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Governance, Performance and Sustainability of Non-State Social Protection Services in Uganda

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Abbreviations

BG	burial group
CAFS	Centre for African Studies
CBO	community-based organisation
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DFID	Department for International Development
FBG	faith-based group
FBO	faith-based organisation
IDP	internally displaced person
ILO	International Labour Organization
LC	Local Council
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NSA	non-state actors
NSSF	National Social Security Fund
NUSAF	Northern Uganda Social Action Fund
PASGR	Partnership for African Social and Governance Research
PWD	person with disability
SOP	standard operating procedures
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UGX	Uganda Shilling
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
USPP	Uganda Social Protection Platform
VSLA	village savings and loans association
WFP	World Food Programme

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Abstract

This study uses qualitative and quantitative approaches to fill gaps in previous studies by shedding more light on the nature, governance, and scope of non-state actors (NSAs) in Uganda and related issues of performance and sustainability. The focus of this study is social protection interventions in three districts in Uganda: Rakai (ravaged by HIV especially in the 1980s and 1990s), Bushenyi (relatively stable) and Kole (post-conflict district). The study found that governance of mutual help groups such as burial groups was based on trust and lacked formal and rigid organisational structures. However, these groups offered crucial and timely interventions for felt and immediate needs that are unmet by either the government or externally funded non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The study underscores the need for formulating government policy that complements and enables NSAs rather than inhibiting and stifling the effort of these pivotal community-based organisations. Further, the study demonstrates how it behoves the government, which is charged with monitoring NSAs, to enable them to transition into more promotive and transformative entities. The study noted that NSAs are home-grown solutions to challenges of social protection as they depended mainly on resources generated by members rather than relying on external funding. In other words, NSAs respond appropriately to local circumstances, while operating without rigid and formal controls. In the process NSAs demonstrate more longevity and sustainability than NGOs whose programs are time-bound and are focused on specific problems such as dealing with the effects of civil war in Kole district in northern Uganda. Given the pivotal role NSAs play in providing social protection in Uganda, this study demonstrates that public policy should be geared towards minimising or eradicating the tension between NSAs and the government in the volatile regulatory landscape.

Key words: governance, social protection, sustainability, policy, vulnerability

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Social protection broadly refers to policies and actions designed to ‘enhance the capacity of all people, but notably poor and vulnerable groups, to escape from poverty, or avoid falling into poverty’ (European Commission, 2012:3). A broader and rights-based view includes policies and actions that enable people to gainfully participate in inclusive growth and human development (Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler, 2004). Social protection responses are deemed essential because they seek to reduce individual vulnerability and improve people’s wellbeing (Upreti et al., 2012:37). One of the key challenges facing social protection in developing countries is long-term sustainability without dependency on external donor funding. Uganda’s State social protection schemes have poor resources. This study therefore sought to deepen the understanding of non-state social protection services (NSSPs) in Uganda.

Irrespective of various interpretations, interventions and services seek to reduce poverty, prevent further poverty, and provide opportunities for the poor to move out of poverty (Slater and McCord, 2009; Adesina, 2010; Jones and Holmes, 2010; Barrientos et al., 2004; Foster et al. 2001). Services include pensions, household grants, public works programmes, health insurance, disaster relief assistance, and others broadly categorised as social insurance,¹ social assistance,² or labour market programmes³ (Upreti et al., 2012; Upreti et al., 2012). Devereux (2006) categorises social protection interventions into four types: protective, preventive, promotive, and transformative. Social protection has in recent years received increased attention from governments, donors, inter-governmental and multi-lateral organisations as an instrument of poverty alleviation, addressing vulnerability and helping attainment of the past Millennium Development Goals (PASGR, 2012), and now, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Social protection services have traditionally been provided by governments through social assistance programmes, social security and pensions. However, literature shows that very many people in African countries are currently outside the scope of state social protection systems. Estimates by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and others indicate that up to 90 per cent of the population in sub-Saharan African (SSA) low income economies are not covered by statutory social security protection (ILO, 2000; Van Ginneken, 2003; Laiglesia, 2011). According to Laiglesia (2011:1), only 26 per cent of the working population has access to old-age coverage, 17 per cent against employment injury, and a meagre 1 per cent to unemployment insurance. The majority working in the urban informal sector and in the rural economy depend on either formal non-state initiatives by community-based organisations (CBOs) and NGOs or draw from traditional (informal) social protection arrangements based on lineage, clan, or neighbourhood risk-pooling initiatives. An increasing and important role for non-state social protection services is beginning to be acknowledged in sub-Saharan Africa, Uganda included.

In Uganda, a number of factors have increased poverty and vulnerability. These include civil wars, HIV and AIDS, natural disasters, changing macroeconomic contexts, gender, disability, household composition, age and ethnicity (National Development Plan 2010/11–2014/15). Uganda has a number of legal instruments and programmes⁴ to benefit

¹ Social insurances ‘cover the risks associated with unemployment, sickness, maternity, disability, industrial injury and old age’...including old-age insurance, health insurance, unemployment insurance and programmes for disabled workers (Upreti et al., 2012).

² Social assistance includes benefits such as assistance for the elderly, health assistance, child protection programmes, disaster relief assistance and other forms of assistance targeting the poor population, and the target is often the entire family in one way or the other (Ibid.).

³ The labour market programmes include programmes directed at the unemployed and underemployed, such as food-for-work schemes (Ibid.).

⁴ Some of the programmes with social protection objectives financed by government include: Northern Social Action Fund (NUSAF), Micro-Finance–former Entandikwa Credit Scheme, Youth Entrepreneur Scheme, Northern Uganda Reconstruction, South-west Agricultural Rehabilitation Project (SWARP), Community HIV/AIDS Initiative (CHAI), OVC programme, Universal Primary Education, pension schemes, health (free health services) and

people in difficult circumstances, including, older persons, persons with disabilities (PWDs), orphans and other vulnerable groups (OVC). A number of private social protection schemes is operated by insurance companies and other health schemes, but these arrangements cover only a few individuals. Uganda has 8.4 million people living in poverty; 80 per cent of these live in chronic poverty and comprise vulnerable groups such as widows, orphans, the unemployed, youth, plantation workers, PWDs, the chronically ill, ethnic minorities, and the elderly. It is estimated that up to 95 per cent of the population is generally excluded from State-provided social protection (Barya, 2009:2). The National Development Plan 2010/11–2014/15 (NDP) directed social protection interventions to target the “welfare of people unable to work or lacking basic resources.” Social protection comprises “all public and private interventions that address vulnerabilities associated with being or becoming poor; enabling the poor to prevent, cope with and mitigate risks.” NSA initiatives that fit this definition include those targeting the elderly, OVC and PWDs, among others.

Problem Statement

Government social protection services benefit only a small number of people. In sub-Saharan Africa and other low income economies, as few as 10 per cent are covered by statutory social security protection (Laiglesia, 2011) owing to lack of resources, weak public institutions, and highly segmented social insurance systems.

NSAs are trying to address the shortfall. By 1998, Uganda had at least 2,728 NGOs and 743 CBOs active in providing some form of social protection. Information on other types of NSAs and the exact services they offer is not available, although some NSSP initiatives like the TASO community-based HIV and AIDS programme have for many years delivered reliable services to members. While state-run schemes tend to have elaborate and well-established rules and procedures, NSAs are not standardised. Some literature shows that the quality of governance significantly determines the outcomes of interventions (Bassett et al., 2012).

1.2 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study on “governance, performance and sustainability”:

- Who are the non-state social protection actors in selected districts of Uganda, and what is their nature and scope of services?
- What governance arrangements characterise non-state social protection initiatives in selected districts of Uganda?
- How do governance arrangements of NSAs affect the performance of NSAs in providing social protection services?
- How do the governance arrangements of NSAs influence the adaptability and sustainability of social protection services?

health insurance, school feeding programmes, (Alternative Basic Education Karamonja/Complementary Opportunity Programme Education (COPE) in pastoral and fishing communities in Karamonja and Kalangala; psycho-social support for HIV/AIDS and conflict prone areas; food aid/ food for work in Karamonja; informal networks–burial groups, merry-go-round groups and village saving clubs, agriculture implements, resistant seeds (PMA/NAADS) and Early Childhood and Nutrition Project.

1.3 Methodology

This study used qualitative and quantitative approaches to illuminate the governance nature of NSAs in Uganda and its implications to performance and sustainability. It adopted a cross sectional design. The study was carried out in two phases: mapping and in-depth.

Mapping was two-pronged (i) total coverage/census for the NGOs and other big NSAs operating in each district, and (ii) for CBOs and other initiatives. Total coverage was conducted in a sample of two sub-counties per district. Table 1 shows the mapped NSAs in the three study districts.

Table 1: Distribution of mapped NSAs by districts

District	Region	Sample sub-counties	%	<i>n</i>
Rakai	Central	Kalisizo Town Council and Lwanda	13	71
Bushenyi	Western	Nyabubare and Kyamuhunga	62	334
Kole	Northern	Aboke and Bala	24	131
Total			99	536

In each of the mapped organisations, interviews were conducted with managers and leaders to capture general characteristics, beneficiaries, services, as well as organisational and governance structures. An inventory of all the organisations was compiled from which the sample for the in-depth study was drawn.

Phase 2 entailed conducting an in-depth study that involved collecting primary data from a sample of beneficiaries and NSA members and managers. A total sample of 815 beneficiaries was selected from 65 NSAs that had existed for at least five years. The cut-off of 5 years identified NSAs that had existed long enough to have evolved some governance structures and issues of sustainability. Other criteria used in selection were:

- Representation of formal and informal NSAs
- Representation of NSAs intervening in different sectors of social protection such as health, income support, food support
- Representation of NSAs working with different categories of vulnerable groups.

