

Assessment and recommendations

Reducing food security and nutrition (FSN) problems is a global development priority and a territorial approach is a key to making progress in addressing it. This report provides a set of lessons that can help implement this agenda. It summarises the main findings of the research project jointly implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) between 2013 and 2015 to examine the usefulness of adopting a territorial approach to addressing food security and nutrition (FSN) problems. According to the definition adopted by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), FSN “exists when all people at all times have physical, social and economic access to food, which is safe and consumed in sufficient quantity and quality to meet their dietary needs and food preferences, and is supported by an environment of adequate sanitation, health services and care, allowing for a healthy and active life” (CFS, 2012). Persistent food insecurity, malnutrition, poverty and regional disparities are major international concerns, and addressing them is central to the recently adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,¹ including its sustainable development goals (SDGs). Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG 2) calls on countries to “end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture”. These concerns are pressing in both urban and rural areas of developing countries, but have different dimensions. This report suggests that a place-based, territorial approach can be an effective analytical and policy framework for tackling these issues.

Typically, FSN is discussed at either the national or at the household level, but both of these approaches are problematic, because they ignore the territorial distribution of food insecurity. The national approach tends to ignore geographic variability within a country and instead focuses on broad groups such as the poor or minorities, without considering their location in space. Household-based analysis has paid more attention to geographic location, but tends to focus on household-specific coping strategies. However, many of these ultimately hinge upon the economic performance of the region in order to be successful. A territorial approach addresses both of these weaknesses. Not only does food security vary by region, but the nature and magnitude of the problems also vary by type of region – urban, rural adjacent and remote rural. As a result, policies to address food insecurity must recognise these differences if they are to be fully effective. Evidence is provided from five country case studies – Cambodia, Colombia, Côte d’Ivoire, Morocco and Peru – and two national workshops, in Mali and Niger, to support the argument for this territorial approach. The evidence suggests that adopting a territorial approach can greatly enhance the effectiveness of policies aiming at food security and nutrition.

¹ *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, Resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly on 25 September 2015, A/RES/70/1.

Since the turn of the century, territorial approaches have become more mainstreamed. Pathways to development should recognise the great diversity across territories, and their varying capacities to develop and respond to problems and opportunities. In the past, many development policy approaches were place-neutral and centrally driven, and policies to address food insecurity focused mainly on a single dimension of FSN: increasing domestic food production. By contrast, a territorial approach focuses on the specific drivers and inhibitors of growth and development in a particular territorial setting, and uses this information to define broad-based development goals. The approach requires policy makers to design coherent, complementary action across sectors and areas of intervention, appropriate for the conditions and needs of different territorial settings.

While concerns over food security and nutrition adequacy are important in certain areas of all OECD member countries, the problem is much more pressing in the lower- and middle-income developing nations. In many of these countries, the level of development is unevenly distributed, and urban and coastal regions are typically better integrated into market economies than more remote rural regions. For FSN, differences in the degree of market integration matter. In urban regions, markets are typically able to provide an adequate supply of food, although often not at a price affordable for the urban poor. Conversely, in rural regions, self-supply is more common, due to weak transport infrastructure and incomplete markets of all types. Subsistence and semi-subsistence farm households rely to a great extent on the limited variety of food they directly produce, which is one of the factors that can make them susceptible to production shortfalls. And in these regions, any constraints on local food production are exacerbated by the low level of economic activity, which in turn limits opportunities to earn the income that would allow market purchases of food. This suggests that strengthening regional economies may be the most effective way to combat food insecurity, because higher incomes and better integration of markets strengthen the availability of food and access to it.

However, because the concept of food security has mainly been discussed either at the national level, where it largely relates to the ability to produce, store or purchase sufficient food for the population, or at the household level, where it focuses on the ability of specific households to obtain enough food of various types to meet caloric and nutritional requirements, this regional approach has not been typical. In terms of geography, FSN interventions often focus on the global or national level, as well as on the community/household level, overlooking the importance of the subnational (regional) level. In addition, FSN is a complex issue linked to food supply and demand, the functioning of factor markets, social policies, the role of different national and local actors and institutions, asset and income distributions, and myriad other subjects across several disciplines. These topics are the precise focus of regional analysis and regional policy, which further suggests that adopting a territorial approach to the study of food security issues can offer a useful understanding of the issues and a better perspective on ameliorative policies.

