STRENGTHENING COHERENCE BETWEEN AGRICULTURE AND SOCIAL PROTECTION TO COMBAT POVERTY AND HUNGER IN AFRICA

FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS AND ACTION
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FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS AND ACTION
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### List of acronyms and abbreviations

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFIRM</td>
<td>Agriculture and Food Insecurity Risk Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIHD</td>
<td>African Institute for Health and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>APSP</td>
<td>Africa Platform for Social Protection</td>
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<tr>
<td>BRAC</td>
<td>Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAADP</td>
<td>Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCP</td>
<td>Committee on Commodity Problems</td>
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<td>CCT</td>
<td>Conditional Cash Transfer</td>
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<td>CFS</td>
<td>Committee on World Food Security</td>
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<td>CFPR-TUP</td>
<td>Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction-Targeting the Ultra Poor</td>
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<tr>
<td>CGP</td>
<td>Child Grants Programme</td>
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<td>CLP</td>
<td>CHARLS Livelihood Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>CWAC</td>
<td>Community Welfare Assistance Committee</td>
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<td>FAC</td>
<td>Future Agricultures Consortium</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</td>
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<td>FASDEP</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>FISP</td>
<td>Farm Input Subsidy Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>FPMB</td>
<td>Food Planning and Monitoring Committee</td>
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<td>FPWU</td>
<td>Food Planning and Monitoring Unit</td>
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<td>FPWG</td>
<td>Food Policy Working Group</td>
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<td>FSP</td>
<td>Food Security Pack</td>
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<td>GDRSC</td>
<td>Gender and Development Research and Studies Center</td>
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<td>GSGDA</td>
<td>Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda</td>
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<td>HABP</td>
<td>Household Asset Building Programme</td>
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<td>HLPE</td>
<td>High Level Panel of Experts</td>
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<td>HSNP</td>
<td>Hunger Safety Net Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technologies</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDS</td>
<td>Institute of Development Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>IFAD</td>
<td>International Fund for Agricultural Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>IIED</td>
<td>International Institute for Environment and Development</td>
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<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organization</td>
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<td>IPA</td>
<td>Innovation for Poverty Action</td>
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<td>LDF</td>
<td>Local Development Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>LEAP</td>
<td>Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty Programme</td>
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<td>LEWIE</td>
<td>Local Economy-Wide Impact Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>LFSP</td>
<td>Livelihoods and Food Security Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>LFSSP</td>
<td>Linking the Food Security to Social Protection Pilot</td>
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<tr>
<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAL</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock</td>
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<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goal</td>
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<td>MEA</td>
<td>Multilateral Environmental Agreements</td>
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<tr>
<td>MIDIS</td>
<td>Ministerio de Desarrollo e Inclusion Social (Ministry of Social Inclusion and Development)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MINAGRI</td>
<td>Ministerio de Agricultura y Riego (Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MIS</td>
<td>Management Information System</td>
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<td>MOFA</td>
<td>Ministry of Food and Agriculture</td>
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<td>NAIP</td>
<td>National Agricultural Investment Plan</td>
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<td>NEPAD</td>
<td>New Partnership for Africa’s Development</td>
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<td>NFPCSP</td>
<td>National Food Policy Capacity Strengthening Programme</td>
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<td>NSPS</td>
<td>National Social Protection Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>ODI</td>
<td>Overseas Development Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>OPCT</td>
<td>Older Persons Cash Transfer</td>
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<td>OVC-CT</td>
<td>Cash Transfer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAA</td>
<td>Purchase from Africans for Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>PROGESA</td>
<td>Programa de Educación, Salud y Alimentación</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRONAF</td>
<td>Programa Nacional de Fortalecimiento da Agricultura Familiar</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSNP</td>
<td>Productive Safety Net Programme</td>
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<td>PtoP</td>
<td>Protection to Production</td>
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<tr>
<td>PWP</td>
<td>Public Works Programme</td>
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<td>PwSD</td>
<td>Persons with Severe Disability</td>
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<td>REDD</td>
<td>Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation</td>
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<td>ROSCA</td>
<td>Rotating Savings and Credit Associations</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCT</td>
<td>Social Cash Transfer</td>
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<td>SKS UPP</td>
<td>Swayam Krishi Sangam Ultra Poor Programme</td>
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<td>SOFA</td>
<td>State of Food and Agriculture</td>
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<td>SSA</td>
<td>sub-Saharan Africa</td>
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<td>TOC</td>
<td>Theory of Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNCTAD</td>
<td>United Nations Conference on Trade and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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<td>US$</td>
<td>US dollars</td>
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<tr>
<td>VUP</td>
<td>Rwanda’s Vision 2020 Umarenge Programme</td>
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<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>WIAD</td>
<td>Women in in Agricultural Development</td>
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<td>WINGS</td>
<td>Women’s Income Generating Support</td>
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Agriculture and social protection are fundamentally linked in the context of rural livelihoods in Africa. Poor and food-insecure families depend primarily on agriculture and partly on non-farm income and private transfers for their livelihoods, and are the main target of social protection interventions (FAO, 2015a). When embedded within a broader rural development framework, stronger coherence between agriculture and social protection interventions can assist in improving the welfare of poor small family farmers by facilitating productive inclusion, improving risk-management capacities, and increasing agricultural productivity – all of which enable rural-based families to gradually move out of poverty and hunger (Tirivayi et al., 2013).
Introduction

THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

There is increasing recognition at the global level of the role that agriculture and social protection can jointly play in combating hunger and poverty. Efforts are also being made at the country level, in Africa and elsewhere, to bring together these two domains. However, more needs to be done. The full range of benefits to be derived from greater coherence between agriculture and social protection is not yet widely understood, nor are the means through which coherence can be promoted.

This document presents a Framework for Analysis and Action with the purpose of filling this knowledge gap. By drawing from concrete country experiences, the Framework will help to clarify the benefits of strengthening coherence between agriculture and social protection, and to identify the options available for achieving this through policy and programming.

BOX 1
DEFINING COHERENCE

What do we mean by coherence? The Framework defines coherence as “a systematic promotion of complementary and consistent policies and programmes across sectors, thereby creating synergies to combat rural poverty and food insecurity more effectively”. For example, a coherent approach to developing small family farms would combine policy interventions to boost their food production while ensuring increased access to markets, insurance, or social transfers in order to assist them in managing risks and earning income.

Coherence is a means to an end – in this case more effective poverty reduction and food security interventions – rather than an end in itself (Slater et al., 2016a). It is as much about ensuring that potentially conflicting interactions between policies and programmes are avoided and/or minimized as it is about actively exploiting complementarities and synergies between agriculture and social protection schemes (Gavrilovic et al., 2015, draft).

Coherence can be pursued horizontally across agriculture and social protection agencies and their policies, programmes and operational systems. For example, public food procurement policy can be coordinated with national school feeding policy in order to optimize positive effects on rural livelihoods, social development outcomes and nutrition. Coherence can be pursued vertically across different levels of government in order to ensure consistency between policy frameworks/objectives and their translation into programmes and effective delivery on the ground. Vertical coherence also ensures that decision-making and programme delivery is congruent among national, sub-national and community government agencies, a benefit of significant importance in the context of decentralized policy-making in Africa.

Coordination is a critical element of pursuing coherence. Although coherence may evolve as the result of fortunate chance, systematically developing coherence requires deliberate coordinated action between various stakeholders (Slater et al., 2016b).
**BACKGROUND**

Recent policy declarations at global and regional levels emphasize that agriculture and social protection together can play an important role 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. Ethiopia’s Food Security Programme directly combines productive safety nets with agricultural support delivered to small family farmers as a means of combating chronic food insecurity in rural areas. The Government of Malawi is beginning to strengthen coordination between the Farm Input Subsidy Programme (FISP) and the Public Works Programme (PWP) to promote sustainable livelihoods and household food security. Similar pursuits are being undertaken in Asian and Latin American countries, such as Bangladesh (e.g. the integrated livelihood programmes of the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC)), Brazil (e.g. the institutional procurement of food from poor small family farmers within the Programa de Aquisicao de Alimentos) and Peru (e.g. Haku Wiñay and Juntos Programmes, targeting rural households in extreme poverty) (Nehring and McKey, 2013; Veras et al., 2016).

However, the interventions that bring together agriculture and social protection are still exceptions. Case studies in seven countries – across Africa (Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho and Zambia), Asia (Bangladesh) and Latin America (Mexico and Peru) – show that coordination between agricultural and social protection policies and programmes is not always pursued at policy and local levels, even when they have similar aims and stakeholders. Key challenges to coordination arise from inadequate policy prioritization of developing small family farms, limited vision of what programmatic coherence would look like and lack of incentives, resources and capacities to engage in meaningful cross-sectoral coordination (Slater et al., 2016b).