The sample of 65 NSAs represented about 12 per cent of the total number of eligible NSAs that had been mapped and was stratified by type. The sample was proportionately distributed in three study districts with Bushenyi taking the largest sample (Table 2).

Table 2: Distribution of sampled NSAs

District	No. of NSAs	%
Bushenyi	34	52
Kole	13	20
Rakai	18	28
Total	65	100

Data for mapping and for the in-depth study were drawn from both secondary and primary sources. Secondary data were collected from published and grey literature, existing databases, inventories and directories of CSOs maintained by national and district offices.

Primary data for both mapping and in-depth study were collected from managers of NSAs, beneficiaries and key informants including policy actors using a desk review, personal interviews and group discussions.

1.4 Relevance of the Study

The findings of this study have generated lessons for policy-makers and implementers of social protection services, and on the governance of service delivery. In a context where

State-provided services suffer from grave problems of inefficiency, corruption and lack of responsiveness and sustainability, there can be a lot to learn from successful non-state providers of social protection services. Funders and other supporters of capacity-building programmes for CSOs may use the results of this study to design capacity-building interventions for social protection providers. It is also hoped that relevant government agencies will gain insights necessary for effective policy and regulation.

2 Literature Review and Conceptual Lens

This chapter highlights the literature review and conceptual lens that informed the study.

2.1 Literature Review

The European Commission conceptualises social protection as policies and actions designed to “enhance the capacity of all people... to escape from poverty” (European Commission, 2012:3). Devereux (2006) suggests initiatives that provide income and/or food transfers to the poor, protect the vulnerable against livelihood risks, and enhance the social status and rights of marginalised people. Devereux (2006) maintains social protection is used mostly as a safety net and should be more diverse and broad.

Social protection constitutes a variety of services such as pensions, household grants, public works programmes, health insurance, disaster relief assistance, and other services broadly categorised as social insurance, social assistance, or labour market programmes (Upreti et al., 2012). Devereux’s (2006) framework categorises social protection into protective, promotive, preventive and transformative interventions. Devereux (2006) argues that safety nets are “neither predictable nor comprehensive”, while social protection interventions are (or should be) “guaranteed, predictable transfers to all chronically vulnerable groups.” Vulnerability is thus a state of being in which a person is likely to be in a risky situation, suffering significant physical, emotional or mental harm that may result in their human rights not being fulfilled. Devereux (2006) noted that social protection responds to transitory vulnerability, chronic vulnerability and structural vulnerability. Those who suffer most from transitory vulnerability (i.e. livelihood shocks) are already chronically vulnerable.

Governance, which is central in delivery of social protection interventions, is “the means by which social coordination is achieved” (Lowndes and Skelcher, 1998:314). A study by the Centre for African Family Studies (CAFS, 2001) on Governance and leadership in eastern, southern, central and western Africa considers governance to encompass processes, policies, procedures, systems and practices, how they are used, their results, and the nature of relationships. Governance is a decision-making process where different actors negotiate social protection packages, delivery methods and nature of beneficiaries. Governance does not imply an action of government, but rather a mode of governing.

Key features of good governance include accountability (responsibility is assigned and records are kept), transparency (stakeholders are able to know what is being done), predictability (rules and standards), and participation (voice and active involvement of a constituency) (ISSA, 2011). Governance involves creating the right institutions and a framework to support delivery of services. Governance is central to any intervention; it helps define eligibility/recruitment criteria for beneficiaries and stipulates the nature of service delivery, whether formal or informal (Bassett et al., 2012). Non-formal governance mechanisms include kinship obligations, reciprocity in friendship, and support based on solidarity (Devereux and Wheeler, 2004; Barrientos and Shepherd, 2003). Seeley et al. (2008) consider informal social networks as pivotal. It has been suggested that formal social protection—such as cash transfers—can in the long-run be integrated inadvertently into informal social protection: families receive cash transfers and turn them into income-generating activities, which may be used to support kin beyond the targeted family/households (Sabates-Wheeler et al., 2008).

In this study, governance means a set of formal and informal processes, systems, practices, procedures and rules exercised in the management of NSAs and relationships created in the delivery of services. While the literature on governance is plentiful, there is little on how governance might influence the success of social protection interventions.

Many NSAs such as NGOs, community-based groups (CBOs), family and kin, religious bodies, savings and credit groups, and forms of “traditional” insurance play a significant role. They have adopted various designs, approaches and strategies to deliver social protection. Some use principles of “universalism”, or selectivity through “targeting”, or a “hybrid” of the two in providing food security, health insurance, income improvement and other services.

In 1998, a database generated by the then Ministry of Planning and Economic Development in Uganda listed 2,728 NGOs and 743 CBOs in the social protection arena. Some are in collaborative partnership with government (MGLSD, 2010), bridging service gaps in State mechanisms, and improving equity, efficiency, quality, accountability and accessibility (Hall et al., 2005; Franceys, 2001).

In developing countries, most people are served only by family and other informal networks. Households live in inherently risky environments with constrained formal insurance options (Franque Grimad, 1997). So households resort to informal risk-sharing schemes between members of close-knit communities, linked either by location or by ethnicity. Franque Grimad (1997) argues that since group members know each other well, monitoring and enforcement costs are considerably reduced. In some countries, informal insurance arrangements between individuals living in different locations but joined by ethnic or extended family networks have been reported. The kinship system therefore is the basis for governance arrangements for this type of social protection.

Social protection has long been part of many Ugandan societies through informal, family, tribe, kinship or other arrangements based on cultural affinities. These persist and even predominate, but are under pressure from socio-economic changes (De Coninck and Drani, 2009; Devereux et al., 2002; Barya, 2009; De Coninck and Drani, 2009), and hence the increasing role of local and international NGOs in supporting social protection interventions.

Local and international NGOs generally operate with a strong value-based motivation, many concentrating on assistance to the poorest. Pioneering work in areas of assisting the poor to develop the organisational forms to manage their own resources (credit and savings groups) has often been associated with NGOs. Devereux et al. (2002) recognised the existence of many interventions such as micro-health insurance schemes that provide support to orphans, persons living with AIDS and other vulnerable groups, but noted that NSA services were unable to meet overall need.

In 2012, the Government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development Protection (MGLSD), released a report entitled *Uganda: Social protection public expenditure review*, which documents efforts towards “expanding social protection.” The MGLSD has spearheaded these efforts, leading to a five-year Expanding Social Protection programme approved by cabinet in 2010. While this is a government programme run through the MGLSD, it is implemented and largely funded by NSAs. Donors supporting this programme are the Department for International Development (DfID), Irish Aid and UNICEF. Prior to this DANIDA, WFP, European Commission, UN Women, and the World Bank supported interventions in social transfer, social insurance, and social care (Wylde et al., 2012). Local and international NGOs in social protection have usually received donor funding that has contributed to the efforts of self-help groups in providing for members.

Harvey et al. (2007) and UNICEF (2009) suggest that self-help groups have poor governance and low administrative capacity. UNICEF (2009:43) recommends there should be a strong multi-sectoral coordination and donor harmonisation (which are crucial for expanding child-sensitive social protection) for a comprehensive approach. Harvey et al. (2007) note that there will always be potential for benefits to be corruptly diverted or captured by local elites, so it is important to build the trustworthiness of donors, governments and other actors through accountability mechanisms and active collaboration.

Foster et al. (2001) suggest that social protection—in family and kin, community, religious bodies, NGOs, savings and credit groups, and forms of traditional insurance such as burial societies—revolves around some level of patronage. The literature draws on the concept of the “moral economy” in traditional societies within small and relatively weak states. Strategies to minimise risk generally come with a trade-off (Ellis, 1993). Safety is often achieved through seeking patrons in a “lop-sided friendship,” where the poor accept routine exploitation in return for the promise of protection when crisis does strike. All this does not nurture good governance for social protection interventions. Few studies have explored the governance of NSAs in social protection in Uganda. However, Kasente et al.

(2004) point out that among the widely existing social security systems in Uganda (formal social security schemes targeting the employed, community groups that serve only group members, kinship-based solidarity groups that serve the extended family, and village residents' mutual assistance groups, which are compulsory for all adults in the villages where they operate), problems of poor management and a low capital base undermine effectiveness. Often, the informal groups depend on the voluntary leadership of members and lack technical skills that would strengthen their operations. The legal framework in which the informal groups operate is the unwritten rules of reciprocity and social support that is expected of every member. Yet even formal groups may experience poor management and misuse of funds, often due to weak control systems. A study by the Centre for African Family Studies (CAFS, 2001) argues that good governance is important in managing service delivery. Accountability mechanisms and practices, resource use, responsible and transparent leadership are considered important principles of good governance, for example, among community-based health insurance schemes (CBHI).

Governance of community-based health insurance schemes provides features that may promote or undermine sustainability. Commenting on CBHI in Central and West Africa, Tabor (2005) noted that in a community-based insurance model the policyholders are the owners and managers of the scheme. Policyholders elect a group (typically one or two persons) of their members to act as volunteer managers. Management is responsible for determining what coverage will be offered and for setting premiums. Through participatory processes, the CBHI managers and members determine the level of monthly contributions, and establish rules for rationing the CBHI resources. Moreover, as long as the management of the scheme is conducted on a volunteer basis, administrative expenses are small. Many CBHIs depend on continuing access to some form of external subsidy (Tabor, 2005).

In summary, literature recognises that traditional forms of social protection have been eroded by changes in socio-economic structures, and forced systems that have survived to adapt to new circumstances (Koehler, 2011; Barya, 2009; De Coninck and Drani, 2008). The survival of NSAs is partly dependent on their ability to adapt to changing situations; social networks are always uncertain and even family support is not guaranteed (Oduro, 2010). In developing countries social protection is fragile and lacks sustainability.