There are growing challenges in attaining FSN. These include population growth, rapid urbanisation, climate change, increasing demand for energy and food, natural resources deterioration, land and water degradation, and economic and financial market volatility. Policies to mitigate food insecurity must also take into account the interaction of these factors with FSN. The territorial approach can be a helpful entry point for exploring the complexity of FSN and identifying possible solutions.

The territorial approach proposed in this report provides a conceptual and operational framework to address the multidimensional (availability, access, utilisation and stability),

multi-actor and multi-level nature of FSN. This framework puts emphasis on new dimensions, such as: 1) a shift from a sectoral (mainly agricultural) to a multisectoral approach in addressing food insecurity; 2) more emphasis on bottom-up approaches and their alignment with top-down priorities; 3) the elaboration of context-specific policies and interventions to capture the regional diversity of FSN, as opposed to “one-size-fits-all” approaches; 4) recognition of the importance of a well-functioning multi-level governance system, in order to align national objectives and strategies with regional and local priorities and needs and to improve policy coherence and complementarities across the various sectors influencing FSN.

Assessment

The analysis developed in the five case studies, in Cambodia, Colombia, Côte d’Ivoire, Morocco and Peru, as well as the outcomes of two national workshops in Mali and Niger, confirms that the territorial approach can be a very useful tool to support the design of effective FSN policies and inclusive governance systems. It provides a useful framework to understand, analyse and capture: 1) the multidimensional, multisectoral and multi-actor nature of food security and nutrition; 2) the geographic socio-economic and FSN inequalities and disparities; 3) the interdependencies between the various levels of policy making and the opportunities to encourage integration and ensure overall coherence with the institutional systems in place; 4) the need for cross-sector coherence of FSN policies; 5) the territorial dynamics and development potential (expressed and latent), notably endogenous potential based on local assets; 6) the importance of social participation in the implementation of FSN policies.

Another finding emerging from the case studies is that it is possible to outline a territorial approach to improving food security and nutrition that provides a general framework for understanding the varying regional dimensions of food security in a country. More specifically, the approach allows for a clear differentiation of the problems that emerge in large metropolitan regions, in rural regions that are adjacent to metropolitan regions, and in more remote rural regions that are not well connected to large urban agglomerations. Moreover, the approach can be refined to account for how differences in the stages of national development can affect both the most common types of food insecurity and the way these differences are distributed across the three types of regions. It is also important to recognise that FSN challenges are also faced by developed and developing countries, and while geographic differences exist in all countries, the nature of the problem varies with the stage of development.

Appropriate investments in rural regions that stimulate economic growth, thereby raising incomes and reducing risk, represents one of the main solutions to food insecurity. In some cases, agricultural investments will be a particular focus, as a means to increase food availability and to provide higher incomes for farm households. But increasing agricultural productivity (SDG Target 2.4 calls on countries to “double agricultural productivity by 2030”) is only one part of a rural development strategy. In addition, investments are needed in network services, including transport, electrification and broadband, that connect communities to markets. Investments in improving levels of basic education and access to new technologies and finance for business development are also important for effective rural development, because they allow for the diversification of the rural regional economy, which can facilitate growth in local employment and mitigate risk.

Central governments increasingly recognise the multidimensional nature of food security and nutrition. Many countries, including those considered in the analysis of this report, have created inter-ministerial commissions and institutions to enhance co-ordination across interventions to deal with one or other of the dimensions of FSN. Most of these co-ordination mechanisms only focus on tackling FSN at the national level, however.