**WHO SHOULD USE THE FRAMEWORK?**

The Framework is intended for use by all those who play an active role in improving the welfare of poor small family farmers by supporting the design and implementation of policies, programmes and advocacy activities. They include:

- Government staff involved in: i) managing the design and implementation of agricultural and social protection policies and programmes (e.g. ministries of agriculture, ministries of social welfare); ii) financing interventions (e.g. ministries of finance, parliamentary committees); and iii) supporting cross-sectoral coordination (e.g. ministries of planning, national and decentralized steering committees, sector working groups);

- Development partners that financially and/or technically support government-run agricultural and social protection policies and programmes; and
Civil society organizations (CSOs), including research organizations, non-state service providers and grassroots farmer organizations engaged in advocating and providing services to eradicate rural poverty and hunger.

**HOW TO USE THE FRAMEWORK**

Countries across Africa vary significantly with respect to economic and growth patterns, rural poverty characteristics, structure of the agricultural sector, commitment towards developing small family farms and the nature and “maturity” of their social protection programmes.

Accordingly, the Framework does not intend to prescribe how governments and other actors should strengthen coherence between agriculture and social protection, as these approaches will be context-specific. Rather, it intends to support reflection by providing concrete examples and lessons learned from experiences in other countries.

The various sections of this document are as follows:

**Section 1** describes how greater coherence between agriculture and social protection interventions can contribute to eradicating poverty and hunger.

**Section 2** identifies key challenges to collaboration between agriculture and social protection, as well as elements in the enabling environment that can assist in achieving coherence between these two domains.

**Section 3** includes some programming options for pursuing coherence between agriculture and social protection, including design, implementation and operational features that can facilitate synergies and help manage trade-offs.

Although the Framework focuses on coherence between agriculture and social protection, some of the issues discussed in Sections 2 and 3 may be relevant to achieving coherence between social protection and other domains, such as health and education, as well as between social protection and rural development in general, including off-farm employment.
SCOPE OF THE FRAMEWORK

The Framework focuses on:

→ African countries that have a high prevalence of rural poverty and hunger and where agriculture is the predominant source of livelihood for rural households. The Framework also draws lessons from experiences of countries in Asia and Latin America, as many concepts and issues are relevant – even if not fully applicable – for developing countries in Africa.

→ Rural households whose livelihoods depend on small-scale agriculture, including farming, livestock, fisheries and/or forestry. This category may include subsistence producers, more commercially oriented small family farmers and landless workers, who play an important part in the rural economy.

→ Very poor and vulnerable households living in rural areas who face labour constraints due to old age, disability, chronic illness or a high ratio of dependents to working-age adults and are therefore unable to engage in economic activities and earn livelihoods. This category of the rural population is a key target for long-term social protection interventions.

→ A wide range of agricultural instruments relevant to small family farmers, including: measures to increase productivity (e.g. improved inputs, finance and credit, irrigation, extension services); risk-management instruments (e.g. price support policies, crop/livestock insurance); measures to protect access to, and management of, natural resources (e.g. tenure security policies for land, fisheries and forests, conservation agriculture); and measures to improve market access (e.g. rural producer organizations, marketing, Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs)).

→ Social assistance instruments such as cash transfers (conditional and unconditional), school feeding schemes, food assistance, fee waivers and public works programmes.

The Framework recognizes that many of the instruments mentioned above adopt multiple and overlapping roles and functions. For example, price support measures can perform both a risk-management function (by protecting farmers from price volatility) and a productivity-enhancement function (by creating incentives for farmers to produce food). Moreover, boundaries between agriculture and social protection measures can be uncertain; in some contexts, input subsidies, crop and livestock insurance and homestead gardening can be classified as social protection efforts. In Bangladesh, for example, both agricultural and social protection agencies deliver home gardening programmes to extremely poor landless beneficiaries.

1 The latter category is relevant to the discussion of coherence for two reasons: First, the transfer of resources such as cash to these households strengthens their ability to buy food and thereby stimulate local food markets while increasing demand for agricultural goods and services. Second, we recognize that through carefully combined social protection and livelihood promotion measures, some of these households may experience enhanced agricultural capacity (FAO, 2014; Slater et al., 2014).
How the Framework Was Prepared

The Framework was developed based on:

- A literature review of the impacts of impacts of agricultural and social protection interventions on the livelihoods of small family farmers (Tirivayi et al., 2013);

- A review of literature and country case studies in Africa (Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi and Zambia), Asia (Bangladesh) and Latin America (Mexico and Peru) describing experiences in strengthening coherence between agricultural and social protection policies and programmes (Espinoza et al., 2016; Gavrilovic et al., 2015, draft; Gordillo et al., 2016; Harman, 2016a; Harman 2016b; Scott et al., 2016; Slater et al., 2016b; Slater et al., 2016c; Ulrichs et al., 2016);

- Key informant interviews with experts (for a list of interviewees please see Annex 1) including policy-makers, practitioners and researchers. These interviews gathered views on the role and benefits of coherence, as well as opinions on opportunities and barriers to pursuing and achieving coherence; and

- Policy dialogue on coherence with representatives of ministries of agriculture, social welfare and finance, regional organizations, development partners and CSOs, conducted during two regional consultative workshops.
INTRODUCTION

BOX 3
DEFINING SOCIAL PROTECTION

What do we mean by social protection? Social protection describes all initiatives, both public and private, that provide income or consumption transfers to the poor, protect the vulnerable against livelihood risks, and enhance the social status and rights of the excluded and marginalized (Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler, 2004).

Social protection comprises three broad components:

→ **social assistance**: publically provided non-contributory transfers that can be provided in kind (e.g. food) or in cash. This includes interventions such as cash transfers, school feeding, food transfers, fee waivers and public works programmes.

→ **social insurance**: contributory insurance to mitigate the effects of shocks. This includes measures such as health insurance, crop insurance, etc.

→ **labour market protection**: protection for labour, such as unemployment benefits and skills development.

While social protection in sub-Saharan Africa is primarily focused on chronically and extremely poor populations through social assistance coverage, there is an increasing recognition of the importance of social security and active labour market support for non-poor rural households that remain vulnerable to poverty, as well as those that move in and out of poverty repeatedly (FAO, 2015a). Due, in part, to support from UNICEF and the World Bank, an increasing number of countries in Africa are developing social protection systems to address the multifaceted and dynamic dimensions of poverty, food insecurity and vulnerability across the life cycle, for different sections of the population. A social protection system brings together different social protection components in a harmonized and coordinated manner for greater equity, inclusion and efficiency (Winder and Yablonski, 2012) and is therefore relevant to strengthening coordination between agriculture and social protection.

This Framework is accompanied by a **DIAGNOSTIC TOOL** for assessing the existing state of coherence within a given country and for identifying potential entry points for strengthening it.

The **DIAGNOSTIC TOOL** is largely intended for government staff working on programme planning within agriculture and social protection departments. Development partners, researchers and CSOs may also find it relevant to their work.
1. Why is coherence between agriculture and social protection important to combat poverty and hunger?

This section explains the rationale for strengthening coherence between agriculture and social protection. It describes the complementary roles that agriculture and social protection interventions can play, the impact they can have on each other and the kind of friction and counter-productive outcomes that can occur when coherence is not achieved.

1.1 RATIONALE FOR LINKING AGRICULTURE AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

In Africa, extreme poverty, hunger and malnutrition are concentrated among rural households, which depend heavily on agriculture for their livelihoods and food security. In sub-Saharan Africa more than half of the rural population is extremely poor, living on less than US $1.25 a day (FAO, 2015a), and as much as 66 percent\(^1\) of the income of poor small family farmers comes from agriculture (FAO, 2015b).

Due to the sheer size of the smallholder sector – 90 percent of all farms in Africa are small-scale – as well as the reliance of the poor on agriculture for their livelihoods and their high share of expenditure on food, agricultural development is an important pathway for tackling rural poverty and hunger, at least in the short and medium terms. Increased investment in smallholder agriculture can improve the welfare of the poor by increasing their productivity, food security and incomes. The absolute number of rural residents working in agriculture is set to rise throughout the next decades in sub-Saharan Africa, thereby making smallholder agricultural development the key to combating poverty and hunger (Masters et al., 2013 cited in Gollin, 2014; World Bank, 2007).

Small family farmers in developing countries are subject to risks and shocks (e.g. illness, drought, animal pests) and face difficulties in accessing markets (e.g. insurance, credit, labour), which do not always function properly and sometimes simply do not exist. As a result, poor households often adopt “low-risk”, “low-return” livelihood strategies that reduce their income-earning potential. Their production and consumption decisions are highly interdependent, in the sense

\(^1\) This is based on data for Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda
that risks and challenges faced in their income-generating activities affect their consumption decisions. This means that they face decisions such as disinvesting in education and health in order to spend more money on food or more time producing food, producing staple crops versus cash crops, sending children to work instead of to school etc. This in turn often traps them in cycles of poverty and vulnerability to future risks (Dorward et al., 2006).

