 360 Maloti after three months is too low, and this has been like that since 2013, it has depreciated a lot and too little for the household to buy anything for a child. It needs to be reviewed and unbundle the children such that each child gets their own amount (PO-1).

Several government officials also indicated that the grant value needed to be revised in order to meet the needs of children. The amounts have been fixed for years yet daily living expenses are constantly rising. The manager of social assistance mentioned that the grant value was too low:

The benefit amount is too low, the program has no considerable impact on the lives of children and unfortunately is does not look like the benefit amount will be increased anytime soon (M-1).

The Director of Planning added:

The benefit amount has not been increased in years, it has remained the same and therefore the program is not as effective as it should be in alleviating poverty (D-2).

The evidence on the impact of the grant suggests that the CGP barely meets the needs of children; the value of the grant is too low especially as the cost of living has increased significantly over the years. The impact of the grant is also undermined by the unpredictability of payments; beneficiaries are never sure when the next payment is due because there is no fixed schedule of payment dates. The perception is that if the payments were regular and predictable, the beneficiaries can realise the benefits of the grant so much so, that they could accrue some savings from it and build assets

over time. Delays in getting payments push the beneficiaries into debt as they try to secure the basic needs for their children.

7.4 Conclusion

Payment modes for a social transfer programme are a crucial component of its implementation. They need to be decided on taking into consideration the cost implications to both the implementer and beneficiary; accessibility, appropriateness, and the respect for rights and dignity of the different categories of individuals benefiting from the programme. In terms of the literature and responses from the participants in the study, the advantages and disadvantages of each payment mode in terms of accessibility have been shared based on how they affect the beneficiaries. The direct and indirect costs incurred by the beneficiaries have implications for the grant in terms of its value and the impact it makes.

Appropriateness of the payment mode eases complications for the beneficiaries for accessing their payments while the payment mode also needs to ensure that the rights and dignity of all the categories of people it serves are respected and protected particularly the elderly, disabled and the illiterate.

The payment mode should also guarantee reliability in terms of allowing the beneficiaries to get their payments without problems and be secure. When the payment mode is reliable, the beneficiaries are confident about planning how they will use the money. Security means that the cash is safe from both the government's side and when in the possession of the beneficiaries. The payment mode should safeguard the money from leakage and theft in all forms while also safeguarding the beneficiaries from attack by criminals. Another important aspect is the payment method's ability to provide opportunities for the beneficiaries to use mobile financial services as the financial landscape is forever evolving. Considering all these factors is important for the credibility and sustainability of the programme.

The advantages of digitising payments such as their being easily and conveniently accessible, while they are also affordable for both the implementer and the beneficiaries, were expressed. However, there is a common view among the

respondents particularly the government officials as well as UNICEF that it is not currently possible for the GoL to use the digital payment systems exclusively for this grant. Financial infrastructure deficits and physical infrastructure challenges have compelled the continued use of manual payments for this grant.

The grant beneficiaries understand and appreciate the government's effort in trying to alleviate the challenges that children and their households are facing due to poverty. Although they emphasised issues that negate the programme such as the unpredictability of the payments and the low value of the grant, most of them acknowledge the slight difference it makes within the household. Nevertheless, they maintain that the grant needs to be improved in terms of increasing the benefit amount, increasing the payments frequency and predictability. The GoL faces massive budget constraints hindering notable progress and growth of the programme to cover more children as well as increasing the value of the benefit amounts.

Some of the government officials raised the same issues. The programme needs to be better managed, especially when it comes to payments. A lot still needs to be done to improve the programme to increase its effectiveness especially in terms of reducing the costs that the government incurs in paying the CIT company to transport the money. If the bulk of the beneficiaries that are paid through the manual payment is reduced, the money saved as a result can therefore be used to increase the benefit amount and possibly pay the grant on a monthly basis.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Introduction

This study sought to understand the implementation of the CGP in three districts in Lesotho. The programme has been explored from its conception to garner whether social protection in Lesotho is understood in the same way as it is defined and conceptualised in the global arena and the problems facing implementation of the CGP.

