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# **Strengthening coherence between agriculture and social protection**

Lesotho country case study report

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**The From Protection to Production (PtoP) programme, jointly with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), is exploring the linkages and strengthening coordination between social protection, agriculture and rural development. PtoP programme is funded principally by the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the European Union.**

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## Preface

Agriculture and social protection can complement and mutually reinforce each other in reducing hunger and poverty. On the one hand, agricultural interventions can promote growth in smallholder productivity by addressing structural constraints that limit poor households' access to land and water resources, inputs, financial services, advisory services and markets. On the other hand, social protection can provide liquidity and certainty for poor smallholders, allowing them to invest in agriculture, re-allocate their labour to on-farm activities, invest in human capital development, increase participation in social networks (which constitute an important source of informal risk management) and better manage risks, thereby allowing them to engage in more profitable livelihood and agricultural activities.

Recent policy declarations at global and regional levels emphasize the combined role that agriculture and social protection can play in tackling poverty and hunger. For example, the 39th Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) urged member states to strengthen coordination between agriculture and social protection (CFS, 2012). Several African policy initiatives and declarations explicitly call for stronger coordination between the two spheres, such as the 2003 Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and the 2014 Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods.

Efforts to strengthen links between agriculture and social protection policies are also taking place at national levels. However, little is still known about how to strengthen these linkages, including opportunities for doing so and some of the challenges that need to be overcome. To partly fill this gap, case studies were carried out in seven countries across Africa (Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho and Zambia), Asia (Bangladesh) and Latin America (Mexico and Peru). Findings from the case studies will contribute to country-level policy dialogue and to developing guidance material on how to strengthen coherence between agriculture and social protection.

## **Acknowledgements**

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## Abbreviations

CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CGP	Child Grants Programme
DFSCC	District Food Security Coordinating Committees
DMA	Disaster Management Authority
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FFW	Fit-for-work
FSPU	Food Security Police Unit
KII	Key Informant Interviews
LFSSP	Linking Food Security to Social Protection Programme
LVAC	Lesotho Food Security and Vulnerability Monitoring Report
MAFS	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
MOSD	Ministry of Social Development
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NISSA	National Information System for Social Assistance
NSFP	National Food Security Policy
NSDP	National Strategic Development Plan
NSPS	National Social Protection Strategy
OVC	Orphans and vulnerable children
PA	Public Assistance programme
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSIC	Public Sector Investment Committee
SADP	Smallholder Agricultural Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

## Executive Summary

This study took place in Lesotho (in Maseru, and in Maseru and Leribe districts) between 27 April and 7 May 2015. The study was led by Martina Ulrichs of the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) along with Dr Matseliso Mphale of the National University of Lesotho with assistance from Borja Miguelez and Mokitinyane Nthimo of the FAO Lesotho Country Office.

The project focuses on two core questions:

- What are the current experiences of achieving coherence between Lesotho’s agricultural and social protection policies and programmes?
- What lessons and insights do these experiences hold for achieving more and better coordination between the two sectors?

The Lesotho study sets out to address these questions by exploring, in particular, the potential for linkages between the two sectors in a context characterized by large-scale, self-targeted agricultural programmes in the agricultural sector and social assistance programmes framed around a life-course approach in the social protection domain.

The key findings of the study are as follows:

- A context of declining agricultural production and recurrent seasonal food insecurity. Lesotho’s ability to produce its own food supply has reduced significantly over the last three decades. The Food Security Policy outlines strategies to increase food production at household and national levels, and provide safety nets for the poorest and most vulnerable people through cross-sector collaboration. Yet, concrete collaboration between actors managing agricultural interventions for food security and safety nets is limited; undermining the country’s potential to reach its national food security and poverty reduction objectives.
- A large proportion of the poor is neglected by public policies. Cash and in-kind transfers in Lesotho are currently only reaching an estimated three to four percent of the poor.<sup>1</sup> With agricultural programmes focusing on national food production by supporting commercially-oriented farmers, there is a shortage of large-scale programmes that specifically target those categorized as “chronically vulnerable to poverty and food security”, who make up the majority of the population and are engaged in agricultural activities, either as farmers or seasonal workers. This part of the population would benefit particularly from linkages between social protection and agricultural programmes since it is economically active, yet face resource-constraints to access inputs, markets and training.
- Agriculture programmes and social protection cater to different types of beneficiaries. While social protection is delivering social assistance to the poorest and resource-constrained households, agricultural support provided by the government in Lesotho mainly focuses on farmers with commercial potential. Social assistance beneficiaries are widely considered to be labour-constrained, despite their productive potential as wage labourers or subsistence farmers. This contributes to the general perception across

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<sup>1</sup> World Bank, 2012.

policymakers that social protection and agriculture have different mandates and cater to different groups of the population, leaving a “missing middle” of households which do not receive any kind of support though they are in need of it to develop their livelihoods.

- Bottlenecks at the top prevent linkages at the bottom. There is currently little awareness among policymakers in agriculture of what social protection is, what kind of interventions it covers and what its objectives are. Technical staff is generally more aware of the need for complementarities between agriculture and social protection, yet lack decision-making power and resources to increase collaboration across sectors, particularly at district levels. Bottlenecks are at the top where a deeply rooted silo-mentality creates competition between ministries. The lack of robust data and accountability mechanisms inhibit a constructive assessment of the effectiveness of programmes that seem to be mainly maintained for strategic political purposes.
- Coordination by process is not leading to coordination by purpose. Several thematic inter-ministerial committees are planned or have been put in place to coordinate actors working on social protection, nutrition, disaster management and child protection. These mechanisms currently serve a “reporting” function with little de facto coordination taking place. This is mainly the result of a missing sense of purpose across stakeholders of why coordination is important to their work. Committees and meetings alone will not increase effective coordination and collaboration unless stakeholders recognize its benefits and receive the necessary political and financial support to put it into practice.

The implications for future work on these findings are as follows:

- **Build linkages through existing policy frameworks.** In Lesotho the policies in both sectors already highlight the need for cross-sector collaboration to reduce poverty and vulnerability and improve food security. The existing National Food Security Policy (2005) recognizes both safety nets and agricultural programmes as key strategies to be implemented in collaboration with other sectors. The National Social Protection Strategy framed around a life-course approach was only launched in 2015. Efforts are currently ongoing to disseminate the policy and reach out to ministries in other sectors to create an agenda for the working-age poor. This provides a timely window of opportunity to engage with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security and link social assistance with livelihood promotion programmes.
- **Evaluate programmes to dispel the myths.** With few exceptions, notably the CGP, agricultural and social protection programmes lack formal evaluations that could provide insights on their effects on food and nutrition security, both at national and household levels. Findings would help to demystify the assumption that social assistance beneficiaries lack productive capacity and are unattractive for agricultural programmes and to shed light on the achievement of households’ food security.
- **Use emerging evidence to promote synergies between social protection and agriculture.** Recent evidence from projects such as the Linking Food Security to Social Protection Programme (LFSSP) highlights that labour-constrained and unconstrained social assistance recipients benefit from complementary agricultural interventions to increase their productive potential. Development partners can play an important role in

advocating for increased linkages between the two sectors at high policy levels, based on this evidence.

- **Strengthen horizontal coordination mechanisms at district levels.** Informal collaboration is already taking place at the district level between the two sectors, with staff from MAFS providing training to beneficiaries of social assistance programmes. New efforts to increase linkages at the policy level should build on this identified need to work together at the technical level, and provide the necessary human and financial resources to institutionalize collaboration.

## Introduction

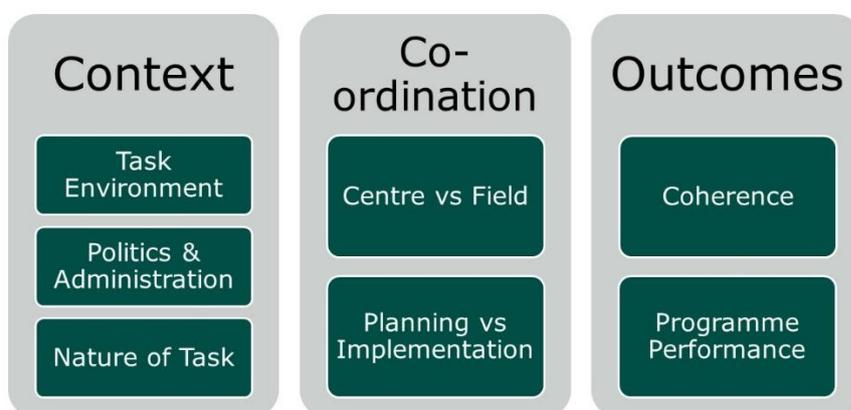
This study forms part of seven country case studies aimed to generate knowledge on country experiences in strengthening coherence between agriculture and social protection. The two main questions underpinning the study are as follows:

- What are the current experiences of achieving coherence between Lesotho’s agricultural and social protection policies and programmes?
- What lessons and insights do these experiences hold for achieving more and better coordination between both sectors?

Lesotho was selected as one of the seven country case studies because of its growing social protection sector. It is one of the few countries in sub-Saharan Africa that has a government-funded, universal old age pension system and is in the process of scaling up its social assistance programmes for vulnerable groups, primarily poor households with orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). It recently established a Ministry for Social Development as the coordinating body for social protection programmes and its recently launched National Social Protection Strategy envisions linkages with complementary programmes targeting the working age population. On the other hand, Lesotho has long-established agricultural programmes, referred to as “safety nets” in its national policies, particularly the input subsidy programme and block-farming. The case study was thus considered important in that it highlights how an emerging social protection sector can be an entry point for building linkages to agriculture.