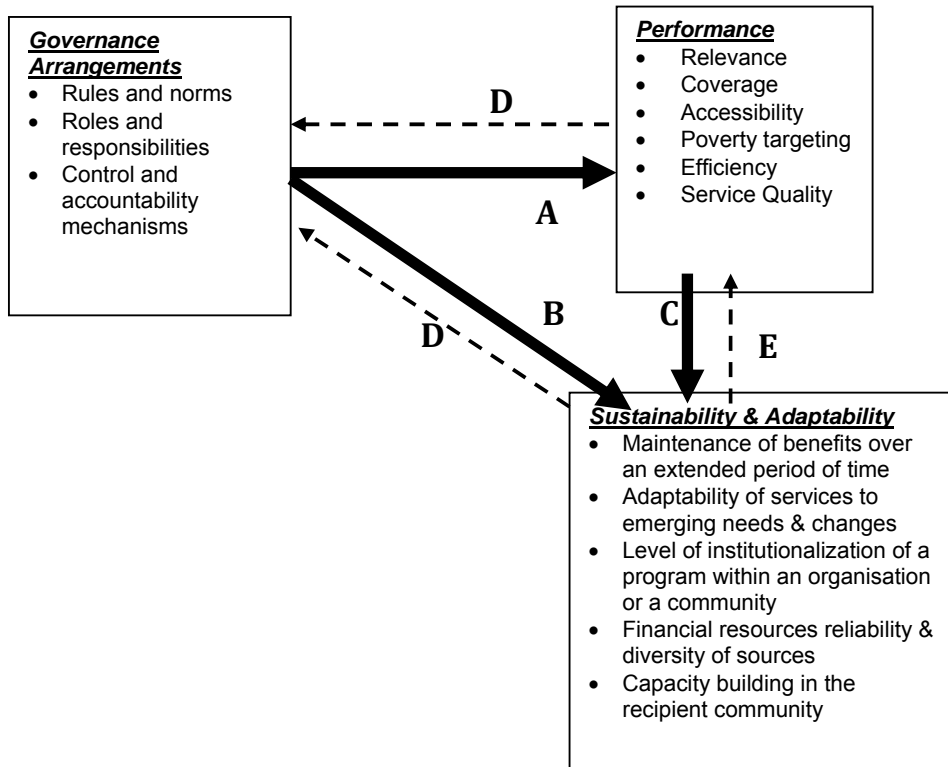
2.2 Conceptual Framework

This study was based on a conceptualisation of the following relationships as indicated in Figure 1:

- A relationship between the governance characteristics of NSAs involved in social protection as an independent variable, and the performance of NSAs in providing social protection services (A)
- A relationship between the governance characteristics of NSAs and the sustainability (potential and actual) of the social protection services provided (denoted by arrow B). It is presumed that the governance characteristics of NSAs might be related to their potential and actual levels of sustainability
- A relationship between performance of NSAs and the sustainability of their services. Whereas performance and sustainability are in this case treated as dependent variables, they are not causal-free variables.
- Finally, a reverse relationship may also exist between performance and sustainability / adaptability, whereby the sustainability of services may contribute to continuous improvement in performance.

A cyclic relationship may be anticipated between governance, performance and sustainability/adaptability of services.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework



Scholars have classified social protection into protective, preventive, promotive and transformative categories. This study focuses on the governance of NSAs: it explores how governance within NSAs in these different categories of social protection interventions is played out. The review shows that success and sustainability largely depend on resources, so this study seeks to understand how the governance of various NSAs enables, sustains or impacts access to resources by NSAs. Social protection seeks to reduce poverty, prevent further poverty, and provide opportunities for the poor to move out of poverty (Slater and McCord, 2009; Adesina, 2010; Jones and Holmes, 2010; Barrientos et al., 2004; Foster et al., 2001).

3 Policies on Social Protection in Uganda

Uganda has a draft policy on social protection (MGLSD) and provides for social protection within the overarching national planning framework—the Second National Development Plan (NDP) 2015/16 – 2019/20.

While there has been no comprehensive social protection programme by the Government of Uganda, several government interventions have had a social protection component. These include old-age pensions for civil servants managed by the Ministry of Public Service, the National Social Security Fund (NSSF), which targets workers in the formal private sector, and short-term donor-funded projects such as the Community HIV/AIDS Initiative and the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF). These schemes have limited coverage. As of March 2007, the pension scheme covered only 44,000 public servants, while NSSF covered about 1.3 million workers between 1967 and 2003 (NDP, 2010/11–2014/15). There are also several pilot poverty alleviation programmes with some being spearheaded by NGOs.

The NGO Policy (2010) reports more than 7,000 registered NGOs that, in the main, rely on external funding and offer services such as health care, food aid, and shelter. They sometimes offer loans and savings schemes and income-generating activities (MoGLSD, 2010). Informal NSAs—family, tribe or kinship-based arrangements—have been common providers of social protection to the vulnerable. Interventions include mutual help with cash lending or in-kind assistance, resource-pooling, welfare and insurance associations such as burial groups and kinship associations, and savings and credit groups at the community level.

The government has put in place a number of legal instruments to regulate NGOs and other voluntary organisations. The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (2005) states that: “civic organisations shall retain their autonomy in pursuit of their declared objectives” (Principle II [iv] of the National Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy – Constitution of the Republic of Uganda). Specific legislations that have targeted non-state voluntary actors include the Non-Governmental Organisations Registration Statute No.5, 1989, and the Non-Governmental Organisations Regulations, Statutory Instrument No.9, 1990. These sought to establish guidelines for the registration and monitoring of NGOs, and set up an NGO Registration Board whose functions were:

- To consider and approve registration of NGOs
- To keep a register of registered organisations
- To guide and monitor organisations in carrying out their services
- To make recommendations to other authorities with regard to employment of non-citizens, exemption from taxes and any other privileges
- To advise the Minister of Internal Affairs on the general policy relating to the operations of organisations (Government of Uganda, 1989).

Under the NGO registration statute, all NGOs were required to register with the NGO Registration Board, which would then issue a certificate (which it also had the power to refuse or revoke). NGOs were required to periodically renew their certificates of registration, and submit yearly returns to the Board indicating whether or not there had been changes in their constitution, membership or name.⁵

NSAs consider these legislations to be too inhibiting and suffocating (Asiimwe-Mwesigye, 2003). When the 1989 NGO Registration Statute was passed, it immediately became a cause of friction between government and CSOs (Bazaara, 2000). The NGO Registration Board had been established under the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which also houses the Police, the Prisons, and other security organisations such as the Internal

⁵ The government's desire to restrict NGO activities could also have been deriving from government's past experience where some political groups and political parties, because of the constitutional restrictions that were imposed on political pluralism in the past, operated more or less like NGOs. Groups like The Free Movement (TFM) and the Reform Agenda, who were opposed to the hegemony of the NRM regime and clearly had a political agenda, operated under the banner of civil society and not as political parties.

Security Organisation (ISO). CSOs questioned why the Board was not under one of the service or development-orientated ministries focused on planning and social or economic development. Second, the composition of the NGO Registration Board included representatives from the External Security Organisation (ESO) and the ISO, but no representatives from civil society. Evidently, the government was portraying NGOs as a potential security threat. It is on this basis that the claim that the government in power—National Resistance Movement (NRM)—has provided a conducive and enabling environment for NGOs has often been rejected (see for instance Asiimwe-Mwesigye, 2003). At the same time, NGOs in Uganda are currently going through a rigorous process of registration due to political scrutiny. NGOs are required to reserve a name under the Companies Act, 2012, but are only registered under the NGO Act from which they derive a legal status upon registration.

4 Non-State Social Protection Actors and Beneficiaries

Of the three districts covered by this study, Bushenyi, which has largely been stable and secure, has 62 per cent of the NSAs mapped compared with Rakai (the first district where HIV/AIDS was diagnosed in 1982) at 13 per cent and Kole (a post-conflict district) at 24 per cent (Table 3).

Table 3: Profiles of mapped NSAs

	% of NSAs mapped in district			%	n = 536
	Bushenyi (n = 334)	Kole (n = 131)	Rakai (n = 71)		
<i>Distribution of NSAs by district</i>	62	24	13	100	536
<i>Year of foundation</i>					
1979 or before	4	0	0	3	14
1980–1989	14	0	3	9	50
1990–1999	20	3	16	15	82
2000–2008	30	25	59	33	174
2009–2012	30	72	23	39	209
Not known	2	0	0	1	7
<i>Registration status</i>					
Registered	44	75	94	58	311
Not registered	56	25	6	42	222
<i>Type of organisation</i>					
Membership organisation	93	89	92	92	493
Externally funded INGOs	7	11	9	8	43
<i>Religious affiliation</i>					
Faith based	7	5	9	7	36
Secular	93	95	92	93	498

More than 70 per cent of the mapped NSAs were founded between 2000 and 2012, compared with only 3 per cent in the previous decade. Bushenyi has relatively older NSAs, with almost 40 per cent founded before 2000, while Kole had the youngest with about 70 per cent founded from 2000 onwards. There is a strong historical sense of cooperative working in Bushenyi District, which led to the formation of self-help groups in the 1980s. The civil war in Kole (Northern Uganda) hampered formation of self-help groups.

Almost all NSAs (92 per cent) are membership organisations, mostly founded by the members themselves (88 per cent in Kole, 89 per cent in Rakia and 72 per cent in Bushenyi). More than half the NSAs were founded to help members generate income. More than 30 per cent of NSAs indicated mutual support in bereavement as their main purpose of existence.