Coordinated agricultural and social protection policies and programmes can support these households in breaking out of the cycle of disadvantage and preventing the transmission of poverty across generations. Social protection can provide liquidity and certainty for poor small family farmers, allowing them to invest in agriculture, re-allocate 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. On the other hand, agricultural interventions can also promote growth in the productivity of small family farmers, by addressing structural constraints that limit access to land and water resources, inputs, financial services, advisory services and markets.

When social protection measures lead to increased demand for food and other goods and services, agricultural interventions (e.g. to support increased local food production, or to facilitate access to food markets) that support supply-side responses can promote local economic growth and mitigate inflation. In addition, agricultural growth can increase employment opportunities in the agricultural sector, as well as increasing food availability and keeping staple food prices low, with benefits for poor net food buyers. Finally, agricultural interventions can also lead to more secure livelihoods and movement out of poverty, thus reducing the need for social protection and providing governments with important cost reductions (Devereux, 2009).

Agriculture and social protection can complement and mutually reinforce each other.

**Agriculture Can**
- Improve smallholders access to natural resources, services and markets
- Increase employment opportunities, food availability, price stability
- Reduce the need for social protection

**Social Protection Can**
- Allow poor smallholders to engage in more profitable agricultural activities
- Increase demand for food and other goods and services
WHY ARE AGRICULTURE AND SOCIAL PROTECTION MORE EFFECTIVE IF THEY WORK TOGETHER?

When synergies between agriculture and social protection are promoted systematically and intentionally through policy and programming, and when they are aligned to broader rural development policies, they can achieve their shared goals of combating hunger and poverty more effectively. There are two main reasons for this:

→ First, neither agriculture nor social protection alone can address all constraints faced by poor rural households: Impact evaluations show that combined interventions can be more effective in tackling hunger and poverty than stand-alone programmes. For example, studies have shown that beneficiaries in Ethiopia with access to both the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) (a cash transfer and public works programme) and the Household Asset Building Programme (HABP) (which provides access to credit, inputs and agricultural extension) had the largest improvements in food security, better agricultural technologies and higher participation in non-farm business enterprises compared with beneficiaries of either PSNP alone or PSNP with higher benefit levels (Gilligan et al., 2009 cited in Tirivaiy et al., 2013). Likewise, the recent impact evaluation of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) “Linking the Food Security to Social Protection” Pilot (LFSSP) in Lesotho found positive effects from combining cash from the Child Grants Programme (CGP) and home gardening support. An additional year of CGP in combination with the LFSSP achieved many food security outcomes that two years of receiving the CGP alone did not achieve (Dewbre et al., 2015).

→ Second, coherence avoids potential harm: Certain agricultural policies, though useful for increasing domestic production, may inadvertently be unfavourable to small family farmers. Investment policies such as the “Growth Corridors” initiatives in the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor in Tanzania or the Beira Growth Corridor in Mozambique – which create a geographic concentration of government investment and services to complement private sector investments in large-scale commercial agriculture – have generated substantial public debate with regard to undesirable social and poverty impacts on small family farmers (Deininger et al., 2011 cited in Gollin, 2014). Similarly, strengthening enforcement of forest conservation regulations by restricting use of forest resources may deprive forest-dependent people of a source of livelihood and even lead to their displacement (Clements et al., 2014 cited in Tirivaiy, forthcoming). Restrictions on fisheries, introduced to protect fish stocks, can produce similar effects. In South Africa, for instance, the government gradually introduced a ban on fishing to protect the abalone fish stocks, which led to a rise in unemployment and to an increase in illegal fishing (Béné et al., 2015). By the same token, some social protection interventions may also inadvertently have negative impacts on agriculture. For instance, under specific conditions, food aid can damage producers by bringing down prices in local markets (Devereux, 2009) or ill-timed public works programmes may draw participants away from working on their own farms during planting or harvesting seasons. School feeding that relies on imported staples from other countries or regions may serve to undermine local agricultural production (Bundy et al., 2009; Sabates-Wheeler and Sumburg, 2011).
1.2 IMPACTS OF AGRICULTURE AND SOCIAL PROTECTION AT THE HOUSEHOLD LEVEL

It is clear that agriculture and social protection can complement and mutually reinforce each other. This section contains evidence of the impacts of agricultural and social protection interventions on a set of household level outcomes related to combating poverty and hunger.

Successful performance of agricultural and social protection programmes is not inevitable. Similar programmes do not always have similar effects on productivity, poverty reduction and food security outcomes. The impacts of social protection and agricultural interventions are in fact conditioned by various factors, such as programme design and implementation capacities (regularity, predictability, transfer size, etc.), household characteristics and broader contextual issues (agroclimatic conditions, markets, economic development, etc.)

**SUPPORTING HOUSEHOLDS IN MAKING PRODUCTIVE INVESTMENTS**

Predictable cash transfers and well-timed public works schemes can alleviate liquidity constraints faced by poor households, thereby enabling them to make small-scale productive investments in their agricultural activities (e.g. accumulation of assets, higher expenditures on seeds, hired labour, improved crop varieties). Beneficiaries of Zambia’s Social Cash Transfer (SCT) Programme increased the amount of land dedicated to crop production by 36 percent and expenditure on agricultural inputs more than doubled. Together, the increase in land worked and the increase in inputs led to a 36 percent increase in the value of the harvest during the rainy season of 2012, which was mainly sold on local markets (Daidone et al., 2014).

Agricultural interventions, on the other hand, can provide households with new technology (e.g. low-cost farming equipment, fertilizers), infrastructure (e.g. rural roads, irrigation) and information (e.g. farmer field schools, technical advice) that increase the sustainability of such investments over the long term.

Positive effects of social protection interventions on productive investment are not guaranteed, however, as the poorest small family farmers often face binding constraints to accessing working capital and land. For the Cash Transfer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC-CT) in Kenya, Asfaw et al., (2014) found “very little impact of the programme on direct indicators of crop production”. The authors hypothesized that one possible explanation for this is that beneficiaries had limited access to land.

This highlights that social protection alone is unlikely to be able to overcome structural factors that contribute to poverty and vulnerability.
STRENGTHENING RISK MANAGEMENT AND RESILIENCE

Predictable and regular social transfers can safeguard people’s welfare and productive assets and assist them in better managing consumption and income shocks, thereby enabling their engagement in higher-risk – but also more profitable – livelihood activities. For example, greater certainty can encourage poor households to adopt new agricultural technologies, such as the cultivation of higher-yield crops or investment in livestock rearing. The latter also functions as a type of safety net for households when they are faced with shocks.

Some agricultural interventions can also have an indirect “insurance effect”, somewhat similar to the insurance effect of long-term and predictable social protection interventions. For example, guaranteeing tenure security over land and the management of common natural resources (e.g. pastureland, water, forests, fisheries) and/or insuring against potential crop losses (e.g. irrigation, crop insurance) can lead to increased investments in high-return activities. Land reform interventions in Viet Nam secured land rights, and thus enhanced certainty, for small family farmers, leading to an increase in land-related investments such as soil conservation structures and land for long-term crops (Do and Iyer, 2008 cited in Tirivayi et al., 2013). Forest tenure security that guarantees access rights to forest-dependent people is among the key drivers of sustainable forest conservation practices adopted by these communities (Duchelle et al., 2014 cited in Tirivayi and Rodriguez, forthcoming). While the poorest populations have limited access to crop and livestock insurance, governments in Africa are increasingly experimenting with pilot weather insurance schemes. Examples include weather insurance pilot schemes in Malawi, and subsidized livestock insurance schemes for poor pastoralists in Kenya and Senegal.

Social protection can help prevent households from adopting deleterious risk-coping strategies such as selling of assets (e.g. selling ploughs or fishing equipment to buy food), reducing food consumption, resorting to low-paid casual labour or removing children from school to send them to work. These coping strategies may address short-term needs but at the cost of undermining livelihood sustainability in the longer term. Evaluation of the one-year safety net pilot, “Atención a Crisis,” in Nicaragua, which was implemented in the aftermath of a severe drought in 2005, shows that the combined effects of a productive investment grant and training helped to protect beneficiaries against the negative impact of drought shocks. At average levels of shock, households that were eligible for the productive investment grant had, on average, 8 percent higher consumption than control households (Macours et al., 2012 cited in Veras et al., 2016). Among other things, the results indicate that the complementary interventions helped shift household income portfolios towards more diversification. Agricultural advisory and extension services regarding sustainable management of natural resources (fish stocks and forest reserves), soil and water conservation practices, forestry and agroforestry, small-scale irrigation schemes and climate-sensitive plant breeding are important measures that build resilience of small family farmers to environmental risks, particularly those arising from climate change.