The study was based on the following research questions:

- a) What is the rationale for the child grants programme in Lesotho?
- b) What organisational arrangements (processes, structures, resources, systems, mechanisms and partnerships) are in place to deliver the CGP in Lesotho?
- c) What are the issues confronting the Government of Lesotho in the delivery of the programme?
- d) What are the views of the implementers on the CGP payment modes?
- e) What are the experiences and perceptions of the beneficiaries in accessing the grant?
- f) How do the beneficiaries use the grant or what are the benefits of the grant on the children's lives?

The research objectives were:

- a) To establish why the Government of Lesotho chose to implement the child grant programme.
- b) To establish how the programme is being delivered (processes, structures, resources, systems, mechanisms and partnerships).
- c) To establish the issues confronting the implementation of the programme.
- d) To explore the views of the implementers on the CGP payment modes.
- e) To examine how the programme is received by the beneficiaries, their experiences and perceptions in accessing the grant.

- f) To discover how the grant beneficiaries use the grant and whether it benefits the children.

Implementation theory underpinned the study. Data was collected from a sample of 143 participants including government officials, partners in the implementation of the programme and grant beneficiaries. Twenty-three individuals were interviewed and 120 participated in 12 focus groups.

8.2 Summary

8.2.1 The Rationale for CGP Implementation

CGP is a social assistance programme intended to respond to the basic needs of vulnerable children, children deprived of proper healthcare, education and nutrition. It is accepted that it is the obligation of the state to provide social assistance to the needy, hence the government of Lesotho took a decision 13 years ago to support families and meet them halfway in caring and providing for the needy children. Lesotho is among the countries with the highest levels of poverty, characterised by high rates of unemployment, food insecurity and HIV/AIDS prevalence. These aspects are detrimental to the development and wellbeing of children in this country. The CGP addresses the social and economic inequalities existing in the communities by lessening the effects of extreme poverty faced by vulnerable children and their households.

8.2.2 CGP Implementation Processes

The processes explored in this study included targeting and enrolment to explain how the programme beneficiaries are identified as eligible for the programme. The programme uses the PMT criteria which, according to social policy scholars, is not easily understood by the people. In this study, it was apparent that since the inception of this programme, the public have not been sufficiently sensitised about the programme and its targeting. There is a lot of dissatisfaction among those who are not enrolled in the programme because they do not understand why and how they are left out. The errors identified in the selection or non-selection of eligible households are associated with the quality of data used for targeting; the data used for selection of beneficiaries is often outdated because the database is not updated as regularly as it

should be to ensure that those who are enrolled are indeed needy or meet the programme requirements. There are households that benefit from the CGP that do not fit its eligibility criteria. The gap between data collection and beneficiary enrolment results in inclusion and exclusion errors. It was noted in this study that validation of prospective beneficiaries is imperative so that only eligible beneficiaries (those most in need of support) are enrolled in the programme.

Re-certification of beneficiaries should be done regularly so that those who no longer fit the programme qualifying criteria are removed. Removing families who may no longer fit the programme eligibility standards opens spaces for families who may have fallen into poverty and deserve to be enrolled in the programme. Continuous mobilisation and sensitisation of the public about this programme is important.

8.2.3 CGP Payment Modes

Payment modes are a crucial part of the implementation of the CGP. There are two types of payment methods used for this programme. Both methods are suitable for this programme given the particular geographic and personal circumstances of the beneficiaries. However, each one faces some challenges regarding accessibility, reliability and security. The manual payment system needs to be secure for the beneficiaries and the government. Cash leakage occurs at the hands of paying agents. Beneficiaries are at risk of being robbed, getting injured or facing death. Many travel long distances incurring significant transport costs, crossing rivers and streams. Beneficiaries often queue for long periods of time with no shelter from the weather and no access to ablution facilities. Given the uncertainty of payment dates, many miss out on receiving their grants.