By type, CBOs dominate in Rakai and Bushenyi, while farmer groups constitute the majority in Kole, where internally displaced persons (IDPs) were settled in camps during the insurgency. With the return of peace, people returned to their original communities and have been heavily involved in land-clearing and planting using group labour support (Table 4).

In Bushenyi, burial and family-based groups predominate. A few CBOs and many self-help groups have gender-specific memberships, with women's groups in the majority. The study found limited involvement of NGOs, whether international, national or local.

Table 4: Types and distribution of NSAs, by district

Type of NSA	District and % distribution of NSA			%	<i>n</i>
	Bushenyi	Kole	Rakai		
Family-based	7	5	1	6	30
CBO	40	16	54	36	193
Local NGO	1	2	4	2	9
National NGO	1	2	3	2	8
International NGO	1	1	3	1	5
Private sector	1	2	0	1	5
Burial group	47	3	7	31	166
Farmer group	0	39	9	11	57
Self-help group	0	15	7	5	25
Others	2	18	13	7	38
Total	62.3	24.4	13.2	100.0	536

4.1 Membership and services provided

Most of the organisations studied had a membership of less than 20 community members. Most males (84 per cent) and females (66 per cent) are members of NSAs that have less than 19 members. In addition, there are slightly more male members than females in NSAs (Table 5).

Table 5: Membership in NSAs by size and gender

Size of membership	Female		Male	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
< 19	209	66	233	84
20–39	86	27	33	12
40–59	15	5	8	3
> 60	9	3	4	1

4.2 NSA Services

NSA services fall within the four conventional categories of protective, preventive, promotive and transformative. The services of NSAs in this study range from traditional social services such as education and curative health, to more innovative services such as health insurance. Some types of NSAs such as burial groups are providing services, which no other actor is providing. Many NSAs provided services in more than one category, but almost always included protective services such as food, farming support, psychosocial support, savings and credit. Most beneficiaries (63 per cent) sought and received food, nutrition and farming support services. Promotive services such as school fees was offered to 22 per cent of the beneficiaries. This is followed by income generating support, which went to more than half the beneficiaries. Twenty two per cent received preventive intervention (medical/health care and insurance). Significantly, a negligible 6 per cent were offered transformative services such as legal services, making the transformative category the least sought service.

Regardless of type and function, all NSAs aim to help members address their vulnerabilities or cushion them from becoming vulnerable. Some mobilise savings and lending of money among members at minimal interest rates. Members also dig or weed other members' gardens on credit, and the beneficiaries pay after they have harvested and sold the crops.

Most beneficiaries rely on the goodwill of fellow citizens, via family relations, good neighbourliness, and community service spirit to meet their needs. NSAs have a needs-based approach to social protection based on strong local knowledge.

NSAs in the study areas are dominated by small, grassroots and membership-based groupings, most of which have been initiated by members themselves in response to their felt needs. They reflect the gap in services left by state deficiencies. In Bushenyi, some self-help and membership organisations are direct post-Idi Amin initiatives. In Rakai many older NSAs that emerged during the late 1980s and early 1990s in response to HIV and AIDS are no longer in existence. It is possible that their predecessors were short-lived because most were donor/externally supported.

In all the NSAs, direct beneficiaries are population groups who are the main or ultimate target of services. Indirect beneficiaries are those who might be supported as a channel to reach the ultimate beneficiaries (e.g. teachers, parents and caregivers, local leaders and others with pivotal community roles). Table 6 shows that of 815 beneficiaries studied, 92 per cent were direct beneficiaries.

Table 6: Type of organisation and beneficiary category

Type of organisation	% of beneficiary category		<i>n</i>
	Direct	Indirect	
Family-based	95	5	21
CBO	91	9	339
Local/district NGO	100	0	86
National NGO	85	15	111
International NGO	75	25	51
Burial group	98	2	167
Village savings & loan assoc.	100	0	22
Farmer group	100	0	10
Self-help group	88	12	8
Total	92	8	815

Beneficiaries include orphans and other vulnerable children (OVC), women, widows, the elderly, PWDs and the general community (Table 7).

Table 7: Beneficiary categories

Target groups of NSAs	% of target group in district			Total	
	Bushenyi (<i>n</i> = 332)	Kole (<i>n</i> = 128)	Rakai (<i>n</i> = 71)	%	<i>n</i> = 531
Bereaved households	47	19	7	25	184
Orphans & other vulnerable children	3	31	87	15	112
Women	14	12	25	11	79
Group/organisation members	21	1	0	10	69
Elderly	1	21	48	9	63
People with disabilities	2	22	14	6	45
Widows	1	18	21	6	41
Youth	2	15	9	4	32
Chronically ill/PLHA	1	3	6	2	12
Others	15	23	11	12	88

PLHA = persons living with HIV and AIDS

In Bushenyi, some burial and family-based groups have transitioned into income-generating activities.

Members/beneficiaries played different roles in their organisations. Most respondents interviewed as beneficiaries (67 per cent) were also members of the NSAs while a half (50 per cent) described themselves only as beneficiaries (Table 8).

Table 8: Beneficiary participation in the affairs of NSAs

Indicators of participation	% of beneficiaries in district			Total	
	Bushenyi	Kole	Rakai	%	<i>n</i>
<i>Beneficiary role in the NSA</i>					
Beneficiary	49	43	59	50	411
Member	76	67	51	67	548
Group/team leader	11	12	13	11	93
Mobiliser	2	7	7	4	34
Trainer	1	2	1	1	8
Counsellor	2	2	2	2	15
Other (specify)	1	4	0	2	13
<i>Trained to perform the role</i>					
Yes	14	64	45	33	272
No	86	36	55	67	543
<i>Nature of NSA activities participated in by beneficiaries</i>					
Attend meetings	77	68	84	77	627
Attend trainings	24	56	50	38	309
Training others	8	12	13	10	85
Visiting/following-up beneficiaries/ members	21	12	19	19	152
Savings and credit	31	41	18	30	241
Farming activities	10	50	17	21	170
Distributing services	7	2	6	6	48
Other (specify)	7	1	8	7	55
<i>Sits on the executive committee of the NSA</i>					
Yes	25	26	35	28	228
No	75	74	65	72	587
<i>Attends meetings</i>					
Yes	83	83	87	84	686
No	17	17	13	15	129

NSAs such as Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) use an “arm’s length” approach to encourage beneficiaries to participate where groups of beneficiaries are given funding and basic training in a number of issues, but they are left to identify their own projects and to run them without much influence from the organisational staff.

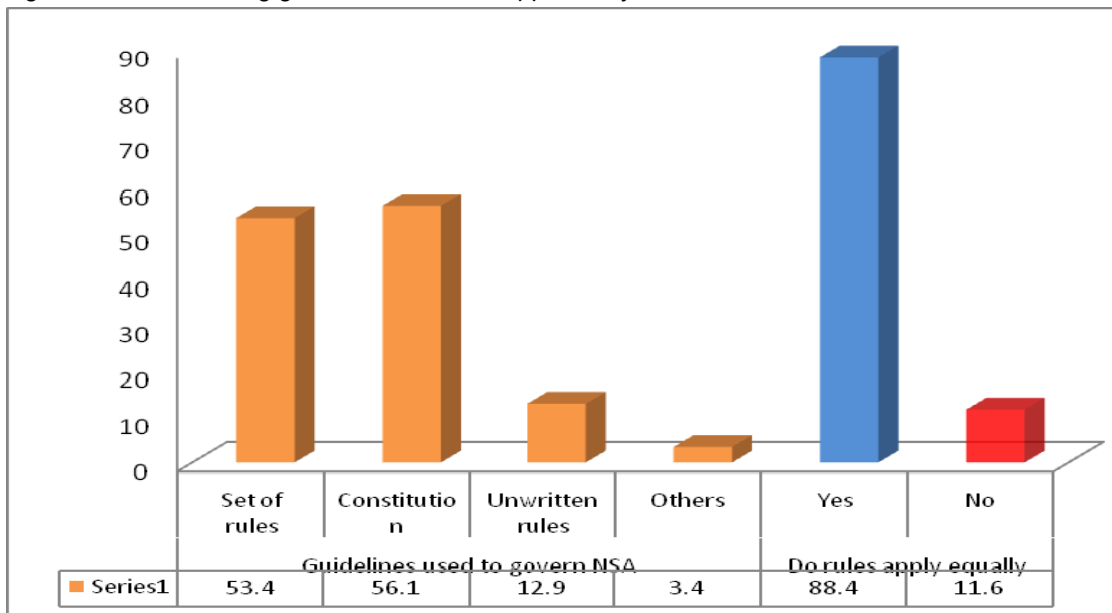
In non-membership organisations, participation of beneficiaries in the governance of the NSA was limited. In one, Mission Empowerment for Africa (Rakai), it was reported that beneficiaries—who are orphans and the elderly—only receive services and are rarely called for any meetings.

5 Governance Arrangements of Non-State Actors

Governance refers to the formal and informal rules and norms, processes, systems, practices and procedures exercised in the management of NSAs. It encompasses how NSAs exercise their roles, responsibilities and their control as well as accountability mechanisms. Good governance is essential to promote efficiency, effectiveness and equitable access to services.

All the leaders and managers in the 536 mapped organisations confirmed the existence of some rules and norms governing their organisations. Whereas some established NSAs reported that *all* their rules are written, others such as Uganda Red Cross Society reported that besides the written rules, they also operate on the basis of unwritten norms. NGOs reported that they have policies on finance, procurement, human resources, operating guidelines in the form of manuals (finance, human resource, and in the health field, standard operating procedures). Unwritten rules were collectively agreed on in specific meetings or simply evolved over time. Such unwritten rules regulate members' behaviour, give a reassuring sense of predictability and stability, and guide conflict resolution (Figure 2).