Finally, macrolevel agricultural measures can also play precautionary risk-reduction functions. Existing literature on the linkages between agriculture and social protection has largely overlooked universally targeted price support and stabilization policies; however, these measures can have important effects on reducing poverty and hunger among smallholders. For example, although price support policies for food producers are quite rare in Africa, they can stimulate production by reducing price fluctuations and minimizing economic risks for farmers (HLPE Report, 2012).
The ability to obtain fair prices for their commodities can incentivize farmers to produce food. Likewise, price stabilization policy measures (price controls and general food subsidies, buffer stocks or emergency food reserves) are critical safety nets for poor food consumers, protecting them from high and volatile food prices. However, trade-offs need to be considered and managed; for example, while low prices of staple foods assist poor net food buyers, they can also deter net food sellers from producing such crops, potentially undermining the effects of productivity-enhancing interventions.

Ensuring consistency and addressing trade-offs between these policies is an important challenge for policy-makers. This is discussed further in Chapter 3.

**INTENSIFYING AND INCREASING THE EFFICIENCY OF LABOUR ALLOCATED TO ON-FARM ACTIVITIES**

Social protection can allow beneficiaries to shift their allocation of labour to what they perceive as more favourable options. Impact evaluations of government-run cash transfer programmes in sub-Saharan Africa\(^2\) report that most of the programmes allowed adults in beneficiary households to move away from casual agricultural wage labour (generally considered a job of “last resort”). This was seen as a positive change. In many cases, household members shifted to on-farm activities and non-farm businesses and/or hired labour to work on their own farms (FAO, 2014; Barca et al., 2015). In Bangladesh, the evaluation of Phase 1 of “Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction Targeting the Ultra Poor (CFPR-TUP)” revealed that this integrated livelihood support programme had positive impacts on the intensity of agricultural self-employment and led to a decrease in more precarious forms of employment, such as begging or housemaid work (Das and Misha, 2010 cited in Veras et al., 2016). However, data indicate that for most households these improvements were not sustained after the programme ended, which raises the question of whether a one-off intervention is sufficient to alleviate ultra-poverty across the board, or if more frequent and sustained support could have longer-term impacts.

Unless adequately coordinated, the demands placed on beneficiaries of agricultural and social protection interventions may be incompatible.

In Mexico, for example, rural beneficiaries of the “Programa de Educacion, Salud y Alimentacion (PROGRESA)” conditional cash transfer found it difficult to satisfy the requirement that children be taken for health check-ups in order to receive the transfer, because of time conflicts with their agricultural work (Handa et al., 2010).

Cash transfers and school feeding programmes can improve food security and indirectly contribute to agricultural growth by producing better educated, healthier and therefore more productive workers. The costs to productivity of malnutrition are well-documented: undernutrition contributes to reduced labour output due to illness, fatigue and other health problems, as well as loss of household resources due to increased health care costs. Malnutrition also has lifelong consequences on the physical and cognitive functioning of children, thereby affecting their productivity and eventual earning potential and perpetuating the intergenerational transfer of poverty (FAO, 2013; Harper et al., 2009).

\(^2\) National cash transfer programmes in Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe were included in the review.
INCREASING HOUSEHOLD FOOD CONSUMPTION AND ACCESS TO DIVERSIFIED FOOD

There is a solid body of evidence demonstrating that agricultural and social protection measures can increase household food security; however, these approaches work in different (though complementary) ways. Social protection has both direct and indirect impacts on food security; in particular, it improves access to food by increasing quantity, quality and diversity of foods that households can purchase (Barca et al., 2015; Fiszbein et al., 2009; Handa and Davis, 2014). Where cash transfers increase households’ agricultural production, they can also improve food security by increasing the consumption of food produced on-farm. However, in some cases they can also have unintended adverse impacts. An evaluation of Ethiopia’s PSNP by Yablonski and Woldehanna (2008) found that household participation in public works led to deterioration in nutritional status, an increase in time burden, and reallocation of time away from the production of food on farm – all of which had adverse implications for child health and nutrition, underscoring the need for careful consideration and monitoring of potential risks.

Agricultural interventions can also improve the diversity of foods produced, which can contribute to better diets (e.g. through the promotion of new input technologies adopted for home gardens, fisheries and dairies). Evaluation by Escobal and Ponce (2015 cited in Veras et al., 2016) of the combined effects of the Haku Wiñay and Juntos Programmes in Peru found improvements in the quality of food intake (i.e. increased consumption of animal protein, fruits, legumes and other vegetables). When coupled with complementary social transfers and social development interventions (including water and sanitation and training on sound dietary, child care and hygiene practices), home gardens had positive effects on food consumption and nutrition (Holmes et al., 2013).

1.3 IMPACTS OF AGRICULTURE AND SOCIAL PROTECTION AT THE COMMUNITY/LOCAL ECONOMY LEVEL

Agricultural and social protection interventions can have important effects on the community and the local economy, benefiting even households that are not direct programme beneficiaries. This section contains a description of the channels through which agriculture and social protection can have positive outcomes related to combating poverty and hunger at the community and local economy level.

- Stimulate local economies
- Promote decent employment in agriculture and rural labour markets
- Contribute to natural resource management
- Support the development of social networks
- Stimulate economic diversification

POSITIVE EFFECTS ON THE LOCAL ECONOMY
STIMULATING LOCAL ECONOMIES

Social protection can increase local demand for food and other goods, and thereby stimulate markets. In Ghana, beneficiaries of the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) cash transfer programme spent approximately 80 percent of their income within the local economy. A simulation model shows that every Cedi transferred by the programme generated an additional 1.5 Cedi in income, leading to an income multiplier of 2.5. Most additional benefits of this spillover accrued to non-beneficiary households that supply the market and/or serve as retailers (Thome et al., 2014). Barrientos and Sabates-Wheeler (2007) also found evidence of significant positive local economy effects on consumption and assets of non-eligible households in PROGRESA treatment areas. Complementary agricultural programmes can then assist local small family farmers in exploiting opportunities associated with greater demand and the ability to generate a supply response can help prevent inflation within local economies (Thome et al., 2014). See Section 3 for illustrative examples.

PROMOTING DECENT EMPLOYMENT IN AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LABOUR MARKETS

Agricultural interventions can have positive effects on agricultural wages, benefiting landless farm workers and part-time workers. In Bangladesh, the construction of rural roads not only lowered transportation costs by 36 to 38 percent, it also improved men’s agricultural wages by 27 percent (Khandhar et al., 2006 cited in Tirivayi et al., 2013).

Transformative social protection measures also may improve the terms and conditions of employment for labourers – for instance, through a statutory minimum wage or legislation to prevent discrimination in the workplace and secure employment rights for women and people with disabilities (Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler, 2004; Holmes and Jones, 2013). While such improvements cannot guarantee income stability – particularly in areas where casual agricultural labour predominates – they can help to protect landless labourers from vulnerability to exploitative forms of employment while providing access to job opportunities and ensuring occupational safety and health.

However, these favourable impacts are not guaranteed. In some cases, so as to ensure that only the poorest subscribe to public works programmes, wages for these programmes are set below the minimum wage. Also, the impact of cash transfer programmes on child labour is mixed, which may be the result of divergent incentives (Estruch, 2015), and in some cases they lead to an increase in child labour (Barrientos et al., 2013). On the one hand, as in the case of the Zambia SCT programme (Daidone et al., 2014), increased income and programme messaging may be reducing child labour by increasing children's schooling among beneficiary households. On the other hand, as in the case of Malawi’s Mchinji pilot SCT programme (Covarrubias et al., 2012), beneficiary households expanded their economic activities, which may have led to more

3 The magnitude and distributional impacts of social protection programmes on local economies largely depends on the extent to which local markets are integrated with outside markets and on the elasticity of the supply response. If local demand for goods and services increases and local supply increases, there will be local economic expansion. On the other hand, without a commensurate supply response there may be inflation, which erodes the benefits to eligible households and the income spillovers to non-beneficiaries. When local economies are more integrated with outside markets, the potential inflationary impact of SCT programmes is smaller because increases in local demand can be met by outside markets instead of putting upward pressure on local prices. In these cases the benefits of increased demand for goods and services are not conveyed to local producers, spillovers do not materialize and SCT multipliers on the local economy tend to be lower. However, in most poor rural areas targeted by SCT programmes, the local economy is imperfectly integrated with outside markets, and this isolation gives rise to a potential for large multipliers, especially if there is a robust local supply response (Thome et al., 2014).
demand for child labour in farm activities or increased engagement in household chores. This is where agricultural sector interventions can come into play. Labour standards for agricultural workers, when properly enforced, can prevent forced labour and child labour (particularly in its most hazardous forms) and labour-saving technologies can be developed and applied to tasks typically performed by children.