The Mpesa payment mode is suitable in all aspects: accessibility, reliability and security. However, accessibility is easier for beneficiaries who reside in urban areas or lowlands because of the availability of service agents. Some of the beneficiaries also indicated that they prefer to get their grant through Mpesa (mobile money) to reduce the travel expenses to the pay points. The recipients living in areas where Mpesa agents are scarce and sometimes not available do not want to be transferred to the mobile payment system because it will be hard for them to access the money.

It is acknowledged that manual payments will remain part of this programme for the foreseeable future but at a smaller scale, because of the country's topography and the limited technological and financial infrastructure of the country. Beneficiaries in the remotest areas will still depend on the CIT.

8.2.4 CGP Networks and Partnerships

CGP is an extensive programme. Its magnitude definitely requires the involvement of multiple role players for effective and efficient delivery. The amount of resources in terms of finance, materials and personnel needed for this programme are beyond what the GoL can manage on its own. This is evident from the responses of the government officials concerning the implementation strategies for this programme. Continuing technical and funding support for capacity building are crucial for the sustainability of this programme. The partnerships with the payment firms clearly augment the accomplishments made in delivering this programme; the effectiveness and efficiency are largely realised because government has released the responsibility to entities with the capacity to disburse the grant. Private companies are well resourced in terms of specialised skills and expertise that is lacking in the government sector, therefore, co-opting them into the public service delivery becomes imperative.

The government officials acknowledged that the government would struggle to administer this programme independently. Issues of accountability and transparency could be compromised and the programme would lack credibility. It has been emphasised that implementation of programmes like the CGP, tend to be flawed when they are solely run by government: audit reports are poor, there are no checks and balances for accountability such that programmes collapse as a result of poor management. The OAP is an example where accountability is lacking and the government is continually losing thousands of Maloti as a result. Cash leakages are common in that programme.

The private companies recognise the mutual benefits they gain as partners in implementing CGP. Trust has been built over the years and government honours its transactional obligations so there is continued service provision on the side of the private partners. The partnership however should be strengthened through proper

communication and coordination. These two aspects are requisite to maintain the relationship.

8.2.5 Challenges in the Implementation of the CGP

The study reveals several challenges, such as high operating costs, logistics and operational issues and unethical behaviour. The manual payment system is expensive. According to government officials the paying company has a monopoly in distributing the CGP to beneficiaries. It charges high rates because it does not have a competitor. The bulk of beneficiaries are paid manually so ways must be found to reduce this cost. It was revealed in the study that costs related to the delivery of the grant through CIT take a bigger proportion of the programme budget than what actually goes to the programme beneficiaries.

Logistics on the side of the CIT company sometimes need to be revised. The amount of work that the company has to carry out is huge. The CIT company is struggling due to the large number of pay points across the country, the distances they have to travel and the difficult terrain to negotiate. Delays are caused by the government such as the delayed release of funds for the CIT company to package, meaning that it will run behind time in transiting the money to the pay points. Beneficiaries suffer as a result. Sometimes they leave the payment sites very late thus risk encountering criminals. Poor payment reconciliations also reflect flaws associated with the manual payments.

Policy networks require honest and ethical behaviour among the partners. Professionalism has to be maintained. However, this study indicated that the CIT company staff fall below the professional standards and ethics required; according to the government officials, the manner in which they speak to the beneficiaries is unacceptable.

8.2.6 Barriers to the Implementation of the CGP

Some impediments inhibit the proper delivery or implementation of the CGP. Lack of public participation, lack of decentralisation, resource constraints, poor administrative capacity and the lack of political will were highlighted by respondents. Public involvement in public policy implementation is crucial for policy legitimation. Social

policy requires acceptance from the public in order to be accepted, if not understood it may be rejected.

The centralisation of the operations of CGP also affects its proper implementation. Officers at the community level lack access to the MISSA which delays case management because all queries are handled at the central level. The top-down approach that this policy takes is unsuitable because officers at the local level usually do not have the necessary information to address the needs of the beneficiaries. As a result, issues are poorly managed and they take too long to be resolved. Failure to address the requests and grievances of the beneficiaries timeously makes beneficiaries lose trust in the programme's processes.