Figure 2: NSAs' existing guidelines and their applicability



In terms of applicability, 88 per cent of NSAs with guidelines applied them in their governance and to all members. NSAs with constitutions, such as CBOs, spell out their aims and objectives, membership, election of leaders, financial management and other governance issues.

5.1 Rules and Guidelines on Membership and Access

The criteria for membership to most NSAs (80 per cent) are payment of membership fees and subscription. Where fee payment is not a requirement, NSAs have conditions such as being a resident of the community, willingness to comply with the rules of the organisation and trustworthiness.

Most of the members of NSAs in the all the three districts have membership duration between 3 and 4 years with Bushenyi (70 per cent), (Rakai 54 per cent) and Kole (29 per cent), underlying the potential for sustainability, and continuity in the membership. Bushenyi leads in the percentage of members who fulfilled the requirements for joining (77 per cent) and paid membership fees (53 per cent).

In most organisations, especially those serving children, youth and the elderly, age was a key variable consideration in determining access to services.

More than half (58 per cent) of all the NSAs were legally registered with national or local authorities, but a big number (42 per cent) remained informal. CBOs are required to be registered with the local authorities i.e. sub-counties and districts. Some NSAs have multiple registrations.

5.2 Management of NSAs

Only one-tenth of NSAs have paid staff to handle their day-to-day management. A further one-third are managed by volunteers, leaving more than half with no personnel specifically designated to manage. Findings indicate that 11 per cent of the NSAs have paid staff and 40 per cent volunteers. However, there is a level of gender balance between the paid staff and volunteer staff involved in the NSAs. Yet, men dominate where there are four or fewer people in full time managements positions with about 64 per cent men compared to 58 per cent women in such positions reflecting a gender parity in the percentage of volunteers in managerial positions. Most NSAs (89 per cent) have three to four staff in managerial positions. Only 10 per cent had five or six staff in managerial positions. Gender balance was reasonable in most NSAs staffing (Table 9).

Table 9: Composition of the management team by gender

Characteristic	Female %	Male %
<i>Size and gender composition of boards of NSAs</i>		
< 3	49	52
3–4	50	50
5–6	42	58
> 7		
<i>Size and gender composition of the management team of NSAs</i>		
< 3	54	46
3–4 staff	37	63
5–6 staff	45	55
> 7		

Slightly over a half of the NSAs (51 per cent) reported having an organisational structure clearly showing reporting lines. Organisational structures (organograms) were seen in only 16 per cent of the NSAs mapped. The bulk of the NSAs (over 80 per cent) have a board or a committee each that is responsible for formulating policies and for decision-making. Such boards typically ranged from three to nine members. Executive committees often consist of a chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary and treasurer, and other positions. Office bearers were in most cases re-elected after a period of two to four years. Some CBOs were found with committees whose term of office was never specified and the committee continued to serve as long as the members were happy with the leadership.

Predictably, family-based groups relied on elders as policy-makers and final decision-makers. Surprisingly, a big proportion of CBOs, which are supposed to register with the local authorities, did not have an organisational chart/structure showing reporting lines.

A common feature in most CBOs and other grassroots NSAs was the continuity of leadership. The same executive members often served for many years. Even where terms of office were specified, leaders would be re-elected several times.

5.3 Responsibilities and Accountability

Few organisations—only 22 per cent—reported to their local governments; most (85 per cent) reported to their members and their local leaders. This is a strong sign of downward

accountability to members. Data from the focus group discussion with members/beneficiaries indicate that meetings were the channel most used for reporting to them. Big and formal NSAs are more likely to report upward quarterly, sometimes semi-annual and annual reports to donors. FBOs reported that they submitted reports to parishes, diocese and other church/religious authorities.

CBOs took reports to the district when they were applying to renew their registration. Burial support groups reported to meetings of all members mainly on finances, and often at the time of a funeral when all are gathered. No written reports are produced. NSAs that did not have external funding reported to their members by sharing information during meetings, and presented brief statements on financial expenditures.

Overall, the low reporting rates among small self-help groups are not surprising, as literature on CSO regulation in Uganda (Muhangi, 2009) shows there are tensions in the regulatory sphere, including the resistance of many CSOs to adhere to government requirements. The resistance of some NGOs to coordination efforts by local government is perhaps also a result and a reflection of mutual mistrust between NGOs and local governments.

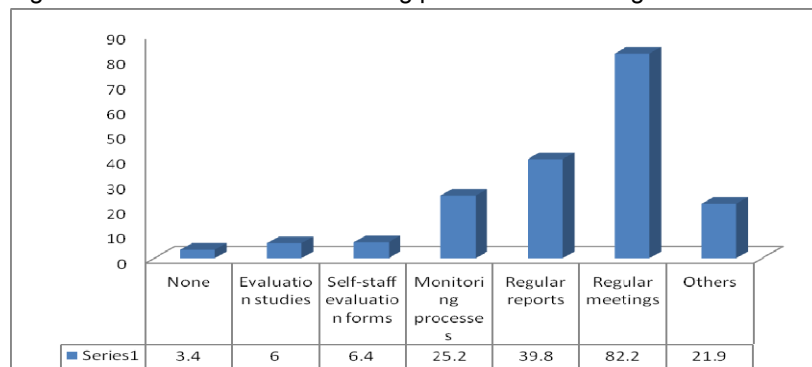
The common mechanism used by most NSAs for ensuring transparency and accountability to members and beneficiaries/stakeholders was through periodic meetings (72 per cent).

Most mechanisms for grievances were similar to those for client participation, accountability and reporting. They included meetings, home visits, committee and board meetings, radio talk shows, and annual general meetings. The NGOs and most well-established CBOs had procedures to govern their financial management. These included having three signatories to bank accounts, and compiling financial reports to donors or members.

The scenario was different in informal, family and community-based groups. In one of the family-based groups, members' complaints were not anticipated because the group is built on trust and transparency. Groups that did accommodate complaints handled them through the executive committee and, necessary, clan elders.

Despite various measures, transparency and accountability were not guaranteed. Figure 3 shows that more than 80 per cent of NSAs held regular meetings to evaluate performance. Regular reports were less common at 40 per cent. Other organisations monitored through staff self-assessments and active involvement of members.

Figure 3: Mechanisms for evaluating performance among NSAs



6 Performance of Non-State Actors

6.1 Introduction

NSA performance was an integral part of this study. The study went beyond examining basics of membership characteristics and modes of management and focused on aspects such as relevance of services provided, coverage, accessibility, poverty targeting, efficiency in service provision, and quality of services.

Relevance of services was considered in terms of the priority needs of beneficiaries at the time of joining the organisation and, at the time of this study, the types of services received, responsiveness to needs, and adequacy of benefits.

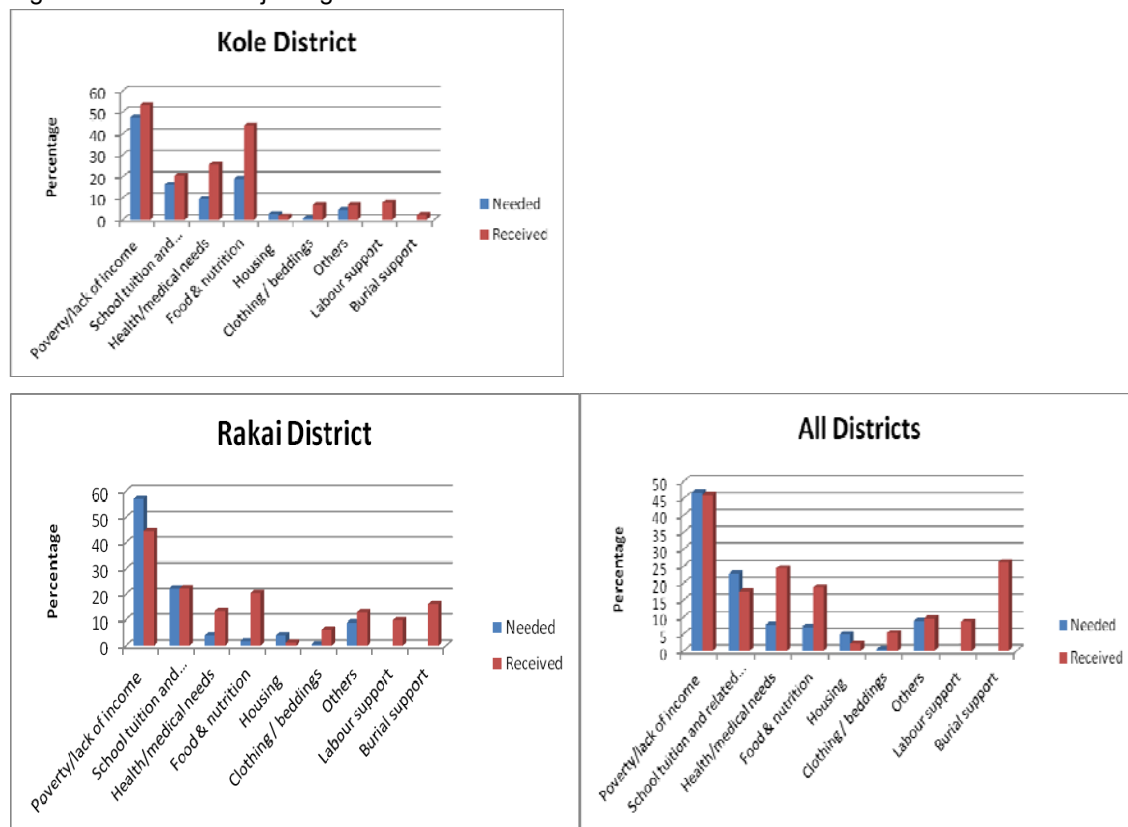
Beneficiary needs versus services received

People facing poverty or lack of income formed the majority of those who benefited from NSA services. In all the three districts, the percentage ranged from 41 to 47. Bushenyi had 41 per cent, Kole 48 per cent while Rakai had 57 per cent. In all, a total of percentage of 47 beneficiaries had identified poverty or lack of income as a pressing need at the moment of joining the NSAs and had their need addressed accordingly.