CONTRIBUTING TO NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Synergies between agriculture and social protection are evident within the context of natural resource management. While social transfers can act as incentives for poor small family farmers to manage natural resources more sustainably, complementary agricultural interventions can build smallholders’ resilience to shocks and stresses over the long term. Environmental cash transfers (typically conditional) are increasingly being used – for example, to promote forest conservation, income generation and human capital development among poor rural communities that are dependent on forestry. Beneficiaries of the Bolsa Floresta programme in Brazil, for instance, receive quarterly transfers (on top of their benefits from the Bolsa Família programme) in exchange for conserving forests and keeping children enrolled at schools (Rosa, 2014 cited in Veras et al., 2016). Recent evaluation of the programme reveals that in protected areas benefiting from the programme there was a sharper decline in deforestation than in areas not targeted by the programme (Borner et al., 2013 cited in OECD, 2015). More traditional public works programmes are also used for natural resource management – for instance, building land bunds to prevent soil erosion.

SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL NETWORKS

Impact evaluations in Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe demonstrated that social protection can help to reduce social distance between the poorest and other community members by facilitating participation of the poorest and most vulnerable beneficiaries in contribution-based social networks such as funeral networks, faith-based groups, community-based savings groups and informal financial networks. Such mechanisms are typically out of reach for the poorest populations, who lack adequate time and financial resources to contribute to them, or who are simply excluded from such groups. Participation in these groups is important for strengthening risk management and resilience in case of shocks and for providing access to liquidity (Barca et al., 2015). Evaluation of the Women’s Income Generating Support (WINGS) in Northern Uganda (which offers basic skills training, investment grants and coaching to impoverished Ugandans, primarily women) found that encouraging beneficiaries to form groups strengthened their social interactions and support levels and led to an increase in earnings (Blattman, 2014 cited in Veras et al., 2016), due to such factors as increased informal finance opportunities, exchange of ideas and cooperative farming.

Agricultural policy also has an important role to play in supporting the development of inclusive rural institutions (e.g. community-based credit associations, farmer field schools, producer organizations) for small family farmers in order to increase their access to quality information, technology, markets and better prices, with particular attention to accessibility for the poorest and most vulnerable smallholders, including women. Social protection interventions could potentially support participation in these formal organizations but, as noted by Barca et al., (2015), transfer levels need to be sufficiently large in order for the poorest to be able to make the required contributions, which are generally larger than for the above-mentioned informal networks.
STIMULATING ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION

Agricultural growth and social protection can stimulate the development of local non-farm economies. For example, Dorward et al., (2006) estimated that each additional US dollar added to agriculture generates another 30 to 80 cents in second-round income gains elsewhere in the economy. Increases in incomes of small family farmers can lead to increased demand for non-agricultural products and services, thus stimulating production across economic sectors (Devereux et al., 2008). In addition, agricultural growth and increased production can lead to a decline in the cost of staples, allowing people to spend on other goods and services (e.g. education, health, consumables), which leads to economic development. Social transfers in combination with labour market policies and microenterprise development schemes can also facilitate a transition to a more diversified economy, thereby enabling those seeking an exit from farming to develop viable non-farm livelihoods, and protecting the welfare of those who cannot succeed as commercial farmers by smoothing their withdrawal from agriculture. Smallholder agricultural growth and broader rural development policies can also drive economic development at the country level by raising the scale and diversification of economic activities through the commercialization of farm production.

Evaluation of “Atención a Crisis” in Nicaragua found that households that participated in the productive investment grant were 13 percent more likely than control households to engage in non-agricultural self-employment. The grant also led to significant increases in both the processing of food products – such as bakery items or different types of cheese – and small-scale commercial activities – such as corner stores or roaming cloth sellers. These increases were significantly larger than those resulting only from training and the programme’s basic offering. These results indicate that complementary interventions helped to diversify household income portfolios (Macours et al., 2012 cited in Veras et al., 2016). Similarly, Blattman (2014 cited in Veras et al., 2016) reports that integrated microenterprise development support provided to WINGS beneficiaries in Northern Uganda led to a doubling in the proportion of people with non-farm businesses – from 39 percent to 80 percent.

IN A NUTSHELL

→ Agriculture and social protection can play complementary roles. Agricultural interventions can address structural supply-side constraints in the agricultural sector whereas complementary social protection interventions can help alleviate household liquidity constraints and enhance the ability to plan expenditures, invest and take risks, thus improving access to, and benefit from, agricultural interventions.

→ Emerging evidence shows that, if successfully implemented, coherent agricultural and social protection interventions can produce important benefits in tackling poverty and hunger. Benefits at household level include improving production, strengthening risk-management capacities, increasing intensity and efficiency of labour allocated on-farm and increasing food consumption and dietary diversity. Benefits at community and local economy levels include stimulating markets, developing social networks, and stimulating economic diversification. Moreover, coherence in interventions can help build and enhance resilience to a range of livelihood shocks and stressors.
### TABLE 1
**COMPLEMENTARY ROLES OF AGRICULTURE AND SOCIAL PROTECTION IN COMBATING POVERTY AND HUNGER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOMES</th>
<th>ROLE OF AGRICULTURE</th>
<th>ROLE OF SOCIAL PROTECTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household-level outcomes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support productive investments</td>
<td>Agriculture provides access to new technologies and extension services, enabling households to intensify their production and productivity.</td>
<td>Social transfers alleviate liquidity and credit constraints, enabling households to invest in agricultural activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthen risk management and resilience</td>
<td>Agricultural interventions (e.g. insurance) protect small family farmers from shocks and assist in building long-term resilience (e.g. conservation agriculture practices). Macrolevel agricultural interventions can reduce exposure to shocks (primarily economic).</td>
<td>Predictable and regular social transfers help households to manage income and consumption shocks and protect household assets, while greater certainty encourages engagement in riskier, but more profitable, livelihood strategies both within and out of agriculture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensify and increase efficiency of on-farm labour</td>
<td>Improved labour technologies can increase labour productivity.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase household food consumption</td>
<td>Agricultural interventions improve household food production and increase food availability; agricultural practices and technologies (e.g. kitchen gardens) can improve the diversity of food produced and increase efficiency of labour and inputs.</td>
<td>Social protection (i.e. transfers both in cash and in kind) can directly and indirectly increase access to more diversified and better quality food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community/local economy-level outcomes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulate local economy</td>
<td>Agricultural interventions boost local capacities to generate a supply response.</td>
<td>Social transfers can stimulate demand for locally produced food and other goods and services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote decent employment</td>
<td>Agricultural interventions can have positive effects on agricultural wages, thereby benefiting landless farm workers and part-time workers, and improving working conditions for both farmers and wage labourers.</td>
<td>Transformative social protection measures may broaden employment opportunities and also improve the terms and conditions of employment for labourers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support social network development</td>
<td>Agricultural policy can promote the development of inclusive rural institutions (e.g. community-based credit associations, farmer field schools, producer organizations).</td>
<td>Social protection can increase the participation of the poorest and most vulnerable beneficiaries in social networks, which are important sources of information and communication, mutual support and lending (e.g. food) and credit/business development support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulate economic diversification</td>
<td>Agricultural growth plays an important role in driving economic development by reducing the cost of staples, allowing consumers to invest in other goods and services and thus stimulating economic development.</td>
<td>Social transfers, in combination with labour market policies and microenterprise development schemes, can facilitate transition to a more diversified economy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


2. Strengthening the enabling environment for promoting coherence

Why is this important and what does it entail?

The previous section described the complementary roles that agriculture and social protection can play and presented evidence for a variety of positive poverty and food security outcomes at household and community levels.

Coherence can be strengthened by intervening in the enabling environment and in programme design and operations. This section identifies options for promoting a conducive and favourable environment for more coherent agricultural and social protection policies and programmes.

Coherence requires **coordinated efforts across different government agencies**; however, government agencies are not typically organized to allow for easy cross-sectoral collaboration (Slater et al., 2016b). Political, institutional and operational factors often pose barriers to effective joint action across ministries of agriculture and social protection. Some of these barriers are:

- **Different strategic approaches.** Even though they share similar goals of combating poverty and hunger, ministries may adopt different approaches – ministries of agriculture working with more commercially oriented farmers and ministries responsible for social protection working largely with the vulnerable and subsistence family farmers.