These delays not only affect the beneficiaries but the government as well, because if for instance, a particular household no longer qualifies for the programme but remains in the programme, it means this money is not available for a beneficiary who could be eligible. Other responsibilities need to be devolved to the district level to augment efficiency and effectiveness in delivering this programme.

Skills and competence need to be improved to successfully drive the policy. Officers are not well-capable of the necessary skills and knowledge. Social policy scholars have identified this problem; in particular, they mention that low-income countries tend to have inadequate numbers of skilled and competent human resources to manage social assistance programmes. There is a gap or skills shortage for proper implementation of CGP that goes together with understaffing: too few officers have to manage the massive workload.

More importantly, political support for the implementation of this programme has to be increased, otherwise it will face difficulties in the long run. This programme will only be sustainable if it is properly funded. For example, the benefit amount for this programme has remained the same for over ten years regardless of the rising costs of daily basic needs. The benefit amount needs to be adjusted yearly to account for inflation in the market prices.

8.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

□ Targeting and Enrolment

These two aspects are crucial for the credibility of the CGP. Through these two processes, the programme will serve deserving households and queries, from the public will be minimised. Public awareness and engagement on CGP targeting and enrolment is necessary to foster understanding, acceptance, programme integrity and credibility. People need to be informed to avoid the dissatisfaction emanating from excluding and including others in the programme.

The suggestion has been raised that NISSA needs regular updating to ensure that CGP beneficiaries are selected from a credible data source. Using old data causes errors. Therefore, it is imperative that NISSA is made credible through timely and regular collection of up-to-date data. Other means of confirming the beneficiaries should be used; validation and re-certification must be mandatory aspects of the targeting and enrolment processes.

□ Address Resource Constraints and Administrative Capacity

The staff capacity in terms of skills has been flagged as one of the problems facing the government in delivering the CGP. Government needs to increase the staff capacity to be able to manage the system, and to upgrade it as necessary in order to address the glitches that sometimes occur when updates are effected into the system thus affecting production of payment lists. The government also needs to commit financial resources for the maintenance and upkeep of the system. The dependence on consultants needs to be minimised and internal capacity increased.

According to Schubert and Beales (2006:21), the result of human resource and skills shortages is the fragmentation and lack of coordination for social protection interventions that is detrimental to the efficiency and reliability of the programmes. CGP faces staff capacity issues in terms of numbers and competence. This was indicated by the top officials who participated in this study and a participant from an organisation providing technical support to the programme. There is a severe shortage of technical staff for running this programme; for example, the NISSA unit is staffed by

only one permanent staff member and temporary staff so when their contracts expire it means there is a gap. Government usually outsources staff because of the shortage of staff and skills.

Government should address the issue of skills shortage, capacitate staff through training and hire more proficient staff for this programme. Technical expertise and leadership also need to be augmented and attention be given to advancing the capacity of the human resources and enhancing systems in technical planning and implementation. Schubert and Beales (2006:21) indicate that institutional strengthening is crucial for government departments mandated with social protection duties; more attention needs to be given to investing in developing the capacity of the human resources and enhancing systems in planning and implementation.

□ **Decentralise CGP Case Management**

Decentralisation is one of the main issues for public administration and policy implementation. The CGP case management is centralised, all programme activities are performed at the central level while officials at the district and community council level have no access to MISSA and therefore cannot effect any updates to the beneficiaries' information. This is a problem and needs to be addressed because it causes delays in resolving queries; some information ends up misplaced as it has to be manually transferred from the districts to the central office to be captured into the MISSA.

Several officials noted different problems associated with the programme centralisation which all affect the effective delivery of the programme. This suggests that policy review and reform are necessary so that the officials who are close to the beneficiaries can serve them without hindrances. If this is done, problems can be addressed swiftly and complaints from the beneficiaries can be minimised.