The wide territorial disparities in most developing countries put into question whether nationwide strategies suffice to address the problems of food insecurity and malnutrition. Good progress in bringing down national averages may hide the persistence of pockets of food insecurity and poverty in specific areas of the country. As indicated in the case studies, food insecurity and poverty are mainly concentrated in marginal and remote rural areas, signalling persistent urban-rural divides and other territorial disparities. The barriers to development, as well as the opportunities for tackling food insecurity, are context-specific and may strongly vary from one sub-national region to another.

In response, an increasing number of developing country governments are facilitating stronger roles for sub-national and local levels in policies and decision making. Greater political commitment to a “decentralisation” or “regionalisation” process is evident in four of the five countries considered in the analysis (Cambodia, Colombia, Morocco and Peru). Colombia and Peru are working in sub-national fiscal reforms to better match the responsibilities of sub-national governments with the funding they receive (OECD, 2014; forthcoming). Morocco is advancing towards a reform regionalising a number of sectoral policies. Finally, Cambodia is advancing in the creation of national institutions that can better co-ordinate cross-sectoral policies at the sub-national level, but still faces challenges on vertical forms of co-ordination with sub-national governments.

Although the decentralisation of FSN policies has taken different forms across the case study countries, there are common traits such as the weaknesses in implementation. For instance, the multidimensionality of FSN formulated at national level often risks getting lost where implementation follows a so-called “silo approach”, with different government bodies and agencies acting independently from one another and limiting the potential for both horizontal and vertical co-ordination. Individual ministries and agencies have their own priorities, monitoring systems, operational and budgeting mechanisms, and, with a few exceptions, financial resources. Moreover, centrally led strategies and priorities, without a clear consideration for local needs and specificities, still dominate the implementation processes. Finally, lack of capacity and financial resources at sub-national level can undermine local authorities’ contribution to the policy-making process, in particular in implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Sectoral interventions for addressing FSN predominate. When it comes to enhanced household access to food, for instance, attention often remains focused on the domestic agriculture sector. As a result, opportunities for promoting off-farm income and employment other than agriculture in rural areas are often underexploited. While the case study analysis shows that developing countries have considerable potential to promote rural development by adopting an integrated approach, these opportunities are often left unexplored. This is the case, for example, in Cambodia, where it would be possible to tap into the potential of energy and tourism as catalysts for broader rural development. This is also true in Peru for the mining sector, and in Colombia and Morocco for rural tourism and local market development.

Moreover, other aspects of FSN, such as health and nutrition, are usually addressed through social policies, which are disconnected from economic development policies. As a consequence, the impact of social policies on economic development is weakened by a

failure to exploit synergies with the competitiveness agenda. Some of the case study countries – in particular Colombia, Morocco and Peru – have invested strongly in social programmes (e.g. basic services, conditional cash transfer programmes and public work programmes) with the aim of reducing food insecurity and poverty. These policies are usually implemented by the Ministries of Welfare (the Prosperidad Social in Colombia, the Ministry of Interior in Morocco, and the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion, or MIDIS, in Peru), but are not co-ordinated with economic development policies implemented by other ministries (e.g. the Ministry of Economy and Finance or Ministry of Planning). Such a lack of co-ordination can be true both at the national and particularly at the sub-national level. Broader and more flexible policy frameworks promoting synergies between the social and competitiveness dimensions of public policies could not only deliver better results in terms of tackling FSN problems, but also for generating sustainable development.

The lack of sub-national data – both related to the four FSN dimensions and to the socio-economic dynamics that impact food security – is another key obstacle for the effectiveness of territorial approaches for FSN. Regional and local statistics and indicators are generally poorly developed and in some cases absent altogether, which undermines the possibility of developing territorial monitoring systems and evidence-based policies. The importance of developing territorial information systems is increasingly recognised, and some countries have engaged in the production of detailed GIS-based maps, such as in Morocco. These efforts have, nevertheless, not so far found much success. The lack of co-ordination, harmonisation of approaches and communication between line ministries often leads to fragmentation of information and duplication issues. In other cases, as in Cambodia, the development of regional information is largely left in the hands of international partners. As a result, data tend to be project-focused and no comprehensive data collection process covers all regions over time in a coherent manner.