The analysis in Lesotho followed the common approach and framework set out for the case studies. This involved looking at the **context** in which policies and programmes are designed, the **coordination** functions which allow them to be delivered, and the **outcomes** of those policies and programmes, especially their impacts on the lives and livelihoods of poor and vulnerable people (Figure 1). To answer the overarching questions, a range of topics were explored through a desk-based review and in-country study following a common investigative framework (see Annex 1 for the main questions).

**Figure 1 Analytical themes for exploring coherence between agriculture and social protection**



The work was carried out beginning with an initial desk-based review which involved reviewing key documents covering development strategy, and agricultural and social

protection policy. This was followed by a two-week in-country data collection exercise involving a number of key informant interviews (KIIs) with ministry staff, development partners/donor agencies and civil society as well as focus group discussions with local communities (FGDs). At the end of the data collection period key informants from the national-level were invited to a validation workshop held in Maseru at the FAO Lesotho Office where the emerging findings were presented and discussed. The study involved looking across the agricultural and social protection spheres at both the national and subnational levels.

In terms of the data collection tools for the in-country study, a register of questions developed for the case studies formed the basis of the main lines of enquiry for all KIIs and FGDs, with the final questions being adapted for specific roles and depending on the emerging themes and issues. The main areas of investigation spanned policy and programme details, coordination, coherence and performance.

A list of respondents is given in Annex 2. All respondents gave permission for their names to be included in the report, but quotations remain anonymized

With regard to social protection the focus of the study is on social assistance programmes implemented by the Ministry of Social Development (MOSD) since it is the main lead ministry and has a coordinating mandate under the new National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS). The study did not look specifically into social protection programmes implemented by other ministries, such as the Old-Age Pension (Ministry of Finance), or the School Feeding Programme (Ministry of Education) – while nonetheless acknowledging the potential for linkages between these programmes and agriculture. The OVC bursary implemented by MOSD was excluded since it is limited to covering tuition fees for orphans and vulnerable children and not livelihood investments.

In terms of the agricultural sector the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS) was identified as the main actor implementing programmes to increase agricultural productivity and achieve household and national food security. It is also acknowledged that the Ministry of Forestry, Conservation and Range Management<sup>2</sup> has been providing longstanding public works programmes which benefit the rural population on a year-to-year basis, which is why stakeholders in the Ministry of Forestry were also consulted.

To assess the political and administrative context of cross-sector coordination other critical stakeholders were identified at the national level within government, development partner organizations and civil society, who could provide critical insights into existing opportunities and challenges for linkages between agriculture and social protection. A wide range of NGO-led and donor-funded smaller projects and pilots are currently taking place in Lesotho and are referenced throughout the text. Yet, in-depth analysis was not undertaken as the study focused on large-scale government-led programmes.

Due to the geographical proximity of districts in Lesotho, two districts were selected for key information interviews. The first was Maseru, where the MOSD and MAFS have collaborated informally in the past to implement income-generating activities for CGP beneficiaries. The objective for selecting this district was to understand how collaboration is taking place horizontally between the two sectors, without necessarily being incentivized by the central offices. The second district was Leribe, where FAO piloted the “Linking Food Security to Social Protection Programme” (LFSSP) in 2013, which provides combined training on

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<sup>2</sup> Hereafter referred to as “Ministry of Forestry”

homestead gardening and food preservation practices with the distribution of vegetable seeds to 799 CGP-eligible households. Stakeholders in the MOSD and MAFS district offices were interviewed, as well as staff from the District Administrator's Office which has an oversight of existing government programmes in the respective districts.

Further, three focus group discussions were held in three villages, with different types of households. In Mahobong (Leribe) the focus group consisted of beneficiaries of the conservation agriculture project, implemented by MAFS in partnership with FAO. In Mazenod Ha Tseka (Maseru) CGP beneficiaries engaged in the livelihood promotion project, implemented by MOSD with assistance from MAFS, were engaged in the discussion, while in Betha-Betha (Leribe) a group of women was convened that consisted of beneficiaries of MOSD programmes, keyhole gardens as well as non-beneficiaries. The objective of the focus groups at the village level was to understand whether beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries perceived any potential complementarities between agriculture and social protection programmes, as well as whether programme delivery of different services was coordinated.

Last but not least the study aimed to assess whether existing social assistance or agriculture programmes are currently including a strong gender component in their theory of change and targeting strategy. The main programmes implemented by MAFS and MOSD do not target women specifically nor include a women's empowerment component. Yet the majority of "payees" for MOSD transfers are women, and women seem to be highly active in programmes such as conservation agriculture and keyhole gardens.<sup>3</sup> The main cross-sectoral programmes targeting women specifically were nutrition programmes focused on maternal health during nursing and pregnancy. The NSPS mentions the Ministry of Gender as a key stakeholder in the promotion of women's empowerment, yet stakeholders did not seem to be aware of their existing programmes.

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<sup>3</sup> Eligible households are asked during the enrolment process to indicate who in the household should receive the payment, and in the majority of the cases a female household member is selected as the "payee".

# 1. Context

## 1.1. Main challenges in Lesotho<sup>4</sup>

Some of the main challenges faced in Lesotho are related to high levels of poverty, declining income-generating activities and limited employment opportunities, exacerbated by a fall in remittances from workers in the South African mining industry, high mortality rates caused by the HIV/AIDS pandemic and a decline in agricultural productivity due to underinvestment and vulnerability to climate shocks.

Lesotho's population is highly vulnerable although the share of people living below the national poverty line has declined by 10 percent since 1994. 57 percent of households in 2010 were living below the national poverty line, of which 40 percent were extremely poor (World Bank, 2010). Lesotho has a population of 1 876 633 (2006 Demographic Census), and population growth has been steady from 1996 to 2006, with high fertility rates being offset by high mortality rates, mainly due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic which affects 23 percent of the population. Life expectancy at birth is consequently low and has fallen from 59.0 years in 1996 to 41.2 in 2006.

Over 60 percent of the population live in four of the ten districts in the western lowland corridor where most of the country's arable land is located. Soil erosion and encroachment by human settlements have been major factors affecting arable land, which has decreased in size by 10 percent. Climatic shocks such as floods, droughts and early/late frost further exacerbate the problem of soil erosion and impact on agricultural production by shortening the growing season and reducing yield. The country's capacity to produce its own food has declined in the last thirty years. The main causes are declining productivity, severe land degradation, reliance on rain-fed agriculture, changing weather conditions, as well as a decline in agricultural investment. In the 1980s Lesotho managed to produce 80 percent of its food; this fell to 30 percent in 2011.

The poorest in Lesotho rely on agriculture, yet to a large extent as a source of income through seasonal labour rather than subsistence. Rural households classified as "poor" or "very poor" rely on casual labour for up to 40 percent of their incomes, which makes them highly vulnerable to seasonal shocks. Inadequate resources during the planting and growing season lead to insufficient food production and food shortages and, in many cases, "poor" and "very poor" households leave their fields fallow when they cannot afford to cultivate them. In the lean season food reserves are exhausted, food prices rise and the poorest struggle to purchase food due to a low demand for casual labour. According to the annual Lesotho Food Security and Vulnerability Monitoring Report (LVAC) produced by the Disaster Management Authority (DMA), approximately one-quarter of the population will require humanitarian assistance for 2014/15 over a period of 4-5 months (DMA, 2014). In previous years those in need of humanitarian assistance was as high as one out of three Basotho, as in 2011/12 when drought led to a food shortage.

Despite its low contribution to GDP (8 percent), agriculture plays an important role for the food security of the majority of households, with over half of the population owning agricultural land and engaging in livestock keeping. Most of the national crop output is

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<sup>4</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, data is drawn from: Government of Lesotho (2012) National Strategic Development Plan 2012/13 – 2016/17, Growth and Development Strategic Framework.

produced for home consumption and the majority of agricultural workers are not salaried, since they produce for their own households. In comparison to the low growth of the primary sector, the secondary and tertiary sectors have grown by 7.8 percent and 3.8 percent per year respectively, between 1982/83 and 2010/11. In the secondary sector manufacturing has been the main force of growth, with textiles and garment manufacturing being the principal industries generating local employment. Main industries in the tertiary sectors that have contributed to growth are post and telecommunications and financial intermediations.

Lesotho has been highly dependent economically on South Africa in terms of trade, as well as a source of remittances. 80 percent of imported goods come from South Africa, and one-quarter of Lesotho's exports go to their neighbouring country. The number of those going to South Africa to work in the mines has more than halved since the 1980s, and the loss in remittances has reduced one of the few sources of income for the rural population.

## **1.2. Political context**

One of the objectives of this study is to understand the context in which agriculture and social protection programmes are currently being implemented; to assess which factors are enabling or constraining coordination across sectors. Two cross-cutting issues were mentioned by the majority of stakeholders which refer mainly to the current political context.

First, Lesotho's experience with policy coherence and inter-ministerial coordination has been marked by the tendency to put stronger emphasis on autonomy and ownership of policies that are by nature cross-sectoral rather than on collaboration creating major disincentives to the building of linkages across ministries at the national level. However the development of National Social Development Policy, for example, represents a fairly successful example of policy formulation that occurred through the participation of multiple stakeholders.