□ **Digitise CGP Payments**

Mpesa is reasoned to be cost-effective for the government. Considerable savings have been realised since some beneficiaries were migrated to Mpesa because the manual payment system is expensive, much of the programme operational costs account for

use of funds which in the long run will jeopardise the sustainability of this programme. Therefore, the government of Lesotho is advised to increase the numbers of beneficiaries paid through Mpesa so that it can reduce the number of payment sites which the CIT company has to visit. Other electronic mechanisms can also be engaged to diversify the accessibility of the grant. Savings that can be salvaged by cutting operational costs incurred to pay the CIT which can be used to expand the programme or even improve its value to make it more impactful.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER



18 September 2021

Miss Mankuebe Bernice Khiba (216072383)
School Of Social Sciences
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Miss Khiba,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00003216/2021
Project title: Social Protection in Lesotho. The Case of the Child Grants Programme
Degree: PhD

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 10 August 2021 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted FULL APPROVAL.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

This approval is valid until 18 September 2022.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

All research conducted during the COVID-19 period must adhere to the national and UKZN guidelines.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,



Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

APPENDIX 2: GATEKEEPERS' LETTERS



Ministry of Social Development

Private Bag A 222

Maseru 100

1st August 2021

Miss M.B KHIBA

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Dear Miss Khiba

RE: PERMISSION FOR CONDUCTING YOUR RESEARCH IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

Reference is made to your letter requesting permission to conduct your research about the ministry's programme of Child Grants. We are impressed with your desire to conduct your research on this programme as we anticipate that your findings will provide the ministry with valuable insights for policy review and reform.

This letter therefore serves to grant you the permission to interview some of the staff working on the implementation of the programme.

Regards,

Nthabiseng .A. Sekete- Ms



Principal Secretary-Ministry of Social Development

Contacts: 00266 22314099/00266 22326371

28 August 2021

Ms Mankuebe Khiba
PhD Candidate
University of KwaZulu Natal

Dear Ms Khiba,

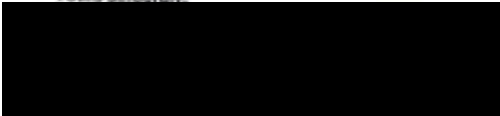
REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE WITH PHD RESEARCH

I refer to your letter dated 22 January 2021

Vodacom Lesotho is pleased to assist you with data collection in furtherance of the requirements of the PhD research which you are currently undertaking.

Please furnish us with the details of your requirements so as to assist us to direct you to the relevant department.

Yours sincerely,



MR. K. PEFOLE
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MANAGER
VODACOM LESOTHO (PTY) LTD

Vodacom Lesotho (Pty) Limited
Vodacom Park
555 Middle Road, Maseru
PO Box 1267, Maseru, Lesotho, 100

Phone: +266 2201 2335
Fax: +266 2201 1075



G4S Cash Solutions Lesotho
(PTY) Ltd
Hilton Road 307
Maseru 100
Lesotho

23rd July 2021

Telephone: +266 22247201
Fax: +266 22247202

Mankuebe Khiba
University Of Kwazulu Natal
Republic Of South Africa

www.g4s.com

Dear Ms M Khiba

REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Thank you for your interest in making G4S Cash Solutions part of your research as per your request. I am pleased to inform you that G4S Cash Solutions is willing to take part in your Research study for the purpose of data collection.

I must indicate that due to the sensitive nature of our business, it might not be all the information that we can share however, we will try to assist you in anyway possible.

We will await your research material in order to start the process. I would like to wish you all the best in your research.

Kind Regards,



WINNIE ADORO
HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

Securing Your World

G4S Security Services Lesotho (PTY) Ltd
Registered as a security services provider by
the Private Security Industry Board, Register
C19616 801/14

Director
Mankuebe Khiba
Lesotho 100
23rd July 2021

Ref: LES/2021/CP

30 March 2021

Ms Mankuebe Khiba
Ph.D Reseracher
University of KwaZulu-Natal
The school of Social Sciences
South Africa

Dear Ms. Khiba


re: Request to Conduct an Interview on the Research Topic: Social Protection in Lesotho: The Case of the Child Grants Programme

Thank you for your letter on the subject.