In addition, the territorial approach is not always fully understood. In some cases, a distinction is not always made between “regionalisation” of sectoral policies and the multisectoral and integrated approach to FSN policies envisaged by a territorial approach. In other cases, a territorial approach is meant merely as local development, without considering the key role of multi-level governance in territorial policies and processes. It may also be confused with community-based development, overlooking the importance of linking grassroots interventions at the community level to policy frameworks at national and sub-national levels. This can promote their sustainability and capitalise on the information and learning they may have generated.

In sum, the main implementation challenges identified in the five case studies for a more effective territorial approach to FSN are the following:

- the need to go beyond policies that strengthen agriculture, since agricultural interventions are important, but not sufficient, to adequately address food insecurity and malnutrition
- the need to promote multi-level governance systems by strengthening policy co-ordination at the central level and empowering decentralised government bodies and stakeholders
- the need to improve territorial information systems for an evidence-based FSN policy

- the need to link social policies with the competitiveness agenda in place-based, comprehensive rural development strategies.

Recommendations

This section extracts the key findings of the case study analysis conducted in five countries and the two national workshops on a territorial approach to FSN. The case studies confirmed the importance and value-added of adopting a territorial approach to FSN, and also identified a number of barriers and bottlenecks that need to be overcome to successfully adopt such an approach. Notably, four common implementation challenges appear to emerge in all five case studies, at different orders of magnitude.

1. Sectoral versus multisectoral and integrated approaches

As stressed above, most of the countries recognise FSN as a multidimensional issue and are developing strategies or creating institutions/co-ordination mechanisms accordingly. The main issue is the implementation of those strategies using a cross-sectoral and co-ordinated approach. In most of the countries considered, despite this multidimensional concept of FSN, policies and interventions still tend to be focused on the agricultural sector, and the opportunities related to off-farm activities are often underexplored.

In Peru, the two main sectors that could represent the main engines of growth in rural areas are agriculture and mining, including in poor regions such as in the department of Cajamarca. Agriculture is the main source of employment, while mining is the sector with the highest potential for promoting rural development, given the vast reserves of gold and copper in the soil. This could have a positive impact on FSN by increasing the incomes of the local population and improving access to FSN. However, the use of mining for rural development is underexploited. Public policies focus mainly on the agricultural sector, while mining is left to the private sector. The absence of policies integrating the two sectors in a single holistic vision for development means that agriculture and mining compete with one another, undermining the opportunities for development in rural areas.

In Colombia, farming is considered the only business opportunity for addressing food insecurity. As a result, most of the FSN policies and programmes promote small-scale or subsistence agriculture. This neglects the potential of income-enhancing opportunities offered by other sectors, in particular manufacturing, as a means of raising household incomes to reduce food insecurity. Currently, the richest departments in Colombia are those with a strong manufacturing element in addition to agriculture.

The sectoral approach to FSN policies is also dominant in Cambodia. The main priority has been the development of a rice-based farming system. The focus on rice production, however, limits incentives to diversify the rural economy that could lead to greater off-farm income and employment opportunities, including for part-time farm households. The consequence has been increased migration from rural areas to Phnom Penh and abroad. Eco-tourism and renewable energy sectors could present fruitful alternatives for developing Cambodia's rural areas. A more integrated approach is therefore needed in order to exploit these opportunities and improve FSN.

In Morocco, agriculture is the key sector of the rural economy and the source of between 75% and 80% of rural employment. However, it alone is not sufficient to promote sustained growth and development in Morocco's rural areas. Based on this evidence, diversification of the rural economy, off-farm income and employment opportunities outside agriculture have recently moved to the top of the government's

agenda. The Moroccan government is trying to adopt a more balanced approach to rural development. The aim is to co-ordinate policy actions with the development of social services, targeted social protection schemes and infrastructure.