Several actors mentioned that for coordination between social protection and agriculture to succeed a high profile figure in government needs to advocate it. Currently, the mandate to coordinate on specific issues lies within ministries, yet they often lack the political authority and mandate to influence how other ministries should design and implement their programmes. Development partners such as FAO and UNICEF have been playing a strong advocacy role in promoting linkages between the two sectors, but representatives in both agencies agreed that this could be strengthened at the cabinet level to obtain political buy-in from leading figures in government. MOSD actively tries to convene different actors in inter-ministerial workshops and meetings to promote a joint agenda, yet faces obstacles due to its position as a recently created ministry with limited convening powers. If inter-ministerial workshops were hosted by more high profile political actors, such as the Prime Minister's Office, participation might increase. However, location in the PMO in itself might not be sufficient for increasing convening power; it will have to be complemented by budgetary incentives and support expressed from high profile political figures to ensure it takes place. Increasing accountability mechanisms and adding more monitoring and evaluation of cross-sector coordination could further incentivize collaboration by highlighting its effectiveness and identifying areas with potential for improved performance.

Second, issues around coordination need be analysed against the backdrop of ongoing decentralization processes. From 2012, decentralization started to become a major government priority and culminated in the launch of the Decentralization Policy in 2014,

which includes a strategy for the first five years to put in place structures for the devolution of power from the centre to executive local governments at the district level.

Under the previous government the decentralization process had started with six ministries, focusing on the decentralization of service provision with technical assistance from the UNDP and GIZ. The ministries involved were the Ministry of Local Government; the Ministry of Health; the Ministry of Social Development; the Ministry of Mining; the Ministry of Forestry, Conservation and Range Management and the Ministry of Water Affairs. The selection was based on a number of criteria, including: the existing level of decentralized staff and services as well as political willingness to embrace the decentralization process. MAFS had been initially shortlisted for the decentralization process but was dropped since it already had a fairly decentralized structure in place. MOSD was the only ministry that managed to systematically decentralize its structure from its inception, since it had been established only in 2012. However, political devolution has not fully materialized, with decision-making and budget allocation still being concentrated at the national level.

Since the decentralization process is ongoing, there are currently two parallel governance structures in place at the district level. On the one hand there are the District Administrator Offices which are the administrative entities inherited from colonization by the British. On the other hand there is the Local Government, or District Council Office, which is envisioned as an independent executive government entity at the district level. Yet it still depends politically and financially from the Ministry of Local Government at the national level until council elections are held, presumably in 2016. One of the main challenges envisioned currently with regard to the election is to put in place the necessary structures to move staff from the national level to the district and find qualified mayoral candidates to run.

Devolution of power through decentralization would facilitate coordination of different ministries at the district and council level, and provide them with more political and fiscal autonomy to set sectoral priorities. Currently, the dependence on decisions made at the centre inhibit district offices to adjust programmes (e.g. ensure inputs arrive on time) or allocate budgets to support coordination and collaboration with other sectors. MAFS district offices are in a position where staff is interested and available to provide technical training to other government entities and civil society organizations, but does not have the leeway to allocate funding to it. The limited training budget district offices used to receive has been cut, and technical staff at the Agricultural Resource Centres depends on resources from other organizations to engage in cross-sector activities. MAFS, MOSD and District Administrator Offices still engage to a certain degree in cross-sectoral programmes that are initiated at the district level, yet these receive limited support from the central offices thus undermining their political and financial sustainability.

## **2. Policies and programmes for agriculture and social protection**

### **2.1. National Policies**

This section reviews the main strategy documents guiding policy implementation in Lesotho, particularly for the agricultural and food security sector, and for social protection. The objective is to assess whether cross-sectoral linkages are envisioned in the policies and to then juxtapose these with existing programmes and practices to assess overall coherence.

#### **National Strategic Development Plan 2012/13 – 2016/17**

The National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) was put in place in the fiscal year 2012/13 and succeeded the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and the Interim National Development Framework. The NSDP is the current five-year strategy of the Government of Lesotho working towards the National Vision 2020 of achieving a stable and peaceful democracy, with strong and sustainable economic growth and thereby address Lesotho's key challenges: poverty, inequality, unemployment, poor health and high mortality.

The strategic goals of the NSDP are:

- pursue high, shared and employment-creating economic growth;
- develop key infrastructure;
- enhance the skills base, technology adoption and foundation for innovation;
- improve health, combat HIV and AIDS and reduce vulnerability;
- reverse environmental degradation and adapt to climate change; and
- promote peace, democratic governance and build effective institutions.

A strong focus of the NSDP lies on job creation through “high, sustainable and private sector led economic growth”, driven by major investments in two key sectors: 1) expansion of the diamond mining industry and 2) expansion of water projects (e.g. the Metolong Dam and the Lesotho Highlands Water Project Phase II). Due to the short-term impacts on employment of these sectors, four “sustainable generators of growth” have been identified: agriculture, manufacturing, tourism and the creation of a more attractive environment for foreign and domestic investment.

In terms of agriculture and the rural economy, the NSDP places a strong emphasis on the commercialization of agriculture with a focus on high value crops and livestock products, the development of integrated value chains and access to inputs and machinery, such as irrigation systems. Agricultural institutions and extension services are geared towards input-intensive, large-scale agriculture. These strategic objectives and actions are expected to realize sustainable agricultural growth that will contribute towards food security, nutrition and poverty reduction. The NSDP also includes a strategic objective that refers to the improvement of household food security. This component focuses much more on sustainable agriculture and promotes conservation farming, community gardens and livestock health and protection from theft. Apart from targeting different types of farmers, the strategies applied for commercialization of agriculture on the one hand, and conservation agriculture for smallholders on the other, are based on completely different rationales which seem to be in direct conflict with one another (especially in terms of environmental sustainability). Programmes targeting smallholders pursue environmentally sustainable, low-input

agricultural practices, while commercial farmers are provided with subsidized chemical inputs and genetically modified seeds. This incoherence in the different types of programmes implemented by MAFS was highlighted by stakeholders interviewed for the study.

Social protection features under the NSDP's fourth goal, "Improve health, combat HIV and AIDS and reduce vulnerability", and its main objective is to reduce the economic and social vulnerabilities of the most disadvantaged and socially excluded segments of society. The NSDP already envisioned the development of a social protection framework that would guide the coordination and harmonization process of the different social assistance programmes, including the establishment of a central registry system to increase coordination and efficiency of different schemes. The NSDP also makes reference to social protection to increase the capacity of able-bodied people and implement sustainable livelihood strategies and programmes to graduate social assistance beneficiaries.

### **National Food Security Policy (2005)**

The National Food Security Policy came into force in 2005 to provide policy directions for the Ministry of Agriculture whose mandate had been expanded to cover food security (and was renamed MAFS). Consultations leading up to the Poverty Reduction Strategy at the time had revealed that improved food security was a key development priority for Lesotho, one which required multi-sectoral collaboration and exceeded the scope of the existing Agricultural Sector Strategy (2003).

The policy defines food security as **availability** of sufficient and adequate food supplies to feed the population; physical, social and economic **access** to sufficient food for all people; **stability** of access and availability at all times; and effective **utilization** of safe and nutritious food. The overall goal of the NFSP is to halve the number of undernourished people in Lesotho by 2015, with the primary objective being to improve the adequacy and stability of access to food at the household level, and secondary objectives to improve the utilization of food and the adequacy and stability of food supplies at the national level.

In order to achieve these objectives the NFSP envisions a number of strategies, such as employment promotion to ensure sufficient and stable access to food; promotion of agriculture and food production; promotion of infrastructure and services to support livelihoods and promotion of public transfers and social safety nets. The NFSP also considers one of the main challenges of delivering food security at the national level to be that "increased agricultural productivity and employment will not [...] adequately address the problem of the burgeoning number of very poor and vulnerable households, a high proportion of which are unable to participate in the productive economy. This means that imaginative and cost effective safety net and social protection measures will need to be prioritised also."<sup>5</sup>

The NFSP spells out that strategies will have to take into account the different vulnerability profiles of population groups. It groups households into four categories: (1) extremely poor; 2) chronically vulnerable to poverty and food insecurity; 3) vulnerable to transitory food insecurity; and 4) not usually vulnerable to food insecurity. While the first category will depend on public and private transfers, the second category is considered to be an economically productive one requiring interventions supporting food production, employment

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<sup>5</sup> Government of Lesotho, 2005.

and trade. Category three includes households who have the capacity to generate economic surplus and employ others, whereas category four is not food insecure but an important group to target since they provide income, employment and transfers of food to the less well-off groups. Policies should focus on enabling this group to become more productive and competitive.

Despite the fact that the second population group, the “chronically vulnerable to poverty and food insecurity”, is claimed to comprise the majority of the population, the actual large-scale programmes taking up the majority of the funding of MAFS are benefiting the fourth group – which is not food insecure – arguably to benefit the other groups indirectly through employment creation and availability of food (see section 2.3). Yet these policies do not address issues around economic access to food and inputs for vulnerable groups. Findings from studies on similar programmes in other countries, as well as findings from this qualitative one, suggest that self-targeted subsidies which do not reduce financial constraints to obtain inputs presumably have a regressive effect.<sup>6</sup>

Public transfers and safety nets are mentioned in the policy and refer to free food distribution, cash transfers and/or voucher schemes either for emergency situations or the chronically vulnerable. Since MOSD had not yet been established at the time of the NFSP, and safety nets mainly consisted of emergency cash/food for assets programmes and the Old-Age Pension, it is not surprising that little reference is made to newer, large-scale social assistance programmes such as the CGP and public assistance. However, even after the larger programmes came into being, integration of the social safety nets with the NFSP never kicked off. With a more harmonized social protection sector under the MOSD, it might be possible to take up the idea of coordination and linkages as envisioned in the NFSP.