Most members indicated that the NSAs provided them the most needed services, with the percentage ranging between 59 and 79 in all the districts.

In most NSAs, members decided through consensus at general meetings on the type of services to be provided and the modalities for delivering them. Figure 4 shows a comparison of the beneficiaries reported priority needs when they joined the NSAs against the types of services received.

Figure 4: Needs when joining versus services received



Income-related services included loans and credit, support for income-generating activities, and cash transfers. Educational needs were sometimes seen to be the

responsibility of government or bigger NSAs. Bushenyi may suffer in this respect, as bigger NSAs may regard it as a well-to-do district.

NSA responsiveness to members/beneficiaries' needs

Some NSAs have tried to adjust their activities to respond to members' needs, which would vary from time to time. Some burial groups have expanded into health insurance, while others have gone into business or into savings and loan schemes.

Case 1: Kyakabeizi Twimukye Association in Bushenyi has 200 members. It started in 2000 as “Twezikyey” (meaning let’s support our own burial). Then the members heard about “tweragurize” (meaning let’s seek medical care for ourselves when we are sick”. In 2001, some members registered with Ishaka Health Plan, a hospital-based health insurance scheme. The office of the association has a slogan pinned up that reads, “Tweragurize, kuturaafe, twezikyey” (meaning, let us seek medical care and, if we die, we support our burial”. The Association now has a savings and credit cooperative society with about 100 members. Nonetheless, the Sacco faces a number of challenges including failure by some members to pay their dues. The inability and/or unwillingness of members to pay promptly has led to the number of families registered in the Ishaka Health Plan to fluctuate between 50 and as low as 13.

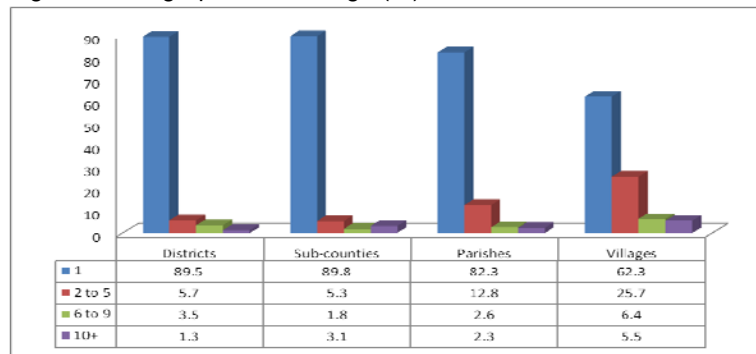
NSAs that were initially not involved in income generation have tried to incorporate a component of savings and loans to make themselves more relevant with regard to members' priority challenge of lack of income. This transition is sometimes fraught with difficulties.

For NGOs and other non-membership NSAs, services were determined through proposal writing by staff/professionals. In big NGOs, services were also determined by the “programme areas” prescribed in their strategic plans. This top-down process often followed the requirements of donors and was not based on advance consultations with the target communities or experiences from previous interventions.

Poverty and vulnerability targeting

Nearly all NSAs (90 per cent) have operations in only one district, and usually (90 per cent) in only one sub-county in that district, and in only one parish (82 per cent) in that sub-county, and often (62 per cent) only in one village (the smallest administrative unit in Uganda) in that parish (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Geographical coverage (%) of NSAs



The geographical coverage reinforces the general finding that only NGOs that provide promotive and transformative services cover several communities. There is a multiplicity of small, grassroots NSAs, although each group covers only one village, almost every village is served. Burial groups are the most widespread.

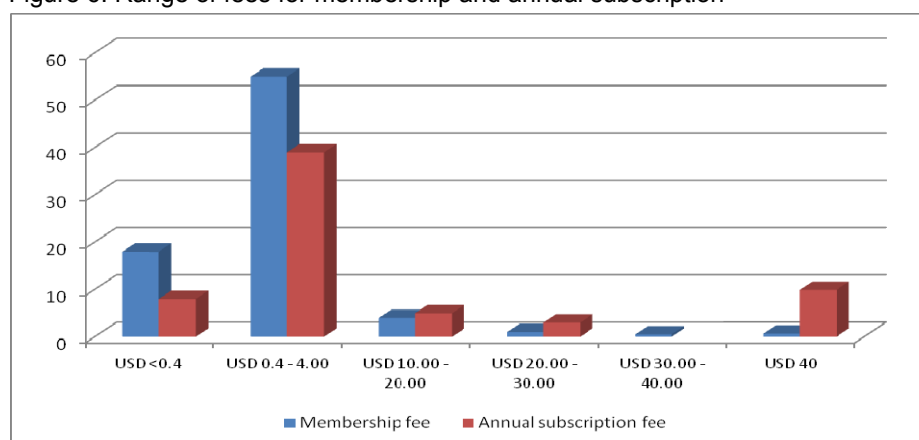
6.2 Accessibility of NSA Social Protection Services

Most NSAs are membership organisations, with criteria of membership determining access to services. Two-thirds of respondents indicated they had to meet certain requirements

before becoming members. Requirements of members/beneficiaries include paying membership fees.

Membership fees are not common among NGOs, with the exception of NGOs involved in community health insurance schemes, e.g. Health Partners Uganda and Bushenyi Medical Centre. A relatively small number of NSA beneficiaries (29 per cent) pay periodic subscription fees, and fewer than half (46 per cent) of all interviewed beneficiaries had made financial or material contributions to either become a member of the organisation or start accessing services from their respective organisations (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Range of fees for membership and annual subscription



Accessibility to services would be constrained by an inability to meet the membership and annual subscription fees. Most beneficiaries' rated the fees as either fairly affordable or very affordable (Table 10).

Table 10: Affordability of membership and subscription fees by type of organisation

Affordability	Affordability by type of NSA (%)										Total	
	FBG	CBO	LNGO	NNGO	INGO	BG	VSLA	FG	SH	%	<i>n</i>	
<i>Membership fee</i>												
Very affordable	53	40	36	36	62	33	19	78	0	39	165	
Fairly affordable	42	48	48	64	39	51	29	22	100	48	204	
Not affordable	5	12	16	0	0.0	16	52	0	0	14	59	
<i>Periodic subscription fee</i>												
Very affordable	43	39	32	0	29	35	34	0	33	36	83	
Fairly affordable	57	49	59	0	67	48	17	50	67	51	117	
Not affordable	0.0	12	9	0	5	17	50	50	0	13	30	
<i>Affordability analysis by district</i>												
Affordability	Affordability analysis by district						Total					
	Bushenyi	Kole	Rakai	%	<i>n</i>							
<i>Membership fee</i>												
Very affordable	41	18	45	39	165							
Fairly affordable	45	55	49	48	204							
Not affordable	14	27	6	14	59							
<i>Periodic subscription fee</i>												
Very affordable	33	12	50	36	83							
Fairly affordable	54	56	41	51	117							
Not affordable	13	32	17	13	30							

Key:

BG: Burial group	FG: Faith-based group	NNGO: National NGO
CBO: Community-based organisation	INGO: International NGO	SH: Self-help
FBG: Faith-based group	LNGO: Local NGO	VSLA: Village savings & loan association

Organisations that did not have specific fees encouraged beneficiaries to contribute towards the services, partly as a strategy to promote local ownership of the service. More than half the NSAs provided services to households rather than individuals, implying that all members of a household have access to services, quality and quantity notwithstanding.

Almost a half of the members/beneficiaries noted that NSAs targeted a single member of the household. Slightly over a fifth targeted at least two members of the household while about a tenth targeted 3–5 members. In associations like burial groups, membership by the household head intrinsically ensures benefits to all the household members.

6.3 Efficiency and Effectiveness of NSA Services

Efficiency of NSAs was assessed by considering availability of services, timeliness in delivery, mode of service delivery, and rating of the delivery mode by beneficiaries. Findings show that 41 per cent of the beneficiaries had hope for the future and 31 per cent were able to meet their pressing needs through services offered by NSAs (Table 11).

Table 12: Efficiency assessment by district

Indicators	Assessment (%) of indicator by district			Total	
	Bushenyi	Kole	Rakai	%	<i>n</i>
<i>Availability of services when needed from the organisation</i>					
Yes, always	71	45	36	56	455
Sometimes/it depends	25	44	35	32	260
No	4	11	29	12	100
<i>Mode of delivery</i>					
Delivery at home by the agency staff	45	25	28	36	185
Own collection from the agency offices	26	35	30	29	239
Own collection from a designated centre in our community	23	38	37	30	244
Other	8	7	5	7	54
<i>Rating of the delivery mode</i>					
Very good	37	23	25	31	248
Good	34	40	49	40	319
Fairly good	27	35	21	30	209
Poor	3	2	5	3	26
Very poor	7	0	1	1	5
<i>Services received when expected</i>					
Yes	83	59	54	70	568
No	17	41	46	30	246
<i>Pay for services received</i>					
Yes	12	8	5	9	75
No	88	92	96	91	740
<i>Rating of the service cost</i>					
Very affordable	34	0	44	29	21
Affordable	52	54	44	51	37
Average	12	15	11	13	9
Expensive	2	23	0	6	4
Very expensive	0	8	0	1	1

The generally better performance of NSAs in Bushenyi is at least partly attributable to the preponderance of burial support groups, where members themselves deliver the services.