The evolution of rural development policies in the Côte d'Ivoire highlights the shortcomings of the sectoral approach to rural development and FSN. Rural development initiatives have focused almost exclusively on agricultural value chain development. However, the gains from this process have mainly been enjoyed by actors involved in the value chains who were already doing well. Other important rural challenges have been left unattended. Existing sectoral policies have prioritised agricultural production, resulting in haphazard, piecemeal investment in rural infrastructure and services. Progress in improving FSN has been unsatisfactory as a result.

The national workshops in Mali and Niger confirmed that food security has been approached sectorally, overlooking opportunities for improving employment and incomes of people in off-farm activities that could improve access to FSN.

2. Multi-level governance and institutions

Co-ordination across national and sub-national authorities

The ability to co-ordinate FSN policies horizontally across sectors, as well as vertically across national and sub-national levels of government, is key to delivering effective rural development strategies addressing the multidimensional nature of FSN. Case study countries offer some examples of policy co-ordination mechanisms for co-ordinating policies across line ministries at the national level. These mechanisms have taken the form of an inter-ministerial council or commission, involving not just government agencies, but also other national stakeholders, such as citizen organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), trade unions and, in some cases, sub-national governments. The majority of the countries considered, as mentioned earlier, also had in place a national FSN strategy reflecting the different dimension of food security and nutrition. Nevertheless, the role of these fora has often remained vague, since most were set up without executive powers and lacked the authority to influence policy making. Their recommendations have thus frequently had to depend on the capacity and willingness of the various line ministries to implement cross-sectoral strategies.

Another common problem that emerges in the case studies is a lack of co-ordination between national and sub-national priorities and programme delivery. This has resulted in misalignment of objectives and intervention in policy implementation, due chiefly to the governance gaps in information, capacity, fiscal, administrative capacity and policy (Charbit and Michalun, 2009). First, involvement of sub-national stakeholders in formulating national FSN priorities appears to have been infrequent. Co-ordination across national and sub-national levels of government generally suggests that although sub-national authorities are in charge of implementing national policies, they have little input in their formulation. In most cases, the capacity and resources at sub-national level have not been able to ensure the effective delivery of a territorial approach to FSN, even where comprehensive national policies and strategies are in place and decentralisation is relatively advanced.

In Cambodia, the Council of Ministries for Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD) was set up in 2004, specifically to co-ordinate national-level FSN policies, and involve international development partners in its working group on FSN and Social Protection. However, CARD does not have its own budget for implementing FSN

programmes. This, in combination with the limited resources and capacity at sub-national level, means that effective implementation will remain a challenge for the foreseeable future.

A similar national structure exists in Peru. The Commission for Food Security responsible for the FSN plan formulated for 2015-21 brings together different policy sectors. The commission further functions as a key forum for FSN stakeholders, involving several ministers, technical bodies, NGOs and representatives from sub-national governments. The system does have drawbacks in terms of co-ordination. First, it lacks the authority to co-ordinate different ministries and policies, and has limited ability to directly influence the implementation of government FSN programmes. Second, the ministry that could potentially have a lead role in co-ordinating programme delivery is the Ministry for Social Inclusion, the MIDIS. This agency, however, lacks the capacity, and the power, to co-ordinate a broad FSN agenda. As a result, most policy actions and programmes focus on immediate hunger relief and do not take into account the range of factors affecting food security, despite the advanced multidimensional definition elaborated in the national plan.

In Colombia, the inter-sectoral commission for FSN, the *Comisión Intersectorial de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional* (CISAN), was created in 2009 to offer national stakeholders a forum to discuss key challenges related to FSN, and to enhance co-ordination and collaboration. This commission appears to be much needed, given the lack of co-ordination among ministries and government agencies involved in FSN. Different agencies use various definitions and narratives of FSN, which range from subsistence to a more holistic understanding of access to food, including the income dimension. This discrepancy across ministries has led to a lack of policy coherence, further complicated by the complex delivery structure, especially at the local level.