### **National Social Protection Strategy 2014/15 – 2018/19**

The National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) was launched in February 2015 and includes the roadmap for the social protection sector, led by the MOSD, to scale-up and expand social protection programmes based on a life-course approach. The NSPS is framed around four key stages in life (pregnancy and early childhood; school age and youth; working age; and old age) and two cross-cutting dimensions of shocks (disability and chronic illness; and idiosyncratic and covariant shocks). The rationale behind this approach is that a focus on life-course vulnerabilities, combined with poverty-focused targeting, will address the underlying causes of vulnerability. While the main focus of the NSPS is to scale-up and harmonize the operation of existing social assistance programmes, it also envisions expansion of social security, social care services and livelihood promotion programmes for the working age poor.

The overall objective of the NSPS is to “support those that are unable to construct a viable livelihood; to protect the assets and improve the resilience of poor and vulnerable households; and to increase the productive capacity and asset base of those households” through comprehensive, inclusive social protection programmes.

Further, the strategy aims to foster coordination of different actors, providing social protection programmes as well as building linkages with secondary, complementary programmes through the life-course approach. Inter-ministerial technical subcommittees are planned which

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<sup>6</sup> See for example: Wiggins and Brooks 2010; Jerven 2012.

would work across all life stages, with an overarching Social Protection Policy Committee overseeing the implementation of the NSPS as a whole.

The explicit linkages between social protection and agriculture in the NSPS are mentioned in relation to the strategy for the working age population. Referencing the World Bank Review of Social Safety Nets (2012), it reiterates the need for expanding employment opportunities for the poor through public works and employment guarantee schemes. Important stakeholders to partner with are the Ministry of Forestry, the MAFS and the Disaster Management Authority (DMA) to expand the range of existing public works programmes and increase labour-intensive approaches. This strategy lays out an action plan for the next four years, to first pilot and then scale up seasonal public works or employment guarantee schemes in partnership with other government ministries by 2018/19.

A stronger focus on the working poor through productive community development projects builds on MOSD's recent shift from a ministry delivering solely social assistance to focusing increasingly on social development. However, MOSD and other institutions dealing with social assistance have traditionally been associated with providing handouts to labour-constrained households. This has alienated government actors, such as MAFS, who aim to target productive farmers, and is based on the misperception that labour-constrained households hold no productive potential and thus represent infertile ground for agricultural programmes. In the context of Lesotho, a better understanding of the productive potential of labour-constrained and poor families is needed, to put in place programmes to attain food security objectives enshrined at policy level.

Having looked at the strategic objectives of the different policies underlying programme design and implementation of agriculture and social protection programmes, the following section will provide a brief overview of the main government-led programmes in both sectors.

## **2.2. Programmes**

### **2.2.1 Social protection**

In Lesotho a range of social protection programmes are currently being implemented. Some of them, such as the Child Grants Programme (CGP) and Old-Age Pension, are purely funded by the government. Targeting differs across programmes, with some applying categorical targeting, others means-testing and yet others a combination of the two. The primary target group of the MOSD consists of households which are labour-constrained and particularly vulnerable because of their age, physical condition and poverty levels, and consequently struggle to meet their basic needs. There is a shared view across stakeholders that social assistance creates dependency among beneficiaries and laziness to engage in productive activities.

While social protection normally includes a range of different interventions aimed at reducing vulnerability to risks of different groups of the population across the lifecycle, in Lesotho, the understanding of social protection across government stakeholders outside MOSD is limited to social assistance for labour-constrained households. Consequently, programmes such as the food/cash for assets *Fato Fato* programme, implemented by the Ministry of Forestry and targeting the working poor, are not considered to be social protection but seen as falling under the terminology of temporary employment schemes or environmental management

programmes. This highlights how a better understanding of what social protection is and which types of interventions it covers is needed, to highlight linkages between sectors.

### **Child Grants Programme**

The Lesotho Child Grants Programme (CGP) is an unconditional social cash transfer programme targeting poor households with children (aged 17 years and under), and currently covers 30 000 beneficiary households and 60 000 children, representing just fewer than 10 percent of children under 18 (NSPS 2015). The objective of the CGP is to improve the living standards of eligible beneficiaries so as to reduce malnutrition, improve health status and increase school enrolment. Eligible households are selected through a combination of Proxy Means Testing (PMT) and community validation, and are registered in the National Information System for Social Assistance (NISSA). The CGP provides a regular transfer, every quarter, of between Lesotho Maloti 360 and 750 to beneficiary households, which is indexed to the number of children.<sup>7</sup> Transfers are tied to the children and beneficiaries who exit the programme once the children have reached the age of 18. To ensure that households are in a better position for when the transfer ends, MOSD is currently planning livelihood promotion programmes for CGP beneficiaries to increase the income-generating potential of households and graduate them out of poverty.

The CGP started as an exclusively donor-funded pilot, mainly by the EU, but within a few years had been adopted and scaled-up by the Government of Lesotho. The CGP is run by the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) since its establishment in 2012. Prior to being turned into a ministry it had been the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) within the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW).

### **Public Assistance**

The Public Assistance programme (PA) is also operated by the MOSD and, according to a World Bank Assessment conducted in 2012, the PA at the time reached 9 500 beneficiaries. The programme provides a combination of cash transfers (Lesotho Maloti 100 / US\$ 14) and various in-kind transfers, such as medical exemptions and food packages. Beneficiaries are extremely destitute people who need to register for PA support or can be referred to MOSD by local authorities or staff from other government departments. Inclusion in the programme is assessed on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of officials. Criteria included in the considerations are: households without a regular income or an income of less than Lesotho Maloti. 150 (US\$ 21). Half of the beneficiaries at the time of the assessment were children who qualified as OVC; 47.7 percent are classified as destitute adults and 2.3 percent are disabled.

The PA is fully funded by the Government of Lesotho at an annual cost of Lesotho Maloti 13 million (US\$ 1.86 million). There has been no review or evaluation of the PA and consequently no analysis of its impact or effectiveness has been conducted. The World Bank assessment highlights some of the issues related to the lack of operational guidelines and impact assessments and the inconsistent use of eligibility criteria.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Effective from April 2013 the cash transfer has been indexed to number of children as follows: (1) Households with 1-2 children M360 (US\$ 36) quarterly; (2) Households with 3-4 children M600 (US\$ 60) quarterly; and, (3) Households with 5 and more children M750 (US\$ 75) quarterly. (OPM 2014).

<sup>8</sup> World Bank, 2012.

## Linking Food Security to Social Protection Project (LFSSP)

The LFSSP is a pilot project that was implemented by FAO-Lesotho in collaboration with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and the Rural Self-Help Development Association (RSDA), with primary funding from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID). LFSSP is one of the few initiatives that aimed to specifically assess the complementary impact of cash transfers for poor and vulnerable households with interventions aimed at increasing the household's food production through homestead gardens. The pilot was rolled out in two community councils in Leribe district (Litjotjela and Malaoaneng) and lasted six months. It provided seeds and training on homestead gardening and food preservation practices to 799 CGP-eligible households, of which half were receiving the CGP transfer and the other half were eligible but not enrolled in the programme. The objective was thus to assess whether the combination of transfers and home gardening activities had a positive impact on households' food production and consequently food security, in comparison to only receiving seeds and training without additional cash.

### Programme performance

Of the different programmes implemented by MOSD, CGP is one of the few to have undergone systematic evaluation. A recent evaluation revealed that, among other findings, the CGP managed to increase the level of expenditure on goods and services for children and has had a positive impact on children's wellbeing. Interestingly, the evaluation also revealed the positive impact of the transfers on households' ability to produce food, both through increasing the frequency of the harvest from their garden plot, as well as increasing the total production of main staples, particularly maize. The evaluation further found that this positive impact of the transfer on food production can be associated with a higher proportion of households' spending money on agricultural inputs and assets.<sup>9</sup>

Findings from the LFSSP pilot allow a more nuanced understanding of the impact of cash transfers on household food production. While the CGP evaluation revealed that the transfer alone encourages vegetable production, particularly of labour-unconstrained households, the additional support provided through the LFSSP appears to have reduced the harvests of homestead gardens for labour-unconstrained households yet it increased the harvest of labour-constrained beneficiaries. The evaluation makes the conclusion that labour-unconstrained households might initially invest the transfer in homestead gardens and later on focus more on investing in larger scale agricultural operations. Labour-constrained households on the other hand, might use the cash initially to purchase, rather than grow food, and only start producing their own vegetables after several years of CGP support and with additional inputs provided through seeds and training from LFSSP.<sup>10</sup>

These findings prove that social assistance beneficiaries do engage in agriculture and food production and that they do have potential for production and productivity improvements, contrary to existing perceptions among policymakers in MAFS. The impact evaluation also provides some important insights into the profile of CGP beneficiaries, who are generally labelled as "labour-constrained". However, the vulnerability levels according to the MOSD, which are expressed in terms of NISSA categories, relate to poverty level and not to the capacity to work. This means that CGP beneficiaries are not necessarily labour-constrained,

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<sup>9</sup> OPM, 2014.

<sup>10</sup> Dewbre et al., 2015.

but are resource-constrained and have children. Thus, while they might not be seen by policymakers as a target for achieving national food security with their individual productions, their access to food, and hence one of the dimensions of their food security, could definitely benefit from improved production at the household level through agricultural support.