Traces of efficiency were evident in some measures that ensure the right beneficiaries access the services. Table 12 shows that 29 per cent of the beneficiaries had increased income as a result of the intervention of the NSAs.

Table 12: Effectiveness of NSA provisions on the beneficiaries in the three districts

Effectiveness	Bushenyi (%)	Kole (%)	Rakai (%)	Total	
				%	n
<i>Individual benefits accruing from the services</i>					
Able to meet urgent needs	28	38	30	31	249
Improved my health	23	24	11	20	163
Attained education	8	13	18	12	97
Increased my income	21	51	26	29	234
Hope for the future	43	37	47	41	332
Self esteem	15	11	22	16	131
Maintain my social status/gain respect	29	9	19	22	178
Others	14	6	5	10	80
<i>Household benefits from the NSA provision</i>					
Improved food production	10	53	12	20	162
Improved feeding	6	28	21	15	123
Pay school fees	27	44	31	32	260
Get medical care	21	26	7	18	147
Increase assets	19	16	23	19	158
Others	23	6	12	16	26
<i>Changes in the condition of the beneficiary resulting from NSA support</i>					
Significantly improved	24	26	13	21	172
Improved	55	71	73	63	508
The same /No improvement at all	21	3	14	15	120
Worsened	1	0	0	0	2
<i>Current household welfare compared to before service provision</i>					
Far better off	28	44	17	28	229
Fairly better off	46	52	68	54	436
Same condition	25	3	13	17	140
Worse off	0	0	0	0	1
Can't tell	1	1	1	1	9
<i>Beneficiary comparison of living conditions with others not receiving support</i>					
Far better off	46	52	21	40	327
Fairly better off	35	44	64	45	364
Same condition	14	2	13	11	88
Worse off	3	0	0	2	13
Can't tell	3	2	3	3	23

Most beneficiaries felt they were either far better off (40 per cent) or fairly better off (45 per cent) than non-members. Similarly, more than a half the beneficiaries (54 per cent) noted that their current household welfare was fairly better off compared to the period before they started accessing services.

6.4 Service Quality

One quarter of all users indicated that the quality of services were very good and slightly over one-third expressed 'high' satisfaction. Most beneficiaries (95 per cent) rated the quality of the services as average and above, leaving those dissatisfied at only 5 per cent (Tables 13, 14 and 15).

Table13: Individual beneficiary assessment of service quality by district

Beneficiary assessment	Bushenyi (%)	Kole (%)	Rakai (%)	Total	
				%	<i>n</i>
<i>Quality assessment</i>					
Very good	28	18	22	25	194
Good	35	61	41	42	333
Average	31	20	30	29	227
Poor	4	1	7	4	33
Very poor	1	0	1	1	6
<i>Overall satisfaction with the services received from the organisation</i>					
Highly satisfied	45	30	27	36	292
Moderately satisfied	51	62	64	57	458
Not satisfied	4	8	10	7	52

Many more beneficiaries in Bushenyi, compared with Kole and Rakai, lauded the quality of services.

Table 14 shows that international NGOs (INGOs) gained the highest beneficiary ratings with at least 52 per cent of respondents saying that they were very good and 40 per cent rating them as good. Only 2 per cent rated them as poor, but none rated them as very poor. Local NGOs (LNGOs) were rated second: 44 per cent of the respondents rated them very good and 44 per cent as good. National NGOs (NNGOs) came third with 24 per cent of the respondents rating them as very good and 44 per cent as good.

Table 14: Beneficiary assessment of service quality by type of organisation

Type of NSA	% of respondents rating of service quality					<i>n</i>
	V. good	Good	Average	Poor	V. poor	
Family-based group	25	30	45	0	0	20
CBO	19	41	33	6	1	331
LNGO	41	44	11	4	1	86
NNGO	24	60	14	2	0	108
INGO	52	40	8	0	0	50
Burial group	18	35	42	4	1	164
VSLA	31	44	25	0	0	14
Farmer group	0	30	50	20	0	10
Self-help group	25	0	38	0	0	189
Total	25	42	29	4	1	793

Dissatisfaction was most prevalent among very small organisations such as village savings and loans associations (VSLA), farmer and family-based groups. Overall, beneficiary perceptions were generally positive on almost all assessment measurements (Tables 15 and 16).

Table 15: Beneficiary overall satisfaction with services, by type of organisation

Type of NSA	Extent of satisfaction			n
	% highly satisfied	% moderately satisfied	% not satisfied	
Family-based group	30	55	15	20
CBO	29	62	9	333
Local NGO	59	41	0	86
National NGO	38	60	3	109
International NGO	72	28	0	50
Burial group	32	64	4	164
Village savings & loan assoc.	27	41	32	22
Farmer group	10	60	30	10
Self-help group	25	75	0	8
Total	36	57	7	802

Table 16: Beneficiary perceptions about selected quality measurements

Beneficiary perceptions	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Don't know (%)
Services from the organisation are addressing my priority needs	64	38	1
Services provided are adequate for my needs	45	54	2
Services provided are adequate for the needs of my family	39	60	1
Quality of the services provided is of high standard	64	33	3
Services provided are offered in privacy and confidentiality if needed	52	43	5
Receiving the services/support from organisation does not stigmatize me or my family	93	6	1
Services are provided to me in the same way as other beneficiaries without any discrimination	93	6	1
Agency staff do their work very professionally (commitment in case of informal groups)	88	10	2
Agency staff treat me with respect and dignity	95	4	1
Agency provides beneficiaries opportunities to participate in its affairs.	88	10	2
Agency staff use organisational resources properly to help members/beneficiaries	80	11	9
Organisation informs members/beneficiaries how resources have been used	79	16	5
Services provided are suited to my cultural beliefs, values and practices	90	7	3
Services provided by the organisation have improved my living conditions	77	23	1
Services provided by the organisation have improved the living conditions of my family members	71	28	1

A number of beneficiaries noted that the services provided were not adequate to meet individual and family needs. Almost 50 per cent of the users indicated that services were not offered in privacy and with the appropriate degree of confidentiality.

6.5 A Logistic Regression Model: Governance and Performance

Analysis determined the net effect of selected independent variables (governance) on the dependent variables (performance) after controlling for the confounding influence of other variables. Governance included training received by beneficiaries/members to perform their roles, existence of executive committee, assessment of the executive committee, performance by members/beneficiaries, receipt of information about the NSAs by beneficiaries/members, convening of meetings by the NSAs, and beneficiary/member awareness of procedure for grievances and complaints.

Performance included beneficiary consultation on choice of services, whether services were the most needed by the beneficiary, adequacy of services, the mode of delivery, availability, timeliness and quality of services, level of beneficiary/member satisfaction, reported changes in the beneficiary/member conditions pre and post service, changes in household welfare since service, and comparison of living conditions with those of other community members not receiving the service. A logistic regression model was run to identify these governance factors that influence performance of NSAs. The results are shown in Table 17.

Table 17: Association of governance and performance of NSAs

Variable/Response category	p-value	Odds
District (Reference=Bushenyi)	0.544	
Kole	0.827	1.063
Rakai	0.382	0.823
Type of organisation (Reference=Other CBOs)	0.000	
CBOs	0.228	1.440
Local/district based NGOs	0.000	6.372
National NGOs	0.000	6.112
International NGOs	0.000	14.547
Burial Groups	0.584	0.829
Requirements that you fulfilled before becoming a member	0.180	1.322
Governance (Reference = Not Good)	0.000	3.190
Constant	0.339	0.729

The type of NSA and quality of governance were significantly associated with good performance. Organisations rated to have good governance were 3.2 times likely to have good performance than those with poor governance. International NGOs had much higher odds (14.5) of being associated with good performance compared with CBOs and this was equally true with national NGOs (6.1) and local/district NGO (6.4).

Clearly, NGOs providing more *promotive* and *transformative* services and those that have a strong financial cost such as education need sound governance arrangements. Small CBOs providing more of the protective and social support services, are less dependent on governance arrangements.

Perceptions of beneficiaries and other indicators show that international and other types of NGOs have a better performance rating, but this finding should be taken with caution on many levels. For instance, are even the very best NSA interventions pulling beneficiaries out of poverty and graduating them as empowered and self-supporting

members of society? Only 19 per cent reported that they had a plan to meet their own needs. The need for more transformative services is clear.

7 Sustainability and Adaptability of Services Provided by Non-State Actors

Among NGOs, sustainability is a function of many inter-related elements including sources and size of resources, ability of the organisation to respond to change, relationships or collaboration with other stakeholders, resource availability (human and financial), and a fiscal environment that encourages self-sustainability. It entails interventions that exhibit longevity and adaptation to changing contexts.

NSA resources are obtained from four major sources: member contributions, donors, Government of Uganda, and internal sources. The most common source among NSAs (85 per cent) in the study districts was members' contribution. A fifth (21 per cent) relied on internally generated funds. Study findings show that a number of NSAs received funding from multiple sources, but 87 per cent of NSAs depend for more than 90 per cent of their budget from member contributions (Table 18).