No specific government body has been set up to co-ordinate FSN policies in Morocco and the Côte d'Ivoire, implying that no single strategy draws together the FSN challenges to be addressed. In Morocco, this has resulted in a predominantly sectoral approach to FSN. Agricultural, social, health and economic dimensions of FSN are addressed separately, by different ministries, with very limited interaction and co-ordination. Only recently has the government started trying to adopt a more integrated policy approach. In the Côte d'Ivoire, a rather narrow approach is taken to rural development in general, focusing strongly on developing selected agricultural value chains, namely cocoa, cotton and cashew production. While there has been an attempt to engage public and private stakeholders in multistakeholder platforms, only occasional support is provided to local governments engaging in a more holistic approach. Rural development and territorial planning are still mainly seen as by-products of agricultural growth. This lack of appreciation of FSN as a cross-sectoral issue may have serious implications for the country's long-term food security. Not only does it put considerable pressure on natural resources, but inadequate attention has been paid to the employment prospects of the growing population of working age. Moreover, civil conflict and social unrest (2002-11) have disrupted development and government functions, including the building of stable and democratic institutions. Focusing too strictly on value chain development may be a missed opportunity to build institutional capacity at national and sub-national levels, encouraging sustainable FSN policies with local ownership.

In Niger, the *Haute Autorité à la Sécurité Alimentaire* (HASA) was created in 2010 to co-ordinate FSN policies. In addition, it launched the 3N Initiative (Nigériens Nourish Nigériens), which became the reference framework for all FSN interventions. This is an

ambitious programme based on a strong political commitment to eradicate hunger, boost incomes and guarantee the conditions for full participation of citizens in national policy making.

In addition to the set of issues experienced in the co-ordination of policies across ministries, one problem identified in several instances was the lack of co-ordination with non-governmental stakeholders. Without a clear vision and co-ordination mechanism at the sub-national level, the work of development partners and national and local NGOs has sometimes led to a duplication of efforts and a fragmented, project-based approach. A strategic, holistic approach is often missing, both at the national and the sub-national level.

In Cambodia and Colombia, the presence of international development partners has frequently led to a duplication of efforts and *ad hoc* solutions. It is not rare to find that development partners have even set up their own separate institutional arrangement for delivering FSN projects and programmes, creating a structure separate from the one put in place by the national government.

A lack of vertical and horizontal co-ordination is also a major problem for implementing FSN policy in Mali and Niger. There, as in Cambodia, there is a strong dependency on external aid from international co-operation and a project-based approach to food insecurity. The workshop also revealed the importance of improving capacity, particularly at the local level, to implement an effective territorial approach to FSN policy.

The role of sub-national institutions

Recent decentralisation reforms provide an opportunity to create a multi-level governance framework more suitable than the existing mechanisms to apply a territorial approach to FSN. However, decentralisation alone cannot be viewed as a panacea. Enough capacity and resources have to be in place to ensure that policies can be effectively formulated, made coherent and implemented at the local level. Decentralisation also involves a greater risk of lack of co-ordination, as well as a host of other problems, including enhanced potential for corruption and for the local elite to capture the benefits of policies. If these risks are to be avoided, especially in the initial stages of decentralisation, greater monitoring of the process is required to ensure full transparency and democratic governance. The countries included in this report have reached various stages of decentralisation, and their multi-governance structures vary enormously from country to country. Nevertheless, the most common problems appeared to be lack of capacity and resources at sub-national level. Moreover, the involvement of sub-national stakeholders in national policy making – especially in relation to FSN – appeared to be rare.

In Colombia, for instance, the capacity of regional governments to design, implement and monitor public policies varies considerably from department to department, both in financial and institutional terms. Economic and institutional capacity tend to go hand in hand. In places with more favourable economic conditions, such as the department of Antioquia, local authorities have demonstrated a strong capacity to implement a multidimensional FSN policy, including programmes like school meals, but also direct support to small-scale farming. These represent a more holistic territorial approach to FSN. The success of the Antioquian approach to FSN – called MANA (*Mejoramiento Alimentario y Nutricional de Antioquia*) – has further influenced national policy making. Some key features of its success are continuous political support and budget stability, as well as its mainstreaming into local policies.