In terms of implementation, the CGP seems to deliver the transfers in a less predictable way as compared to, for example, the Old Age Pension. This is something that was highlighted by the evaluation and was also reflected in the experience of the people at the village level through the focus group discussions. Furthermore, high targeting errors made in the CGP – with 52 percent relative exclusion errors and 51 percent inclusion errors<sup>11</sup> – mean that a great proportion of households receiving the transfer do not belong to the poorest groups of the population. This is problematic for several reasons, yet for the purpose of this study it does not allow an assessment of whether households receiving social assistance actually engage in agriculture and would benefit from complementary interventions in agriculture, or whether the ones who do are erroneously included in the CGP.

In terms of overall performance and impact of Lesotho's safety nets, the World Bank Review (2012) concludes that despite high total spending on transfers only a small share of it is currently benefiting the poor.<sup>12</sup> Most of the large-scale programmes (agricultural subsidies are included as a safety net in this review) benefit the non-poor, while those programmes targeting the poor are comparably small scale, reaching only 3-4 percent of the population. More coordination between social transfer programmes is needed to unlock resources that are currently spent inefficiently due to duplication of efforts, fragmented delivery systems and administrative procedures. Further, across all safety nets it is necessary to conduct rigorous evaluations, increase the predictability of transfers, improve targeting and coordination and increase the productive and promotive potential of social safety net programmes.<sup>13</sup>

### 2.2.2 Agriculture

Government-led agricultural programmes in Lesotho are currently self-targeted and appeal to commercial farmers who can afford input-intensive agricultural production at a medium to large scale. Stakeholders agreed that MAFS's main interest is to deliver services to farmers who already have greater productive potential, rather than to subsistence farmers or agricultural workers. The only programmes that target poor farmers are those co-financed by aid agencies, such as SADP (IFAD and World Bank) or the FAO resilience programme, including components on conservation agriculture, home gardening and nutrition.

Despite the concerns raised by many stakeholders that the larger agricultural programmes might exclude smallholder farmers with limited purchasing power, the programmes have not been revised or reshaped. Some stakeholders believed that for the government to prioritize pro-poor agricultural programmes, mindsets need to change towards viewing poor farmers as having an unlocked productive potential.

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<sup>11</sup> OPM, 2012.

<sup>12</sup> The study examines all programmes that transfer money or in-kind assistance to individual households in Lesotho, not necessarily with the explicit objective to reduce extreme poverty. The ten programmes reviewed are: Child Grants Programme, Public Assistance, Old Age Pension, School Feeding Programme, OVC Bursary Programme, Nutrition Support Programme, Agricultural Input Fairs, Integrated Watershed Management Public Works Programme, National Fertilizer and Input Subsidy, Tertiary Bursary Scheme (World Bank 2012).

<sup>13</sup> World Bank, 2012.

## National Fertilizer and Input Subsidy Programme

The programme has been running for several years and was initially put in place to help farmers cope with the negative impacts of drought. The programme is self-targeted, based on the assumption that those in need of subsidized inputs will access them. Apart from reducing the purchasing cost of inputs, the programme provides seeds procured from large multinationals which are more resistant to climate shocks and produce higher yields. Despite offering inputs (hybrid seeds and fertilizers) for roughly 30-50 percent of the retail cost, according to interviewed stakeholders they still remain unaffordable for the majority of poor farmers. Yet this is only an assumption made by different stakeholders as no evaluations have been commissioned to assess the coverage or impact of the programme. However, studies from other countries which assess the impacts of fertilizer subsidies reveal that poorer farmers have limited access to inputs and subsidies and that these mainly benefit wealthier groups (e.g. Jerven 2014; Mason *et al.*, 2013). A review of agricultural input subsidies programmes in sub-Saharan African countries, for example, concluded that in three out of four countries covered (Ghana, Zambia and Malawi), wealthier and more politically connected households captured a higher proportion of the overall subsidy (Ricker-Gilbert *et al.*, 2013).

The lack of explicit pro-poor targeting, combined with services that lower the financial barriers poor smallholders have in accessing inputs, leads to the unintentional exclusion of those with limited purchasing power. Stakeholders are openly aware of this issue, yet funding for the input subsidy programme is continuously renewed with an annual budget of Lesotho Maloti 100 million (approx. US\$ 8.5 million) approved for 2015/16.

## Block-farming

Block-farming is a strategy adopted by the MAFS to reactivate fallow land and increase agricultural productivity. Farmers are incentivized to join together in groups and combine contiguous fields into one block. Traditionally share-cropping used to be (and continues to be) a form of collective action and safety net for poor farmers to share labour and outputs.<sup>14</sup> However, for the government-run block-farming to benefit from economies of scale in terms of investment in inputs and operations, a minimum of 4 ha of land is necessary, which exceeds the average size of landholdings of farmers. Extension officers assist farmers in the farming operations, but require some labour input from the farmers. The outputs are shared between the farmer and the government (30/70 percent), however the ratio for the farmer was raised to 40 percent to fulfil an election promise after the new government was in place.

There are currently also different variations of block-farming in place, some more input intensive than others and some operated by private agribusinesses or associations of farmers. In either case those responsible for the cultivation of a particular block can take out loans with the Standard Lesotho Bank which are fully guaranteed by the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning against default on the loans. Stakeholders commented that the lack of transparency in overseeing the loan disbursement and repayments has led in turn to abuse of the credit guarantee provided by the government.

In theory block-farming could be a programme that assists farmers who abandoned their fields due to financial constraints to access inputs and reactivate their agricultural production.

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<sup>14</sup> Turner, 2009.

However in many cases the size of land required to form a block-farm is an obstacle for these farmers. Block-farming with government assistance seems to be unattractive for many small farmers. Many of the participants in the village focus groups, who were cultivating their fields, said they would not participate in block-farming if it was offered to them as they considered the share going to the government to be too high.

In the case of block-farming there is again a dearth of documentation, or monitoring and evaluation carried out, with development partners stressing the lack of any document stating the programme's objectives.

### **Smallholder Agricultural Development Programme (SADP)**

SADP is a six-year project that runs from 2012-2018 and is co-financed by IFAD (US\$ 10 million), the World Bank (US\$ 10 million) and the Government of Lesotho (US\$ 3.4 million). The programme was designed to fill the existing gap of agricultural programmes targeting smallholder farmers specifically, with a strong interest particularly from IFAD to include poor farmers. The programme follows the World Bank's community-driven development model and consists of four main components.

The first one is rounds of competitive grants (US\$ 30 000–100 000) farmers can compete for to invest in productive projects. These larger grants explicitly target commercial farmers who need to contribute 40 percent of the capital themselves in the form of labour or funds. The second component aims to improve market linkages between farmers and traders, and is implemented in collaboration with the Department of Marketing situated in the Ministry of Trade. The third component comprises agricultural investment plans, where communities put together proposals for productive investments which are expected to have an impact on local livelihoods and income generation. The project also aims to link conservation with productive investment by incentivizing communities to engage in (unpaid) conservation work which is expected to have a positive impact on their productive activities (e.g. stonewalls to prevent erosion of arable land). Additionally, people are trained by the programme on making business plans, putting together proposals, as well as managing their projects and funds collectively.

The programme targets two different types of groups: smallholders with commercial potential and larger commercial farmers. The first group of beneficiaries could potentially be linked up with social protection programmes targeted at the able-bodied poor. Yet the programme clearly articulates that beneficiaries of the grants for productive activities at the community level still need to contribute 20 percent of the total amount of the grant in the form of labour or capital. Thus it still targets farmers with some degree of starting capital for productive activities. The objective is to lift these farmers from subsistence into commercial farming. Despite the fact that the programme has been considered to be successful, programme staff expressed doubts that the government will continue the programme once donor funding comes to an end, due to budget constraints. The mid-term evaluation report was being produced when this study was undertaken and should be available shortly.

### **Integrated Watershed Management Programme (*Fato Fato*)**

The programme is operated by the Ministry of Forestry and employs 10 000 people per month to plant trees and carry out other environmental conservation work at the village level.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> The World Bank SSN report.

The programme is not targeted and works on a first-come, first-served basis; with the condition that only one household member can participate at a time. Despite the fact that the programme is fully funded by the government with an annual budget of Lesotho Maloti 54 495 702 (US\$ 4 million) announced for 2015/16<sup>16</sup>, there are currently no records on the type and number of beneficiaries, or evaluations of the programme's impact. The "*Fato Fato*" programme started as part of broader government response plans to soaring food and commodity prices. Yet, due to its popularity and political traction, it has managed to sustain itself and goes hand in hand with the Ministry's mandate to rehabilitate land, create employment and contribute to food security. Development partners raised their concerns with the lack of strategic thinking behind the programme, particularly the absence of explicit targeting criteria, which makes it more prone to use for political ends. Suggestions have been made to review the existing model and introduce a labour-intensive, self-targeted public works programme that provides predictable transfers, adjusted to the local minimum wage, to attract poor unskilled workers.<sup>17</sup>

### Programme performance

The absence of evaluations of the National Fertilizer and Input Subsidy Programme, as well as the government-run block-farming, makes an assessment of the programme performance and impact impossible. In fact, from talking to stakeholders, including those within MAFS, concerns were raised about the lack of information available.

Further, issues were raised about how the programmes are currently performing. In the case of the subsidized inputs it was mentioned that late arrival of inputs to the warehouses at the district level delays the start of the planting season, which then negatively affects yield. The agricultural season starts in September, yet the first batch of inputs often arrives in October and runs out quickly. The second batch sometimes does not arrive until December. Extension officers at the Agricultural Resource Centres said they provide the central offices with the number of required inputs in advance, but have no control over when these will arrive or whether the order will be complete. The delay of the inputs not only affects the timing of the agricultural activities of farmers, but also of government programmes, such as block-farming. Another issue raised at the district level was that it was impossible to assess the food security impact of the block-farming or input subsidies programmes because the destination of the produced crops is often unknown, and MAFS cannot assess whether the share kept by the farmer has an impact on household or community food security.