We are pleased to inform you that your request to conduct the interview is approved. You can contact with the following two officers and make necessary appointments at mutually convenient dates and times:

- Ms Mookho Thame-Ramasike, Social Policy Specialist at mthame@unicef.org; and
- Ms Sarne Holtslag, Social Policy Specialist at sholtslag@unicef.org.

Yours Sincerely,


Kimanzi Muthengi
Officer-in-Charge

APPENDIX 3: INFORMED CONSENT LETTER (Translated)



UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)

APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

For research with human participants

INFORMED CONSENT RESOURCE TEMPLATE

Note to researchers: Notwithstanding the need for scientific and legal accuracy, every effort should be made to produce a consent document that is as linguistically clear and simple as possible, without omitting important details as outlined below. Certified translated versions will be required once the original version is approved.

There are specific circumstances where witnessed verbal consent might be acceptable, and circumstances where individual informed consent may be waived by HSSREC.

Information Sheet and Consent to Participate in Research/ Pampiri ea litlhakisetso ho nka karolo boithutong

Letsatsi:

Monghali/ Mofumahali

Lebitso la ka ke Mankuebe Khiba, moithuti Universithing ea KwaZulu-Natal/ My name is Mankuebe Khiba, a student in the School of Social Sciences in the faculty of Humanities at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Ke kopa ho o memela ho nka karolo boithutong bo amanang le lithuso tsa litsiane tsa bana tsa lekala la Ntsetso-pele ea sechaba. Sepheo sa boithuto bona ke ho fumana hore na ba fumanang litsiane tsena li ba tsoela molemo joang le hore na maikutlo a bona ke afeng ka tsela eoo ba fumantsoang litsiane tsena ka eona, tsela eeo chelete e fihlang matsohong a bona. Boithuto bona botlo etsoa ka batho ba mashome a tseletseng ho bapisa maikutlo a bona. Batho bana ba tla nkoa literekeng tse tseletseng; tse tharo ka maloting le tse tharo ka mabalane. Ke tla o kopa ho arabela lipotso tseo ke li lokisitseng sebakeng sa boithuto bona.

Ke lumela hore ha hona letho leka o behang tlokotsing kapa kotsing ka ho nka karolo boithutong bona. Maikemisetso ke hore boithuto bona bo tle bo thuse mmuso oa Lesotho ho hlahloba tsebetso ea ona ele ho etsa lintlafatso phanong ea litsebeletso moo ho hlokehang. Taba ena etla thusa le lona lele sechaba moo ebang litsebeletso tsa morero ona ha li le tsamaele hantle.

Boithuto bona bo hlahlobiloe mme ba amoheloa ke komiti ea lipatlisiso ea Unifesithi ea Natala hore bo bolokehile sebakeng sa sechaba.

Moo o kabang le mathata, lipotso kapa tsoenyeho e itseng oka letsetsa moithuti linomorong tse latelang; 58008858 kapa 62008858 kapa oa letsetsa Komiti ea lipatlisiso ea Unifesithi nomorong eka tlase:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus
Govan Mbeki Building
Private Bag X 54001
Durban
4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Ho nka karolo boithutong bona ke boithaopo, o nale bolokolohi ba ho ikhula neng kapa neng ha o batla. Hape o tsebe hore ha hona letho leo o lokelang ho le lefa ho nka karolo hape ha hona patala eeo o tla e fumantsoa kaha ele ka boithatelo ho nka karolo.

Tseba hore litaba tseo o tla fana ka tsona likeke tsa sebelisoa khahlanong le oena ka tsela efeng kapa efeng. Litaba tseo o li faneng likeke tsa fetisetsoa ho mang kapa mang ka tsela eka o behang tlokotsing mme litla bolokoa ele lekunutu; le mabitso a hau akeke a amahanngoa le litaba tseo o tla li fana.