In Morocco, many policies dealing with FSN have been largely decentralised, as part of the broader “*Régionalisation Avancée*” agenda. Increasing power is granted to sub-national authorities, including finance and planning. In 2015, the first elections of regional and municipal authorities were held. Nevertheless, the case study analysis showed that, with regards to FSN, the regionalisation process in Morocco has so far resulted in “territorialised sectoral strategies”. In other words, while policies are being decentralised and brought closer to the territories, they are still not coherent and hence do not fully reflect the cross-cutting nature of FSN. More effective horizontal co-ordination mechanisms to maximise the potential synergies between actors and across sectors at the local level have been put in place. Institutional capacity and human resources available at the decentralised level nevertheless remain relatively weak, partly due to the lack of experience of the actors involved.

While Cambodia has also put decentralisation on a legal footing recently, a lot remains to be done in terms of building the capacity and empowering the sub-national level of government to deal with FSN challenges. Lack of budget allocation and involvement of local stakeholders in national-level policy making have been identified as key issues in the creation of a multi-level governance framework to address local FSN problems. As things stand, a significant disconnect is found between national and sub-national planning. Development plans prepared by sub-national authorities are mainly formulated based on national policies and strategies, without any involvement of sub-national stakeholders. Moreover, since the national co-ordination body for FSN is further limited to horizontal co-ordination at the national level, co-ordination across sectors does not seem to trickle down to the provincial level. This appears to result in a largely sectoral approach in practice, with provincial departments receiving funds based on national sectoral priorities.

The case of Peru further highlights the importance of informal institutions for the smooth implementation of FSN programmes. The peer-to-peer learning initiative *Mi Chacra Emprendedora*, led by the Ministry of Social Inclusion, promotes the introduction of innovations in farming through a network of local leaders and a system of peer-to-peer learning. In the department of Cajamarca, for instance, local leaders, *yachachiq*, have helped small-scale farmers introduce new crops with a high value added on the international market, such as quinoa and *aguaymanto* (or *physalis*), based on their knowledge of the local *milieu* and their cultural proximity to beneficiaries. This has provided better income for the local population and has had a positive effect on access to food. Nevertheless, the programme is so far of limited geographical reach, covering only 5 out of 12 departments in the country.

3. Improving territorial information systems for evidence-based food security and nutrition policies

Introducing an integrated and territorial approach can increase the effectiveness of responses to rural poverty and food insecurity. However, it requires information, tools and approaches that can help to describe and analyse the different dimensions and territorial assets of rural areas. This can shed light on territorial dynamics and the implications for rural development. In several of the case study countries, territorial information systems are either weak or absent altogether. FSN statistics are thus gathered in an unsystematic, uncoordinated way, with little or no continuity in the collection of sub-national data. In others, a failure to use territorial data in an integrated way to support evidence-based policies appeared to be the main shortcoming, rather than the availability of information *per se*.

In Peru, collecting statistics to back evidence-based policy making needs to become a priority, especially given the relative abundance of territorial statistics. Better co-ordination of data collection and use is needed. The same appears to be true for Morocco. While local information is collected and processed by various government agencies and ministries, as well as mainstreamed through most programmes and initiatives, no clear vision appears to guide the use of data across sectors.

The Colombian government is working to improve its territorial information system, since, as things currently stand, public authorities often lack basic information about rural communities in particular, including the number of inhabitants, *desplazados* (displaced people) and land titles. One of the key aspects that needs attention includes consolidation of baseline data. First, Census data is not mandated at regular intervals. Data collection at the sub-national level is typically carried out by a multitude of actors as a result of their programme deliveries or management, and could benefit from improved co-ordination and oversight. Use and dissemination of the data collected could be improved if it was shared between FSN stakeholders. Further review of the definitions of urban and rural that are used in policy formulation and delivery could enhance the utility of geographical data for such purposes. For example, the *Familia in Acción* programme which provides 3 million households with conditional cash transfers does not take account of the beneficiaries' local context. Finally, capacity to analyse territorial data needs to be built both at the national and the local level. The government's commitment to create a "territorial observatory" is a welcome move in this direction.