The lack of evaluations is also a challenge to assessing the impact of the *Fato Fato* programme implemented by the Ministry of Forestry. From talking to focus groups in both districts, it emerged that *Fato Fato* was a popular programme that provided one of the few sources of income for households. The programme, however, is unpredictable in terms of frequency and timing and people in the village are often only informed close to the start of the activities. The timing of *Fato Fato* also clashes frequently with times of high agricultural activity, meaning that farmers decide to abandon their fields to participate in *Fato Fato*. Participants in the focus group discussions said this did not impact too much on their farming activities, since they work in groups and take turns to cover for people who are engaged in *Fato Fato*.

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<sup>16</sup> Lesotho News Agency, 2015 *Forestry Ministry is hiring over 10 000 people per month*, 24 June 2015.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

On a broader scale, the fact that one of Lesotho's main challenges has been recurrent seasonal food insecurity highlights the fact that the National Food Security Policy, launched in 2005, has failed to meet its objective. Poor people are increasingly unable to produce their own food due to the lack of access to resources to cultivate their land. This increases their reliance on cash to purchase food, yet the lack of income-generating activities jeopardizes their ability to do so. Despite the lack of data on programme performance, it is evident that the most capital-intensive agricultural programmes financed fully by the government are regressive and benefit better-off farmers rather than the majority of the poor population.

### 3. Coordination

Coordination between ministries seems to be an issue that is generally considered to be challenging across stakeholders in Lesotho. Currently, at the national policy level, coordination at best happens through meetings on cross-cutting issues where different ministries convene to report on their programmes. Apart from holding these meetings, there appears to be a lack of formal procedures which could facilitate de facto coordination in a systematized way, i.e. joint planning, using standardized procedures for the delivery of services, or shared beneficiary databases. Further, these inter-ministerial meetings are not consistently attended by all relevant stakeholders, and in particular not by senior policy staff with decision-making power.

However, a number of different stakeholders agree that better coordination is desirable and would avoid duplication of efforts and maximize scarce resources. But current inter-ministerial coordination committees are headed by ministries (e.g. MAFS leads on food security; MOSD on social protection) and this, combined with the current “reporting function” of the coordination committees, creates a hierarchy where some ministries need to report to others, leading to disincentives to participate. Some stakeholders considered it problematic for ministries to have the dual role of both coordinating as well as implementing programmes. Specific coordinating bodies should be put in place with the political authority to oversee and coordinate ministries.

#### 3.1. Coordination mechanisms

Despite the fact that little de facto coordination is currently occurring in Lesotho, there are a surprising amount of coordination mechanisms in place – and there are plans for more to be implemented, particularly as part of the recently launched National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS).

##### Social protection

The NSPS envisions the establishment of political and technical inter-ministerial coordination committees which would bring together all ministries and development partners involved in social protection programmes. Development partners have been supporting the harmonization of processes and systems to facilitate better cross-sector coordination. Through the European Development Fund, the European Union and UNICEF are currently assisting MOSD in improving the National Information System for Social Assistance (NISSA) to generate a full household registry of social assistance beneficiaries. The World Bank also recently initiated a programme that specifically aims to incentivize the establishment of coordination mechanisms through a “payment by results” strategy. 80 percent of the funding is tied to disbursement-based indicators tied to policy reforms already planned by the Government of Lesotho, such as that outlined in the NSPS. The released funds can then be channelled to fund eligible expenditures, e.g. the expansion of the Child Grants Programme. The focus of the programme is to primarily increase coordination of existing social assistance programmes delivered by the MOSD (OVC bursary, CGP and public assistance) and to harmonize payments systems, delivery and targeting mechanisms.

The National Social Protection Strategy does provide MOSD with the mandate to coordinate ministries which are implementing social protection programmes. Many of those, in particular

the Old Age Pension run by the Ministry of Finance or the Ministry of Forestry's *Fato Fato* public works, started operating before the MOSD came into existence. This might have created the perception that MOSD is infringing on the existing mandate of more established ministries, and furthermore, is now in charge of overseeing the implementation of their programmes. Despite MOSD's efforts to communicate the objective of the NSPS and the benefits of increased coordination to other ministries, this perception might have caused resistance to participate in policy discussions leading to the formulation and launch of the NSPS, which now undermines their feeling of ownership of other ministries over the NSPS. In the specific case of MAFS, the lack of engagement in the initial phases of the NSPS has resulted in limited understanding among crucial stakeholders of what the NSPS entails and what role the MAFS plays in it. The strategy was only recently launched so there is still scope for changing such perceptions and of raising awareness among MAFS stakeholders, and trying to obtain their buy-in to design and collaborate on programmes together – particularly those related to the community development component.

One potential mechanism for harmonizing targeting mechanisms of different social assistance programmes is the National Information System for Social Assistance (NISSA), which contains household information for MOSD districts and generates poverty ranking through a combination of proxy means testing and community-based targeting. The new NISSA is currently being designed, and development partners in particular see the potential of NISSA to increase coordination of targeted programmes across sectors (including agriculture), using it as single household registry. DMA, for example, has already expressed interest in using NISSA for targeting disaster-affected households after an emergency. MAFS has not explicitly expressed an interest in it and the lack of targeting in agricultural programmes, as well as the perception of catering to groups of the population that are not considered to be “MOSD clientele”, highlights the need for more advocacy before instruments such as NISSA can be adopted by different actors.

## **Agriculture**

The National Food Security Policy (NFSP) spells out specifically that MAFS needs to take the lead on coordinating efforts across government actors to achieve food security objectives. To do so the NFSP designed an institutional framework at the national and district level, to guide coordination across ministries. The Food Security Policy Unit (FSPU) was going to be the overarching unit chaired by MAFS and coordinate the implementation of policy at the technical level through a Stakeholder Technical Committee (STC). At the district level, District Food Security Coordinating Committees (DFSCC) would include the same institutions involved in the Disaster Management Teams (DDTMs), which are coordinated by DMA. Despite the fact that MAFS seemed to feel strong ownership over the NFSP, the attempts to establish these coordinating committees “died in a political turf war” across ministries, according to interviewed stakeholders, probably because of a lack of shared ownership across ministries. The FSPU and the DFSCC were consequently never put in place. The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) is another example where coordination within the agricultural sector has proven to be challenging. CAADP is a regional programme initiated by the African Union within the context of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). It provides a framework for African countries to achieve economic growth and food security through the transformation of the agricultural sector. In Lesotho the MAFS provides the lead on CAADP and the compact sets the context for joint sector policy, budgetary and investment dialogue and commitments to

align, scale up and improve the quality of long-term public investment and increased leverage of private sector investment. The process of finalizing the CAADP agreement in Lesotho has been a lengthy process, which started in 2008 and ended in 2013. Since then the CAADP process has stalled completely, with stakeholders raising doubts of it ever being put into action.

### **Other coordinating bodies**

The Disaster Management Authority (DMA) is currently the main government body in charge of coordinating DRR efforts in Lesotho. DMA itself does not implement programmes, but has a coordinating function in the case of an emergency. Six working groups (Health and Nutrition; Agriculture and Food Security; Water and Sanitation; Logistics; Training; and Emergency Services) have been established, chaired each by one of DMA's Senior Economic Planners. Yet the limited number of staff to chair these working groups inhibits their effective functioning (DMA currently only has one Senior Economic Planner). Working groups are attended by representatives of NGOs, development agencies and ministries. Their main objective is to inform others of planned activities, including those aimed at preventing risk of disasters and building resilience. MOSD and MAFS both form part of the Agriculture and Food Security working group, but DMA was not able to provide concrete examples of effective collaboration or coordination between the two ministries. Apart from the limited staff to chair the working groups, DMA reported that inconsistent levels of participation in the meetings and limited resources provided for coordination present major challenges.

Despite being located under the Prime Minister's Office, and hence in a good strategic position to coordinate ministries, DMA does not have the political clout or staff to take on a central coordinating position. DMA's initial mandate was fairly narrow and focused on coordinating emergency responses. However the shift from disaster response to disaster management and resilience-building in theory requires DMA to ensure that all government programmes are resilient to disasters (e.g. infrastructure) and contribute to building resilience of people (e.g. education and livelihood promotion). This exceeds its technical and human capacity and highlights some of the operational challenges related to an increasingly popular resilience agenda, which conceptually encompasses several policy areas but in practice provides little clarity on how it can be implemented.

The Ministry of Development Planning is another actor which, by mandate, could have a stronger coordinating function, particularly in terms of monitoring the implementation of the National Social Development Plan (NSDP). Yet it is not perceived to have actively played a prominent role in bringing about coordination actors sectors. One mechanism that has been put in place, in 2013 by the Ministry is the Public Sector Investment Committee (PSIC), which appraises project concepts and proposals put forward by several ministries and assesses their financial and economic viability and sustainability, as well as technical, institutional, environmental and social aspects in accordance with set guidelines. The scale at which the PSIC has been reviewing proposals seems to be still relatively small, but is perceived by the Ministry of Development Planning as a mechanism which could increase inter-ministerial coordination.