- **Organizational fragmentation.** There may be a “silo” effect as institutions and actors responsible for different sectors (i.e. agriculture and social protection) are often compartmentalized and work in isolation. When they do link with other sectors, agriculture is more inclined to work with “economic” sectors (infrastructure, trade, etc.) and social protection with “social” sectors (health, education, nutrition, etc.)

- **Limited exchange of information and lack of joint planning.**

- **Competition for resources and political leverage.**

In this section we identify and explore five aspects of the enabling environment that can contribute to overcoming these obstacles.
Aspects of the enabling environment that can contribute to coherence

For each of these aspects, we consider its relevance to coherence, as well as key challenges and actions for overcoming these challenges.

2.1 POLITICAL COMMITMENT

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT FOR COHERENCE?

High-level political commitment is critical for providing the leadership and momentum required to promote the coherence agenda (see Davis et al., 2016; Hickey 2011, 2007; and Hickey et al., 2009 for review of the relationship between politics and social protection in African countries). Technical and operational solutions are necessary but insufficient for achieving coherence.

WHAT ARE THE KEY CHALLENGES?

Opportunities for mobilizing political commitment to coherence are influenced by political context. This context includes historical factors and political economy factors – such as motivations, interests and values regarding smallholder agricultural development – as well as development priorities more broadly. For example, the views of ministries or departments of agriculture, trade and finance about the role of small family farmers in national food security and poverty reduction, as well as government attitudes towards the poor and the role of social protection, are important factors in determining the extent of political support for coherence between agriculture and social protection.

A review of agricultural policies in Kenya, Lesotho, Mexico, Peru and Zambia also indicates that ministries of agriculture in these countries are mostly focused on large-scale agriculture as opposed to subsistence production (Slater et al., 2016b; Gordillo et al., 2016). Large-scale agriculture is perceived to have a higher potential for generating growth and producing a trickle-down effect on poverty reduction, due to higher average incomes and greater ability to contribute to national food availability (Gollin, 2014). In Peru, researchers found that “when serving smallholders MINAGRI faces the challenge of choosing between small farmers most in need of assistance, or producers with more capacity” (Espinoza and Wiggins, 2016). This situation is compounded by the weak capacity of poor small family farmers to advocate for their interests in the policy realm, by political and policy bias towards urban voters and towards a wealthy, influential landholding class, and by the perceived opportunity costs involved in raising productivity among poor producers as opposed to larger farmers (Gordillo et al., 2016; Espinoza et al., 2016).

Similarly, in broad terms, many African governments remain somewhat reluctant to make long-term financial commitments to social protection, partly due to concerns that “welfare” measures...
create dependency among the poor (Davis, 2014). However, there are exceptions. Programmes in Kenya, Lesotho, Tanzania and Zambia are being considerably scaled up with domestic funding, and Botswana, Namibia and South Africa have well-established, domestically funded programmes. In countries where social protection is a rapidly growing but still relatively new part of government policy the immediate priority may be to expand coverage (as in the case of Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi or Zambia) or to strengthen coherence within the sector (addressing fragmented social protection programming) as opposed to extending coordination with other sectors (Slater and Nyukuri, 2016; Ulrichs and Mphale, 2016). These perspectives and the evolving social protection sector may mean that establishing linkages between agriculture and social protection is not considered a priority.

In addition, governments may face competing priorities for establishing linkages across sectors. Aside from agriculture and social protection, other sectors may be promoting intersectoral linkages (e.g. health and agriculture, nutrition and education). The priority sectors for linkage depend on a number of issues, including the nature of the programme at hand, the profiles of beneficiaries, and the government and development partners involved in the dialogue. In Ghana, for example, the Ministry of Agriculture appears to prioritize links with the health sector above the social protection sector; in Kenya, social protection programming focused on life cycle vulnerabilities (e.g. OVC-CT) has prioritized linkages with health, HIV/AIDS, education and nutrition sectors.

**WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT?**

High-level support for coherence can be mobilized and achieved by:

→ **Building coalitions of stakeholders to develop a shared vision and call to action:** Strategic alliances between ministries of agriculture, social welfare, finance and planning, district and local government departments, parliamentarians and non-state actors (i.e. development partners, research institutions and CSOs, including grassroots farmer organizations) can generate momentum towards coherence and increase its prominence in the policy agenda. Initial steps for building these coalitions can include organizing events such as dialogue workshops and visits to field sites that exemplify complementarities between agriculture and social protection. These can help sensitize participants on the potential benefits of collaboration and on identifying shared goals and joint activities to achieve these benefits.

→ **Generating and disseminating evidence for policy advocacy:** As shown by Davis et al. (2016), evidence-informed advocacy on the role and benefits of coherence in food security and poverty reduction can be useful in garnering support and establishing a common understanding of key issues among diverse stakeholders. Pilot-testing innovative approaches and generating evidence about them can sensitize and encourage ministries of agriculture to examine their role in supporting smallholder agricultural development to reduce poverty and strengthen food security, while also deepening understanding among actors in the agricultural and social protection domains of the productive potential of small family farmers and the role of social protection in unleashing this potential (see Box 4). Since testing new ideas may be risky for governments with very limited funds, development partners must play a role in funding trials and related evaluations. The knowledge generated can be disseminated through coordination platforms such as national social protection committees, rural development and food security fora, and communication tools such as policy briefs, radio, national television, videos, the press and social media.
→ **Identifying leaders and policy champions:** Effective leadership is an important driver of coalition-building as it marshals government actors to support coherence and ensures that policy and institutional reforms are politically feasible and sustainable and able to endure political and regime changes. This involves identifying well-informed and connected policy champions who can advocate for these issues at the highest levels and facilitate the development of coalitions and strategic alliances. For example, in Peru, a multi-sectoral policy approach to fighting malnutrition was heavily promoted by former president Alan Garcia (Mejija Acosta and Haddad, 2014).

→ **Identifying and seizing policy “windows of opportunity”:** Processes of updating and/or re-designing policies related to social protection, rural development, food security and agriculture can be used to place coherence on the policy agenda. In Lesotho, for example, the recent launch of the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) provides an opportunity to advocate for and develop more inclusive livelihood programming for the working-age poor in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security.

→ **Leveraging regional and global commitments:** Continental and global-level political commitments made by member states of the African Union (such as the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods) present important political leverage for national stakeholders seeking to place coherence on the political and policy agenda. Likewise, to build resilience in forest-dependent communities, stakeholders can leverage existing global initiatives, such as climate change funds, the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) programme, and integrated conservation and development projects, to promote synergies between social protection and climate change mitigation and forest conservation policies (Tirivayi and Rodriguez, forthcoming).

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**Box 4**

**GENERATING EVIDENCE ON THE IMPACTS OF CASH TRANSFERS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA**

In response to the growing number of social protection programmes in sub-Saharan Africa and the concern among policy-makers that these programmes create a disincentive to work, FAO and UNICEF – with the financial support of the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development and the European Union – collaborated on the “From Protection to Production” (PtoP) project. Together with the governments of Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe, the PtoP project evaluated the productive impacts of cash transfer programmes at household, community and local economy levels.

These impact evaluations contributed to changing the national policy narrative around social protection, increasing interest and buy-in from top levels of the government. By broadening the audience beyond the social welfare sector to ministries of finance and planning and presidencies, the PtoP project increased credibility for the cash transfer programmes and for an emerging social protection sector. For instance, in his national budget speech in April 2014, the President of Ghana justified continued support to social protection programmes by referring to the results of the PtoP study on the local economy impacts of cash transfers (FAO, 2015a; Davis et al., 2016).
2.2 POLICY ARCHITECTURE

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT FOR COHERENCE?

Policy architecture that defines the joint role played by agriculture and social protection in moving people out of poverty and hunger can provide the strategic vision and guidance necessary to translate political commitments for coherence into action.

WHAT ARE THE KEY CHALLENGES?

Ministries responsible for agriculture and social protection often have different mandates as well as potentially competing priorities, all of which contribute to fragmented policies and programmes across the two sectors. Objectives in the agricultural sector focus predominantly on increasing agricultural productivity, profits and other benefits for producers, while social protection addresses poverty and vulnerability and may not fit neatly within agricultural sector mandates (Interview, 2014). Despite some well-known exceptions (e.g. Bangladesh, Peru), social protection is generally not perceived as being productive and therefore is not included in “productive policy” frameworks. This partly explains the relatively limited experience so far in linking agriculture and social protection within national policies and programmes. Even when policy objectives do overlap, sectoral ministries may have limited incentives to coordinate if they do not view agriculture or social protection as relevant, interdependent and beneficial to their own mandates and sectoral priorities (see Box 4). In Zambia, for instance, although the social protection side seems to acknowledge the need to link with agriculture, that the agricultural sector sector does not seem to recognize its links to social protection (Harman, 2016b). A further institutional barrier to exploiting synergies between agriculture and social protection lies in the designation of different ministries to “economic” or “social” sectors – agriculture being in the former and social protection in the latter. These designations lead the ministries to work within siloes and not across different domains.