Tumello,

Nna----- ke hlaloseletsoe ka boithuto ba Morero oa Litsiane tsa bana oa Lesotho. Boithuto bo etsoa ke Mankuebe Bernice Khiba.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study/ Ke utloisisa boikemisetso ba boithuto bona

I have been given an opportunity to ask questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction/ Ke filoe monyetla oa ho botsa lipotso ka boithuto bona mme ke arabiloe ka tsela e nkhotsofalitseng.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time/ Ke nka karolo boithutong bona ka boithaopi mme nka ikhula neng kapa neng.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study, I understand that I may contact the researcher at 00266 58008858/ Kea utloisisa hore ha kena le lipotso nka letsetsa moithuti linomorong tsena: 00266 58008858.

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact:/ Hape nka letsetsa nomoro ea Unifesithi e fanoeng mona haeba kena le tletlebo ka litokelo tsaka kele ea nkang karolo boithutong bona.

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Additional consent, where applicable/ Tlatsetso ea tumello moo ho hlokehang

I hereby provide consent to:/ ke fana ka tumello ho

Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion/ ho rekotoa likarabo tsaka

YES / NO/ Eea/Che

Signature of Participant/Motekeno

Date/Letsatsi

Signature of Witness/Paki

(Where applicable)

Date/Letsatsi

Signature of Translator
(Where applicable)

Date

APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW GUIDES

a) DIRECTOR SOCIAL ASSISTANCE, DIRECTOR PLANNING, MANAGER SOCIAL ASSISTANCE (GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS)

1. What is the rationale for the implementation child grants programme in Lesotho? / Why did the government resolve to introduce the CGP?
2. What are the processes followed in selecting the beneficiaries of this programme?
3. Why did the government choose to partner with the private companies to deliver the program?
4. What have been your experiences in partnering with private companies with Vodacom Lesotho and G4S Lesotho in delivering the grant?
5. What is your view about the payment modes of this program?
6. What are the challenges with the delivery modes of the CGP?
7. What are the advantages of each delivery mode?
8. What have been the overall issues that the government has faced with the grant?

b) SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT MANAGERS (GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS)

1. What is your role in the implementation of CGP?
2. What do you think this policy intervention is trying to address?
3. Why do you think the government decided to partner with the private companies to implement the CGP?
4. What are the challenges of this partnership?
5. What is your opinion about the delivery modes of this program?
6. What are the challenges that are associated with these delivery modes?
7. Which areas in the implementation this program do you think need to be improved?

8. What recommendations do you have for improved service delivery in terms of this program?

c) Senior Social Assistance Officer (CASE MANAGEMENT OFFICE)

1. What is your role in the implementation of the CGP?
2. What have been your experiences with the implementation of the CGP?
3. Why did the government decide to partner with the private companies; Vodacom Lesotho and G4S Lesotho?
4. What are some of the constraints and or challenges that you experience with this partnership with these private companies?
5. What are some of the benefits?
6. What is your view about the delivery modes of this program?
7. What is your view about the impact of this program?
8. What areas of the programme need to be improved?
9. What recommendations do you have for improved service delivery in terms of this program?

d) Senior Social Assistance Officer (PAYMENTS OFFICER)

1. What is your role in the implementation of the CGP?
2. What have been your experiences with the implementation of the CGP?
3. Why did the government decide to partner with the private companies; Vodacom Lesotho and G4S Lesotho?
4. What are some of the constraints and or challenges that you experience with this partnership with these private companies?
5. What are some of the benefits?
6. What is your view about the delivery modes of this program?
7. What is your view about the impact of this program?
8. What areas of the programme need to be improved?
9. What recommendations do you have for improved service delivery in terms of this program?