At the district level, the District Administrator's (DA) office holds monthly meetings with the heads of departments of different ministries with the objective to inform others about their work, but also to explore collaboration. From talking to staff at the DA's office in Leribe and

Maseru, it was unclear how much collaboration or coordination actually takes place during those meetings. Similar issues seem to be encountered here, as at the coordinating committees at the national level, in terms of lack of interest to attend due to the primary “reporting function” of the meetings. A challenge for incentivizing more effective coordination and collaboration at the district level was the lack of autonomy districts have in encouraging horizontal planning, since most ministries still need to report to the centre. Despite having a coordinating function at the district level, the DA does not have the financial or political autonomy to carry out this planning. If executive local government entities are put in place through the decentralization policy, there might be more scope to do so – if aligned with decentralized structures across ministries.

### **3.2. Coordination in practice**

Despite having several formal coordination mechanisms in place at the ministerial level, the actual examples of coordination – or rather collaboration – seemed to take place outside of these formal structures and across technical, rather than policy, staff.

Within MOSD, those working at higher policy levels at the national level seemed to be unaware of any form of collaboration between the two sectors. However, at the technical level, the Director of Operations had been actively engaging with agricultural extension officers to explore potential collaboration between MOSD and MAFS for the community development projects that will be implemented at a larger scale by MOSD in the coming years. These more formal structures of collaboration that are currently envisioned, build on several experiences at the district level, where MOSD staff sought the expertise of the technical officers at the Agricultural Resource Centres for small income-generating projects.

In Maseru, for example, the MOSD district office identified the need to provide income-generating activities for CGP and PA beneficiaries to ensure the sustainability of their livelihoods after social assistance ends. Based on the initiative of a Child Welfare Officer, small projects in three villages were started up, where MOSD provided interested beneficiaries a one-off grant of 750 Rand per member, to start an income-generating activity of their choice. Several groups decided to start a poultry project and bought chickens with money provided by MOSD. Due to the lack of MOSD’s expertise in poultry management, problems were soon encountered in relation to building adequate shelter, which led to the chickens becoming sick and dying. The MOSD district office approached the Agricultural Resource Centre (ARC) directly and requested technical training for their beneficiaries. The ARC Technical Livestock Officer provided the assistance and has since been engaged in monitoring the project. The collaboration between MOSD and the ARC has been working well, but is based on the good will of a few individuals without the necessary financial and explicit political backing by the central offices, particularly by MAFS’s central office. Similar forms of collaboration exist with the Ministry of Forestry, Conservation and Range Management for beekeeping projects funded by the MOSD.

In most cases these income-generating activities remain at a small scale, but MOSD is planning to expand them through new funding provided by European Development Fund. Building explicit linkages and formal collaboration structures between MOSD and MAFS, which are backed with sufficient resources and funds on both sides, would significantly help these initiatives to scale up and increase their impact. Efforts have already been made by FAO to assist MAFS in increasing their training capacities and providing training tools to better

assist communities and organizations requiring their technical support. One example is the training of teachers and principals in over 250 schools on household gardens and nutrition, which was conducted by MAFS and the Ministry of Education and Training.

At the district level there are also more formal mechanisms for coordination, where representatives of different ministries come together to discuss their ongoing programmes and plans. On the side of MAFS there seems to be more systematized coordination between their Nutrition Department at MAFS and the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and MOSD, through the Child Protection Team. The primary function of MAFS is to deliver training on nutrition at schools and for pregnant and nursing mothers. Coordination with MOSD mainly limits itself to referring cases of vulnerable children to them; however, this happens on a case-by-case basis rather than in a systematic way. The effective formal mechanisms of coordination at the district level between MAFS and MOSD are focused on promoting nutrition among vulnerable groups, rather than agricultural activities.

The MAFS seems to have a strong training function at the district level and is invited by several actors, government, development agencies and civil society, to provide training on agriculture and livestock keeping. MAFS's current involvement in productive projects implemented by other sectors or civil society in response to their requests is limited by the availability of resources and the lack of explicit support, in terms of guidelines and tasks from the MAFS at the central level. The lack of vehicles in particular prevent technical staff from undertaking field visits on a regular basis, and limits their ability to actually engage with farmers on a longer-term basis and monitor their performance after training is delivered.

At the village level, beneficiaries of different programmes did not perceive that programme implementers coordinated service delivery. This applied to programmes delivered by the MOSD (e.g. CGP, PA and OVC bursary), as well as programmes delivered by other ministries (Old Age Pension). Coordination between interventions in both sectors only occurred in pilots that specifically aimed to harness synergies between transfers and agriculture, such as providing CGP beneficiaries with seeds and training to build keyhole gardens, or the poultry projects initiated by MOSD. In those cases, complementary interventions were extended to households that were already receiving some kind of assistance and led to a few households in the village being beneficiaries of several programmes.

There are also several donor-led initiatives in place or planned that aim to increase coordination of service delivery at the council level. UN agencies, bilateral agencies and international NGOs have piloted the model of "one-stop shops", where several government and NGO programmes deliver services on the same day in a location. Catholic Relief Services piloted their Child Health Days, and UNICEF adopted these to provide a range of services, such as HIV testing, extension services and food demonstrations for nutrition awareness. These initiatives appear to still be at a pilot stage and are funded by development partners.

Overall, the existing coordination mechanisms are currently not fulfilling their function of actively generating effective coordination and collaboration across sectors. Existing coordination in practice is taking place outside of those mechanisms in an unstructured and ad hoc way, nonetheless – highlighting the fact that actors at the technical level further down the decision-making chain see a value in working together. The question here is how this purpose in coordinating seen at lower levels can translate into more formal processes that permeate the whole institutional structure from top to bottom.

## 4. Conclusion: coherence and lessons

This section concludes with some observations from Lesotho on how linkages could be strengthened between agriculture and social protection to increase policy coherence.

**Better understanding of target population of agriculture and social protection programmes is needed to improve food and nutrition security at both national and household levels.**

As food security is both a major goal of the country's policy framework as well as an area where achievements have been lagging behind expectations, efforts should be made to evaluate the contribution of past and ongoing programmes to this regard. It seems that most of the efforts towards food security have been focusing on increasing production to ensure national food availability, thus concentrating on those farmers with commercial potential. Given that a large part of the population is considered to be "chronically vulnerable to food insecurity", their access to food in rural areas, either through self-production or seasonal work, cannot be overlooked.

In Lesotho, the fundamental challenge is that social assistance programmes currently target resource-constrained households, while agricultural services are benefiting mainly non-poor farmers. This is based in conceptual gaps between the purpose and potential target group of social protection, which inhibit synergies between policies and programmes in the two sectors. The focus on different groups of the population is based on a dominant belief across policymakers that the poor are labour-constrained and lack productive potential and should thus receive social assistance, while scarce resources for agriculture should be channelled towards farmers with commercial potential to generate greater dividends of investment.

While MOSD has traditionally focused on delivering social assistance to categorically vulnerable groups of the population, it has recently redefined its mandate to move from social assistance to social development. The NSPS is based on a life-course approach and envisions integrating programmes that address vulnerabilities across different stages in life with livelihood promotion programmes. Current social assistance programmes target people who are categorically labour-constrained, such as the elderly, OVCs and people with disabilities, while also providing CGP transfers to households with children who are poor, but who are not necessarily labour-constrained. These households would benefit from livelihood promotion programmes that would increase their ability to generate income and increase their productive potential.

The challenge is that other government actors, including MAFS, still perceive MOSD programmes as targeted at labour-constrained households who lack the necessary capacity to participate in agricultural production. Although the potential for commercial agriculture of poor households might be limited in the short-term, their involvement in agricultural programmes aiming to improve household-level production is crucial to reach the overall national objective of food security. Government-led agricultural programmes in Lesotho are currently not designed in a way to specifically improve food security of poor and vulnerable households because of their strong bias towards wealthier farmers. Among MAFS this is justified with the argument that MOSD clients do not have the productive potential and/or incentives to engage in agriculture and therefore the limited budget for agriculture should be channelled towards farmers who can maximize impact, rather than towards those who are resource-constrained.

Agricultural programmes have not explicitly targeted this group of the population, but it is expected that large commercial agriculture programmes will have a “trickle-down” effect on poverty reduction and food security through increased productivity and employment creation. The absence of evaluations on agricultural programmes makes it impossible to assess whether they have had such an impact, although high levels of unemployment and recurrent food crises in Lesotho over the last decade cast doubts on their effectiveness.

### **Coordination needs to take place in the right space and build on shared objectives.**

The main national development and sectoral policies in Lesotho place a strong emphasis on the need for inter-ministerial coordination to achieve national development objectives. The National Food Security Policy, as well as the National Social Protection Strategy, both specify the need for cross-sectoral coordination and define different inter-ministerial committees to lead on it. However, these committees were either never created or are functioning as “reporting committees” with little effective coordination taking place. This can be traced back to a lack of awareness of synergies, particularly on the part of MAFS. Among actors in the agriculture sector, there is little understanding of what social protection is and how it could potentially complement agricultural programmes to reach national food security objectives.

Inter-ministerial coordination committees that are chaired by one ministry are currently perceived as mechanisms to “control” others, rather than as a space for collaboration between equals to achieve a joint objective. Challenges related to inter-ministerial collaboration are not easily overcome and are not unique to Lesotho. However, for coordination to be more effective, it might require inter-ministerial committees to be hosted by a more high-profile political body with the necessary mandate and convening power to do so.