Another factor limiting linkages between agriculture and social protection is related to the timing of policy development and revisions. In most of the countries included in the case studies (Slater et al., 2016b), with the possible exception of Peru, existing agriculture policies were conceived before social protection policies and so do not take account of them. This was often because at the time of agricultural policy formulation social protection was just emerging onto the national policy agenda and so more focus was placed on incorporating agricultural issues into social protection policies than vice versa. Ideally, future sectoral policies will build iteratively on previous linkages.

Numerous actors are also involved in agriculture and social protection policy-making, which makes these processes complex; discussions about priorities and policy trade-offs can be long and difficult to resolve, leaving considerable scope for inconsistent and contradictory policy-making and outcomes (Gordillo et al., 2016; Wiggins et al., 2013).

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4 Although the latest declared agricultural strategy dates from late 2014, these strategies stem from ideas about agricultural development that came well before Peru developed a large, integral family of social protection policies from the early 2000s onwards.
WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT?

Coherence between agriculture and social protection can be supported through high-level policies within national development strategies and plans and sectoral policy frameworks. Different stakeholders – including the government, development partners, rural institutions and CSOs – can engage in policy dialogue to consolidate policy narratives and define common goals, sectoral objectives, priorities and roles and responsibilities. Possible entry points include:

- **Using existing national food security and nutrition and agricultural policy processes to place coherence on the policy agenda**: In Mali, for example, a common intervention framework under the leadership of the Food Security Commission guides the transition from emergency safety nets to smallholder development and food security (Interview, 2014). Likewise, regional and national policy processes such as CAADP, and the preparation of National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIPs) are possible avenues to initiate high-level discussions on the role of coordination between agriculture and social protection in achieving planned results. Higher visibility for coherence can also be integrated into the CAADP roadmap. This approach is currently being promoted by NEPAD’s Agriculture and Food Insecurity Risk Management (AFIRM) Project in nine African countries: Cameroon, Cape Verde, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Liberia, Mozambique, Niger, Senegal and Uganda. However, as pointed out by Slater et. al. (2016b) it is probably less about the form that these cross-cutting strategies take, and more the substance in terms of additional funds, staff and high-level political support that counts. Brazil’s Zero Hunger initiative is an outstanding example of a cross-sectoral initiative backed by strong political support plus additional staffing and financial resources.

- **Using dialogue processes around national social protection strategies and policies**: These dialogue processes can involve ministries of agriculture in social protection policy discussions, in particular when these policies adopt a systems approach to social protection. Through these processes, it is possible to identify how the ministry of agriculture could contribute to addressing structural constraints in the sector in order to achieve a set of common food security and poverty reduction objectives (see Box 4 for details). Another entry point is through the support structures that development partners are providing for “harmonizing” social protection programmes (e.g. support from the World Bank for the Kenya National Safety Net Programme, and the National Social Support Programme in Malawi).

As the specific policy entry points differ across countries, actors should identify which processes and frameworks are most relevant and feasible for engagement within their own contexts. For example, in Kenya, at the national level, the Ending Drought Emergencies framework is a possible entry point for articulating the coherence agenda, whereas in Zambia, the National Social Protection Policy is a feasible entry point.
Section 2. Strengthening the enabling environment for promoting coherence

Box 5
Placing Coherence on the Policy Agendas: Findings from Country Case Studies

Evidence of links in agricultural policies:

Sectoral policies have complementary elements, but also diverge in some respects, with important variations between countries. National agricultural policies in Bangladesh and Zambia and the Ghana Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy II (FASDEP II) 2014-2017 make no specific mention of linkages; however, their policy objectives demonstrate overlaps with social protection – in particular, priorities around food security and nutrition, emergency preparedness and improving incomes and food and nutrition security for poor and disadvantaged farmers. In Ghana, for example, social protection was a relatively new and unfamiliar domain when the policy was prepared, which partly explains why the policy lacks explicit reference to it. In contrast, the Agriculture Sector Development Strategy (2009-2020) in Kenya and the Agricultural Policy in Lesotho pursue different objectives and are focused more on developing commercially oriented agriculture, maximization of profits and sector contribution to GDP, which are driven primarily by large-scale farmers. The extent to which their flagship activities target poor small family farmers receiving social protection is likely to be limited, which raises questions as to whether coherence can be achieved under the current set-up and how it can be promoted through programming in these contexts. Mexico shows a similarly strong priority in agricultural policy to working with commercial farmers and relatively well-endowed smallholdings, rather than with more marginal smallholdings. All the aforementioned examples prioritize the requirements of poor and vulnerable smallholder producers in their programming (in practice, however, agricultural programmes such as the FISP in Zambia or Block Farming in Ghana tend to focus on more viable producers).

Evidence of links in social protection policies:

Synergies with agriculture appear to be better articulated within social protection policies. Ghana’s draft NSPS makes explicit reference to agriculture under its “livelihood promotion” pillar, and commits to facilitating access of LEAP beneficiaries to a range of complementary programmes, including agricultural extension and fertilizer subsidies and the home-grown school feeding programme.

In Lesotho, one objective of the 2014 NSPS is to ensure that social protection beneficiaries with productive capacities are reached through Agriculture and food security interventions that promote smallholder agriculture (e.g. input fairs, input and fertilizer subsidies, extension services, sharecropping). In order to establish an integrated set of programmes, the NSPS plans to harmonize targeting systems across sectors, for effective inclusion of social protection beneficiaries targeted for “productive” agricultural interventions.

In Zambia, the government is using its recently adopted National Social Protection Policy as a platform to guide discussions around more explicit integration of agriculture into social protection strategies in order to strengthen the livelihoods of poor rural populations. This includes policy discussions about potential coherence between the national SCT Programme and farm input subsidies.

Source: Slater, et al., 2016b; Gordillo et al., 2016
2.3 INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES FOR COORDINATION

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT FOR COHERENCE?

Institutional capacities for coordination refers to suitability of coordination mechanisms, effectiveness of procedures and adequacy of resources (e.g. staff, financial). Coordination mechanisms can facilitate collaboration across different agencies and also within agencies, as well as across different programmes, ensuring that policy and programme formulation is harmonized and aligned, and interventions are well-implemented. These coordination mechanisms are particularly important when agricultural and social protection interventions targeting small family farmers are implemented by different ministries – as is most often the case – and when various actors from the government, civil society and development partners are involved in these interventions. Clear working procedures can also support coordination by indicating if and how interventions should take place, and institutions – at national and subnational levels – need to have the resources to operate effectively.

WHAT ARE THE KEY CHALLENGES?

There seem to be many intersectoral coordination mechanisms related to food security, rural development and poverty reduction that could potentially support coordination between agriculture and social protection, but this does not guarantee effective coordination. In fact, an excessive number of such mechanisms can lead to fragmentation rather than improved coordination. For example, in Malawi, each of the five social protection programmes has its own coordination committee, which creates difficulties in coordinating across all of these programmes, let alone between these and other sectoral programmes (Government of Malawi, 2015). In contexts where there are many programmes, such as in Bangladesh, where there are more than 145 social protection programmes implemented across 23 agencies, it is a challenge to ensure coordination even within the social protection sector (Scott and Rahman, 2016).

In addition, existing mechanisms may not include adequate representation from agriculture and social protection sectors. In Kenya, the Ministry of Agriculture is not part of the Social Protection Secretariat and, until recently, development partners from the agricultural sectors have not fully participated in social protection fora (Slater et al., 2016c). Similarly, in Ghana, Lesotho and Malawi (Harman, 2016a; Ulrichs, 2016; Gavrilovic et al., 2015, draft) it is reported that there has been limited senior level engagement in social protection coordination mechanisms from the agricultural sector. This is partly due to limited awareness and uncertainty among civil servants, particularly at higher policy levels, about the relevance of social protection to agriculture.

In theory, when agricultural and social protection programmes are housed within the same ministry, collaboration between these interventions should be easier. For instance, in Ethiopia, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development manages both the PSNP and the HABP as part of the national Food Security Programme, which significantly improves coherence. Furthermore, there is a designated, funded, donor coordination platform and personnel, which is critical for harmonizing partner programming and ensuring alignment with the government agenda. Peru has a somewhat similar organizational set-up; the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion manages both the Juntos cash transfer programme and the Haku Wiñay livelihoods intervention
but, as noted by Espinoza et al. (2016), collaboration is problematic, suggesting that issues other than interministerial collaboration are at play.