(e) AUXILLIARY SOCIAL WORKERS (GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS)

1. What is your role in the implementation of CGP?
2. What is your opinion about the delivery modes of this program?
3. Which mode of delivery do you think works better in delivering the CGP? Why?
4. Which queries do the beneficiaries usually report?
5. What are their perceptions about the ways in which they access the money, delivery modes of the program?
6. What kind of reports do you usually receive about the usage of this child grant?
7. What are your observations about the usage of the grant?
8. What is your view about the impact of this programme?

(f) SOCIAL POLICY SPECIALIST-UNICEF LESOTHO

1. What is your understanding of the Lesotho governments reasons for establishing the CGP?
2. How has your organisation been involved in the implementation of the CGP?
3. What have been your experiences with this programme since its inception?
4. What kind of support are you giving the Lesotho government implementation of and or delivery of the CGP?
5. How has the government performed in implementing the programme?
6. What areas of the implementation of this program do you think need to be improved?

(g) G4S LESOTHO (ASSISTANT MARKETING OFFICER)

1. Why did your company partner with the government to deliver the cash grant?
2. What are your responsibilities in the partnership?
3. What are the governments responsibilities?
4. What are your company's experiences of delivering the cash grant?
5. What are the challenges facing your partnership?
6. What value does your company bring to this partnership?

(h) VODACOM LESOTHO (MPESA ENTERPRISE SPECIALIST)

1. Why did your company partner with the government to deliver the cash grant?
2. What are your responsibilities in the partnership?
3. What are the governments responsibilities?
4. What are your company's experiences of delivering the cash grant?
5. What are the challenges facing your partnership?
6. What value does your company bring to this partnership?

(i) GRANT BENEFICIARIES (FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION)

1. What is your understanding of the child grants program?
 - Which documents did you need to produce to have your children registered for the grant?
 - How were you notified that your household qualifies for the grant?
2. How do you access your grant?
 - How do you receive the payment for your grant?
 - What have been your experiences of this method of payment?
 - Which method of payment between the mobile (Mpesa) and manual (money in the envelope) do you prefer?
 - Why do you prefer the one prefer?
 - How would you like the government to improve the delivery of this child grants programme?
3. What do you think about the amount of the grant you receive?
4. How do you usually spend the money, what are the things you spent the grant on?
5. How has your family benefitted from the grant?

APPENDIX 5: Turnitin Report

Second Full Draft Dissertation			
ORIGINALITY REPORT			
11 %	10 %	4 %	3 %
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS
PRIMARY SOURCES			
1	researchspace.ukzn.ac.za Internet Source		1 %
2	hdl.handle.net Internet Source		1 %
3	au.int Internet Source		<1 %
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APPENDIX 6: Proof reader's report

Cecil Renaud Library
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Pietermaritzburg Campus
Pvt Bag X014
Scottsville
3209
12 August 2024

To whom it may concern

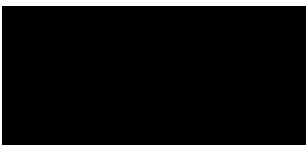
This is to certify that I have proofread MANKUEBE BERNICE KHIBA's PhD titled:
AN ANALYSIS OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPLEMENTERS AND BENEFICIARIES OF THE
CHILD GRANTS PROGRAMME. A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED REGIONS IN LESOTHO.

I first looked at the thesis before it went to the examiner and checked for grammar, spelling, typos, formatting, numbering, corrected the contents pages and checked the in-text references against the bibliography and vs versa, as well as checked for omissions and technical errors in the bibliography.

Based upon the examiner's comments, I have re-numbered the tables and figures, re-checked the spacing in the text, numbered a paragraph that was missing a number, added in two appendices and checked the text in terms of grammar etc assisted by Grammarly. I have also made some technical corrections to the bibliography. I have also checked the contents pages. I do experience some issues with spacing and hope it is now satisfactory.

I have done this 2nd check to the best of my ability in the limited time available and hope that the work now passes muster.

Yours faithfully

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Dr Rosemary Kuhn.

Dr Rosemary Kuhn