In Cambodia, a centralised effort has been mounted to produce FSN statistics at the sub-national level. An FSN Info Task Force has been set up, but the availability of reliable data at sub-national level has presented a challenge. So far, intra-national disparities in FSN have been estimated through statistical modelling. This provides an aggregate picture, but does not give precise information at the province or district level. Moreover, territorial information has mainly been produced by international development organisations, and tends to be issue-specific, and tied to the timeframe of their operations. Better capacity and awareness among sub-national governments could help address this barrier to evidence-based policies.

4. Linking social policies with competitiveness agendas

Food security and nutrition policies tend to be disconnected from growth policies

While it is not a sufficient remedy in itself, economic growth is a critical part of the fight against hunger and malnutrition. In all the case studies, economic growth and job creation have been important in reducing poverty and hunger. Despite this evidence, FSN and social policies appear not to be connected with the policy framework for stimulating growth and investments. At least three factors seem to lie at the root of this disjuncture:

- First, ministries in charge of investment policy (the pro-growth agenda) do not participate in institutions where social policy and/or FSN policy are designed. Even in countries such as Colombia, where the government makes the effort to produce a multi-year national development strategy (the National Development Plan), the connection between the social dimensions and growth is tenuous.
- Second, cultural constraints are also at play. Poor citizens are not so much considered an untapped asset, but as in need of social assistance. This cultural constraint may depend on several factors, including the way in which the constituencies are formed, and the educational background of operators and

policy makers dealing with FSN policies. Last but not least, the policy packages and funding made available by donor agencies and international organisations are not designed to be integrated with national pro-growth policies.

- Third, institutional volatility disrupts continuity in policy making. Short political cycles, a poorly developed civil service and the changing priorities of influential international stakeholders, such as donor agencies and international organisations, may explain the lack of consistency in policy making. On occasion, funds allocated by international stakeholders – and their agendas – may contribute to the creation of *ad hoc* institutions, often at the community level, that do not necessarily co-ordinate with national stakeholders and may represent an element of complexity within the multi-level governance framework of a given country.

Conditional cash transfer programmes can inform investment policy

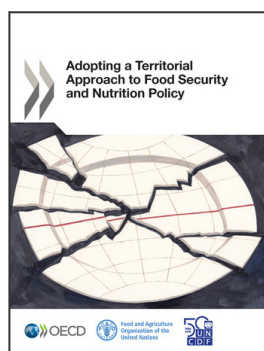
The information collected through conditional cash transfers policies and the institutional networks that administer such policies represent an untapped resource. Not only could they promote policy complementarities, but they could be used to help guide a pro-growth investment strategy. In Peru, for instance, the national programme *Juntos* provided approximately 1 million households (in 2014) with conditional cash transfers. The programme is delivered through a mechanism that collects a large amount of information about these households and the place in which they live, and also involves local communities to select beneficiaries. Local governments are responsible for the delivery of the health care and/or education services that beneficiaries must use if they are to be eligible for receiving the cash transfers. This system has already achieved a high degree of co-ordination and integration among the different policy actors involved that could be used to inform an investment policy that creates job opportunities in poor communities.

Scaling-up small investment implemented by programmes

In some cases, the social and economic dimensions in small-scale programmes at the local level are complementary. These programmes are usually delivered by sub-national governments, deconcentrated national agencies or NGOs. They provide poor households both with relief and with small sums of capital to be used to create a stable income. Often, the experience gathered in their design and implementation remains at the local level. It may not be transmitted to due to poor multi-level governance, or it may end if a programme is discontinued because of a lack of funds or changes in the political/institutional context. This represents a lost opportunity that could be used to inform policy at the regional or national level. Small-scale investments in infrastructure, service delivery, education or in other areas can result in disconnected initiatives with fragmented outcomes. A territorial, place-approach integrating local initiatives into a common, multi-annual agenda can benefit from economies of scale and deliver opportunities in the medium and long term.

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