Table 18: Funding sources for NSAs

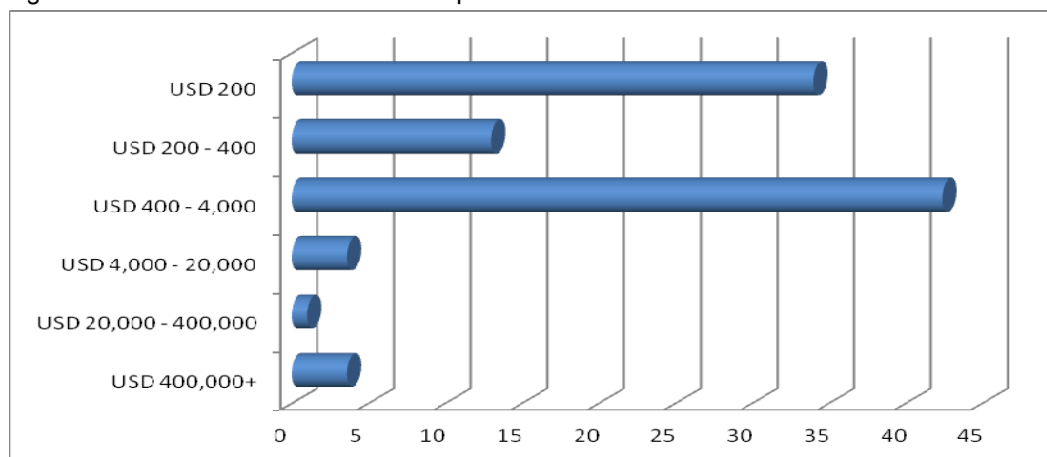
Source	Proportion (%) of NSAs total budget by source			
	≤ 9	10–49	50–89	90+
External sources / donors (<i>n</i> = 59)	7	24	27	42
Government of Uganda (<i>n</i> = 32)	31	63	0	6
Members' contributions (<i>n</i> = 456)	1	4	8	87
Internally generated by organisation (<i>n</i> = 110)	17	32	13	38

CBOs expressed overwhelming need to access external support in order to expand and diversify their interventions.

7.1 Size of Resources

Majority of the NSAs operating in the three districts are generally small based on the size/amounts of financial resources they operate with annually. Less than a tenth reported having an annual resource envelope of more than USD 4,000. Majority (42 per cent) had a resource envelope ranging between USD 400 to USD 4,000 (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Size of annual resource envelope for NSAs



The size of the resource envelope for international and national NGOs did not represent their total budget, but represented a project or component being implemented in a given locality, administered by the local office.

7.2 Consistence and Longevity of Service Delivery

Both managers and beneficiaries confirmed that small groups had maintained similar services over many years, because the needs of members are continuous. Services from

NGOs continue or terminate depending on availability of funding. Table 19 shows that more than half the beneficiaries had accessed services for more than five years. Most (86 per cent) were beneficiaries of burial groups, next were CBOs and local NGOs.

Table 19: Period (years) of beneficiary receipt of services

Type of NSA	Period (years) and % of NSAs receiving service				n
	< 1	1–2	3–4	5+	
Burial group	1	8	5	86	167
CBO	7	16	22	55	336
Local NGO	11	15	20	55	86
Family-based	10	33	19	38	21
Self-help	0	50	13	38	8
National NGO	9	36	22	33	109
Farmer group	20	20	30	30	10
VSLA	19	52	0	29	21
International NGO	14	47	12	28	51
Total	7	21	17	55	809

Some of those recorded as short term may have made one-off use of a service, e.g. a single loan or pooling of labour. Nearly 70 per cent of beneficiaries were receiving services continuously or frequently. Continuous access to services was reportedly very low among beneficiaries of self-help support groups.

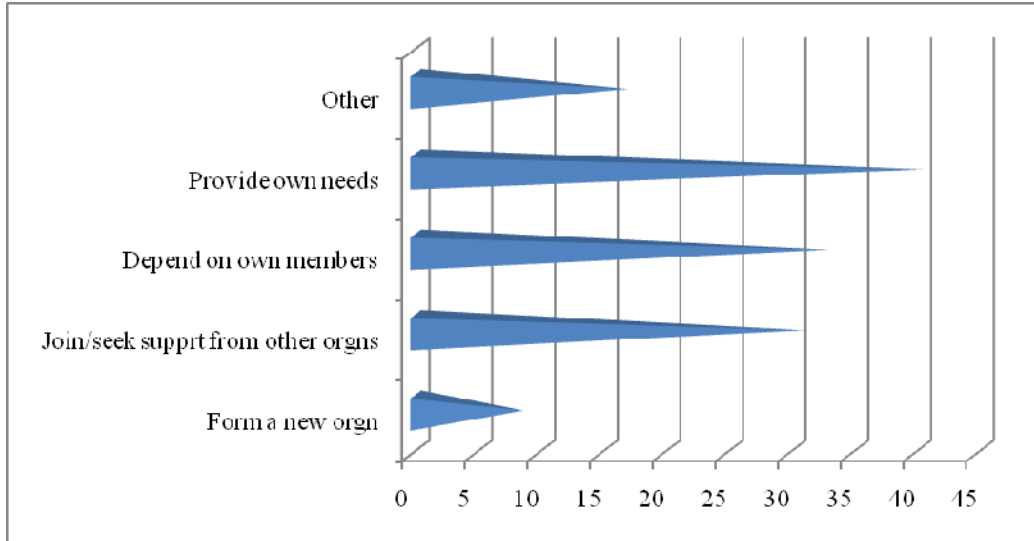
7.3 Institutionalisation of Service Delivery

Sustainability requires long-term mechanisms, such as an existing or alternative institutional structure planned by stakeholders. In most development practice, NGOs that plan to phase out have often sought to integrate services into government structures in an effort to ensure that they are sustained.

Most beneficiaries (86 per cent) envisage NSA services in perpetuity, as membership and community-based responding to a common (and unending) need. These NSAs have institutionalised service delivery, and while they believe they should work with government and probably hand over programmes when donor funding ends, the government structures themselves have limited capacity to carry on these activities.

Most beneficiaries (85 per cent) had not been informed how long they would receive services; an indication of lack of an exit strategy by the majority of the NSAs. However, over one-third of the beneficiaries had mechanisms or plans to ensure continuity of services after the existing providers stopped. It should not be surprising that most beneficiaries of burial groups did not have a mechanism for sustainability since the support process is culturally in-built (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Types of sustainability mechanisms



Accordingly, if one NSA closes down, members simply plan to join another to start an income-generating activity. A few beneficiaries mentioned seeking support from church, family members and relatives, selling property and looking for employment. It is evident that a dependency syndrome is entrenched. It is worthwhile noting that for sustainability most NSAs reported that their members had received formal training or informal mentoring and advice regarding income generation, hygiene and sanitation, savings, and other aspects. Formal training was more prevalent among NGOs and other big NSAs.

7.4 A Logistic Regression Model: Governance and Sustainability

A logistic regression model was run to determine governance arrangements of NSAs that are associated with the sustainability of organisations. Bushenyi had higher sustainability potential than Kole or Rakai, because more of its NSAs are membership organisations and fewer are donor-supported on short project funding cycles. NSAs that were rated to have good governance were 2.7 times more likely to have good levels of sustainability than those who were rated with poor governance (Table 20).

Several NSAs have also adapted their services to make them more sustainable or more meaningful and relevant to members/beneficiaries. A few burial groups have succeeded in diversifying into income generation, and business ventures, although some of these ventures have failed.

Table 20: A Logistic regression model identifying factors associated with sustainability

Variable/Response category	p-value	Odds
District (Reference = Bushenyi)	.000	
Kole	.000	.342
Rakai	.000	.469
Type of organisation (Reference = Other CBOs)	.036	
CBOs	.903	.965
Local/district based NGOs	.058	2.071
National NGOs	.176	1.608
International NGOs	.537	1.297
Burial Groups	.599	.840
Requirements fulfilled before becoming a member	.375	.857
Governance (Reference = Not Good)	.000	2.651
Constant	.933	.974

8 Conclusion

The study sought to shed light on NSAs in social protection, and the nature and scope of their services. It also aimed to reveal the nature, performance and adaptability of their governance structures and how these aspects impact social protection initiatives in the three Ugandan districts of Bushenyi, Kole and Rakai. The findings of the study have far-reaching policy implications for the selected districts in particular and other areas of Uganda and beyond in general.

It is evident from the study that NSAs are many and varied; some formal others informal and there is no need here to rehash every salient characteristic they exhibit. However, most NSAs (88 per cent) apply written and sometimes unwritten rules and regulations of governance. At the same time, over 80 per cent have boards of trustees or committees that oversee their operations. That NSAs recognise it is important to apply rules and regulations and oversight or management entities is commendable.

The NSAs almost always set out to salvage members caught up in vulnerability owing to poverty, chronic illness, or bereavement, whereby the state is unwilling or unable to intervene. One other notable feature is the apparent gender parity as far as management positions in the NSAs is concerned in all the selected districts. NSAs attempt to address their members' vulnerabilities and cushion them against becoming vulnerable again. However, it is significant that in terms of performance less than half the members (47 per cent) stated that they had their pressing need met. It is unclear whether one should conclude that the respondents who did not feel their need was met said so because they are hard to please or their expectations exceeded reality. Whatever the case may be, NSAs have their work cut out for them and they need to do more to meet their beneficiaries' needs or help those beneficiaries to recognise when their needs are met.

More than half the NSAs (58 per cent) conform to government requirements regarding such organisations and are registered by local or national authorities. But a significant 42 per cent of the NSAs are not formally registered, despite playing a crucial role in social protection. The muted defiance of these informal NSAs expressed in the failure to register officially may be an indicator of resistance to government control of their affairs. Indeed, the study established that on the whole NSAs regard government control as too rigid and excessive. This exposes an underlying problem in the relationship between the government and NSAs; a problem that needs to be addressed. Whereas NSAs would resent government control, the government is often suspicious of their agenda and. This situation is bound to hinder effective and efficient implementation of social protection initiatives. The Government of Uganda should create an enabling environment for NSAs to operate, even allowing for flexibility in applying certain regulations. On the other hand, NSAs should cooperate with the government and incorporate in their activities important governance principles such as accountability and transparency so as to achieve the common good of their beneficiaries.

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