### **The productive potential of smallholder farmers needs to be part of the political discussions towards achieving food security and rural poverty reduction**

For a more coordinated approach between agriculture and social protection to come about in Lesotho, it is necessary to obtain political buy-in from leading figures in government. This might be difficult in a context where resources are scarce and funding would have to be reallocated from politically attractive, large-scale universal input subsidies and commercial block-farming. However, existing evidence from smaller scale donor-funded pilots could assist in demystifying the assumption that poor households lack productive potential, and provide guidance on how to implement programmes for smallholders.

Existing collaboration between staff of MOSD and MAFS at the district level further highlights the need, scope and willingness to collaborate across sectors and provide services for poor and vulnerable households in rural areas to increase their income-generating potential and food security. The bottlenecks for more linkages seem to be at the top and central levels. Thus high-profile advocacy is required to highlight first, how linkages between agriculture and social protection can contribute to achieving national food security and poverty reduction objectives; and second, how it can lead to the design of policies and programmes that will reach out to a wider group of the population and gain political traction. Examples from scaling up the Old Age Pension and the Child Grants Programme highlight how government-owned, pro-poor programmes can be politically attractive.

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## Appendix 1: List of Key Informants

Institution	Position	Name
<b>Government</b>		
Ministry of Development Planning	Principal Secretary	Mr. Leretholi Pheko
		Mrs. Liako Mofo
		Mr. Cosmos Mokone
Ministry of Forestry , Range & Soil Conservation	Director of Forestry	Mr. Elias Skaledi
	Director of Range	Mr. M. Ratšele
Ministry of Agriculture	Acting Director for Field Services	Mr. Ntitia Tuoane
	Director of Planning & Policy Analysis	Ms. Mathoriso Molumeli
		Mr. Leretholi
	Project Manager SADAP	Mr. Lebeso S. Lekholoane
Disaster Management Authority	Chief Executive Officer a.i	Ms. Matseliso Mojaki
	Senior Training Officer	Nonkosi Tshabalala
	Senior Economic Officer	
Ministry of Social Development	Director of Planning	Mr. Masasa
	Director of Operations	Mr. Refiloe Pakela
	NISSA Manager	Mr. Setlaba Phalatsi
Ministry of Local Government	Director Planning,	Me Maselemeng Mokose
<b>Civil society</b>		
Rural Self Help Development Association	M&E Officer	Lineo Lekhanya
Catholic Relief Services	Head of Programmes	Wendy-Ann Rowe
LCN	Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resource Commission Coordinator	Thato Konstabile
World Vision	Grant Manager	Albert Muraisa
RL Consultants		None Mokitimi
<b>Development Partners</b>		
World Food Programme	Deputy Country Director & Representative	Arduino Mangoni
	Vulnerability Officer	Likeleli Phoolo
GIZ	Program Manager DRDP	Mr. Armin Kloeckner
		Mrs. Lifuo Molapo
UNICEF	Chief Social Policy	Ousmane Niang
	Social Protection Consultant	Bettina Ramirez
	Social Policy Officer	Mookho Thaane
World Bank	Social Protection Consultant	Ana Ocampo
	Agricultural Division	Pedro Arlindo
<b>District Level Maseru</b>		
Agricultural Resource Centre Masianokeng	Chief Extension Officer	Ntate Mabuye
	Area Technical Officer Livestock	Mrs. Maleteka Ramashamole

	Agricultural Assistant	Mrs. Bera Lekhanya
	Area Technical Nutrition Officer	Matseko Phokojoe
MOSD District Office	Child Welfare Officer	Mrs. Lineo Lephoto
District Administrator's Office Maseru	District Administrator	Major General Samuel Makoro
<b><i>District Level Leribe</i></b>		
Agricultural District Office	District Office Manager	Mr. Makau
	District Extension Officer	Mr. Malefetsane Lepota
	District Nutrition Office	Mrs. Mangaka Letete
Agriculture Resource Centre Mohobo	Area Extension Officer	Lekhetho Tlali
MOSD District Office	Child Welfare Officer	Mrs. Mosili
	Senior Welfare Officer	Mrs. Marorisang
District Administrator's Office	District Administrator Assistant	
Village Level (Ha Tseka, Maseru; Bbeta-Bbeta, Leribe; Mahobo, Leribe)		
Chief Ha Tseka		
Chief Bbeta Bbeta		
FGD Mahobo, with beneficiaries of conservation farming		
FGD Ha Tseka, with CGP beneficiaries engaged in poultry project		
FGD Bbeta-Bbeta, with a mixed group of beneficiaries		

## Appendix 2: Framework to field matrix

**Overarching objective:** *Identify emerging experiences in strengthening coherence between agriculture and social protection policies and programmes.*

	Descriptive data	Normative interpretation	Data required/ data source
<b>Understanding the policies and programmes for agriculture and social protection</b>			
Background and history	What are the main challenges in the rural areas of the country? What are the levels of poverty, how have they changed over the last 20 years, and what is known about the trends seen? What have been the main public strategies to promote agricultural and rural development and to reduce rural poverty?	How adequate and sufficient have public programmes been compared the size of the challenge faced? What has been learned about agricultural development and social protection in the country in the last 20 or so years?	Rural poverty, food security and nutrition data / longitudinal/trends Annotated timeline of public strategies Literature/poverty data Development policy/strategy/plans statements Key informant interviews (national level)
What is the strategy for agricultural development and social protection?	For policies and programmes, what are their aims, intermediate outcomes and activities? [Set out the theory of change, or narrative summary of the logical framework, together with the key assumptions that link up the levels.]	Is the theory of change coherent? Do the means seem adequate to realize the ends envisaged? Are assumptions made reasonable? Do they assume that other programmes are successful? Do they involve high levels of risk or uncertainty?	National poverty reduction strategies / development plans Logframes Key informant interviews (national level)
What are the political and administrative conditions that apply to the policies and programmes?	How much political support does the programme have? Are there groups opposed to the programme? To what extent are goals and the means to achieve them agreed? What is the implementing agency? How broad are its functions? What technical staff does it have? How decentralized is the agency? To what extent can leaders and staff at regional and district level vary programme activities to suit local circumstances?	Does the programme have political backing commensurate with its mission? Does the implementing agency have the capacity to deliver the activities planned?	Discourse/narratives on major programmes Programme implementation manuals Capacity needs assessment Perceptions survey data Political/election statements regarding programmes Newspaper articles Discussion fora Key informant interviews
What is the nature of the task set? <i>Simple, straightforward or complex and innovative?</i>	What are the specific features of the programme: • Who: clients, targeting? • Where: geographical area? • What: delivery of services/ inputs/ payments/ knowledge, etc.? • How: which agency or agencies are involved? What active collaborations form part of the programme?	Does the programme deliver tried and tested interventions, or are there innovative and novel elements? How complex or simple is the programme? Can it be standardized, or does it require tailoring to local circumstances? How much scope do managers and field staff have to adapt the programme to local circumstances and to emerging insights? How is the programme monitored? Any scope for re-planning? [Are mistakes accepted?]	Coverage data, output (e.g. payments) data Organogram Monitoring and evaluation reports, including rosters and outputs. Programme implementation manuals Coverage maps Logframes Key informant interviews

What is the human and physical environment of the programme?	<p>What key factors in the physical and human environment affect implementation and results?          To what extent do programme managers have any influence over these factors?          How does the programme deal with changes in the environment?</p>	<p>To what extent does the programme depend on elements in the environment not under control of the agency?          How stable are key elements in the environment? What key risks arise from the environment?          Do managers and field staff have sufficient scope to react to changes in the environment?</p>	<p>Key informant interviews          Logframes (risks/assumptions), risk assessments, risk management documentation          Programme monitoring</p>
<b>Co-ordination</b>			
What coordination is seen within and between programmes?	What mechanisms are used to coordinate programmes?	How well do the forms of coordination work? Are they effective?	Key informant interviews
	Where does coordination occur? At central, regional, district or village level?		Key informant interviews (at all levels), FGDs
	How much coordination takes place? Through sharing of goals, exchange of information, joint planning, or close collaboration among field staff?		Key informant interviews
	What incentives to coordinate do staff of different agencies have at different levels?	How much scope do district and field staff have to adjust their operations without referring back to headquarters?	Key informant interviews (at all levels)
		<p>Do the benefits of coordination outweigh the costs? Or vice versa?          Are there procedures that produce little, yet cost time and money?          Are there cost-effective ways in the programmes that could be better coordinated?</p>	Key informant interviews (at all levels)
<b>Coherence across programmes</b>			
In what ways are the programmes coherent?	Do the programmes share a similar theory of change or set of beliefs about to promote development? Do they share goals?	<p>Are there potential synergies that are not being achieved?          If there are conflicts, how might programmes change to eliminate them?</p>	Key informant interviews (at all levels)
	Do the activities carried out complement or conflict with one another? Or are they largely independent of each other?		Key informant interviews (at all levels) FGDs
	Do the outcomes of one programme affect the other, either positively in creating synergies, or negatively by diminishing the results of the other programme? Or are the outcomes largely independent of one another?		Key informant interviews (at all levels) FGDs

Performance			
	Does the programme deliver the outputs expected in the field? Are clients receiving the expected services, benefits, etc. from the programme? What problems have arisen in implementation?	What accounts for any problems, delays, setbacks?	Key informant interviews (at all levels) FGDs
	Are programme outputs contributing to programme goals?	If not, then why?	Key informant interviews Programme and impact evaluations
		What does the programme consider successful?	FGDs
	What aspects of performance result from coordination with other programmes?	Could performance be improved through more coordination with other programmes?	Key informant interviews FGDs

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FAO, together with its partners, is generating evidence on the impacts of coordinated agricultural and social protection interventions and is using this to provide related policy, programming and capacity development support to governments and other actors.