Insufficient resources can constrain coordination even when there is willingness to collaborate. For example, in Ghana (Harman, 2016a), a lack of information-sharing and coordination between the Department of Agriculture and the District Social Welfare office that manages the LEAP programme was perceived to be the result of significant capacity constraints at the district level (i.e. there were only three staff members in the Social Welfare office) (see Section 3.5 for further discussion). Similarly, in Lesotho, Ulrichs and Mphale (2016) find that “there seems to be a lack of formal procedures which would facilitate de facto coordination in a systematised way, i.e. joint planning, using standardised procedures for the delivery of services, or shared beneficiary databases”. In Zambia, district-level coordination appeared to be stifled by focus on specific projects rather than across sectors and on cross-project synergies. For that reason there seemed to be no relationship between the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL) and the Department of Social Welfare, which is responsible for the SCT programme. When asked, key informants acknowledged that greater guidance from the national level would be helpful in clarifying the nature of specific coordination mechanisms and duties; however, as noted above, this process must not be undermined by unpredictable and inadequate funding (Harman 2016b). Moreover, at the subdistrict level, lack of access to basic operational requirements, such as transport, also restricts local-level intentions to coordinate. For instance, in Zambia, Community Development Assistants stated that lack of transport had implications for their ability to coordinate and engage with their counterparts under the MAL.

An increasing number of African countries are gradually devolving decisions around programming and resource allocation to subnational levels. On the one hand, devolution can create opportunities for collaboration across agriculture and social protection by ensuring that coherent policy and programming responses are closely adapted to local needs and specific contexts, but it can also create challenges. Across the seven country case studies (Slater et al., 2016b) the de-concentration of administration appears to allow some coordination between the two sectors, particularly where district-level coordination meetings occur, allowing sharing of knowledge between sectors. With some devolution of power, useful adjustments of programmes to local conditions can be made. On the other hand, until adequate capacities are in place at local levels the initial steps of devolution (e.g. new laws, rules, organizational structures) are unlikely to make much difference. Moreover, where powers for agricultural and social protection programmes are held at different levels, devolution can make collaboration across the sectors even more complicated (ibid). In Kenya and Peru (Slater et al., 2016c; Espinoza et al., 2016), for instance, agricultural powers are devolved to counties, whereas social protection is centralized.

WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT?

Coordination and collaboration in support of coherence can be promoted by:

- **Ensuring representation of agriculture and social protection in relevant coordination mechanisms**: existing intersectoral coordination mechanisms (e.g. food security coordination committees, social protection steering committees, rural development and poverty reduction fora) that include government and development partners can be strengthened by ensuring, as relevant, that they include adequate representation (both technical and with decision-making
power) from the agricultural and social protection domains. For instance, to coordinate efforts in combating hunger, countries such as Bangladesh (Food Planning and Monitoring Committee) and Mexico (National System for the Crusade Against Hunger) have established multi-sectoral coordination bodies that include representation from agriculture and social protection (Scott et al., 2016; Gordillo et al., 2016). Across Africa, the gradual adoption of a systems approach to social protection – focusing on the development of cross-sectoral institutional structures for coordination – presents a concrete opportunity to involve ministries of agriculture in social protection interventions. However, a phased approach will be important in some country contexts where the immediate priority is to harmonize existing social protection schemes, gradually extending coordination to other productive sectors. Evidence on the benefits of coherence between agriculture and social protection can be generated and disseminated (see Section 3.1) to stimulate interest among staff in these domains in participating in coordination mechanisms. Other possible options include supporting the sharing of experiences across countries through international workshops and study tours to countries (e.g. Brazil, Ethiopia, Mexico, Rwanda) that have progressed further in setting-up and managing coordination mechanisms conducive to collaboration between agriculture and social protection.

→ **Harmonizing coordination mechanisms:** the proliferation of programme-based coordination mechanisms and the consequent fragmentation of actions can be countered by harmonizing these mechanisms. In one area of Zambia, the Area Food Security Committee (responsible for selecting Food Security Programme beneficiaries) was the same as the Community Welfare Assistance Committee (responsible for selection of the SCT beneficiaries). According to the local Community Development Assistant responsible for the area, this was decided based on the belief that it was better to use the same structure rather than duplicate it, as they did not want to have to select an entirely new committee. This harmonization ensures that the same people are aware of which households benefit from programmes implemented through the district Department of Social Welfare and the district Department of Community Development. In this case, streamlining community-level structures to improve coordination across programmes worked well (Harman, 2016b). As part of its National Social Support Programme, Malawi also intends to harmonize implementation mechanisms of its social protection programmes. In Peru, while coordination efforts between the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (MINAGRI) and the Ministry of Social Development and Inclusion (MIDIS) at the regional level are hard to see, at the district level more interaction occurs due to the physical closeness of the staff of the ministries with their municipal counterparts, allowing frequent exchanges of information, mutual participation in local assessments, and so on (Espinoza et al., 2016).

→ **Engaging with institutions at subnational levels:** at decentralized levels, lead sector/technical officers often meet regularly under district leadership. This provides the opportunity to build collaboration (e.g. information-sharing, implementation procedures, targeting). It is important to work with these structures, as well as with implementation committees. In Ethiopia, long-term investment in the establishment of PSNP architecture has led to strengthening of institutional capacity at the devolved levels. The government is now exploring ways to harness this capacity at regional/woreda and local levels in order to scale up programme coverage (Interview, 2015). Mexico’s, *Territorios Productivos* programme aims to link clients of the *Prospera* conditional cash transfers to the very wide array – as many as 57 –
of public programmes to stimulate and support production offered by ten agencies of national, state and municipal governments. Locally based “promoters” are expected to play a key role in establishing linkages across programmes by working with groups of households to enable them to take advantage of the services and support to which they are entitled (Gordillo et al., 2016).

- **Ensuring that mechanisms at national and regional/community levels have the necessary mandates and coordination capacity:** this capacity includes a combination of political leverage, power to coordinate and adequate technical and functional capacity and incentive systems in place to effectively nudge actors towards multisectoral and normative collaboration.

- **Developing programming guidance:** staff members working at the front lines of service/programme delivery are often responsible for facilitating referrals and linkages across programmes. Given that programming to strengthen coherence between agriculture and social protection is a relatively new area, guidance/operational manuals indicating what can be done in terms of issues such as targeting and timing of interventions, grievance mechanisms, monitoring and evaluation, etc., could be developed and made available to these “frontline” users.

## 2.4 **FINANCING ARRANGEMENTS**

### WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Financing is key to establishing coherence because it helps to determine priorities, including the attention given to coordination. Challenges to coordination between departments of agriculture and social protection arise partly from particular funding arrangements and existing priorities; for example, ministries of agriculture may not be committed to smallholder development, and therefore do not prioritize funding for this group. This appears to be the case in Bangladesh, Kenya, Lesotho and Mexico, where flagship agricultural programmes and expenditures do not reach social protection beneficiaries (Slater et al., 2016a; Gordillo et al., 2016).

Scope for coordination is also undermined by potential competition for resources and in situations where a significant proportion of aid funding for social protection programmes is provided “off budget” (i.e. without strong involvement from the government or a clear link to development plans) (Hagen-Zanker and McCord, 2010). Through their financial allocation decisions (and policy dialogue), development partners have some scope for supporting coordination between agriculture and social protection. However, across the programmes assessed in the seven case study countries (four of them from sub-Saharan Africa), no evidence was found of major support by development partners to strengthen coherence between agriculture and social protection.

Lack of consistent and sustained financing is also a major constraint to coordination of programmes across sectors that secure their funding from different avenues, and potentially also from different donors. In Zambia, Harman (2016b) found that poor and erratic funding held back the performance of the FSP, which “in turn impacted upon the timely delivery of inputs as well as underperformance of the various other key components of the programme which were intended to achieve a greater overall livelihood and rural development impact (e.g. livelihood diversification,
entrepreneurship and seed and cereal bank development)” (p. 22). Another example comes from the experience of financing locally sourced foods for school feeding in Ghana. “Financing delays meant that caterers often have to purchase food on credit, which means they tend to have to buy from markets (which can include imported foodstuffs) rather than smallholders” (Harman 2016a, p. 15). A similar case was found in Malawi (Gavrilovic et al., 2015 draft) where delays in financing of the FISP constrained opportunities for establishing synergies between this and the public works programme.

WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT?

Government and development partners can create financial support for coherence by:

→ **Identifying the role of agriculture and social protection within cross-sectoral investment plans:** the role of agriculture and social protection should be identified within cross-sectoral investment frameworks (e.g. sector-wide agriculture programmes, investment plans for agriculture, investment plans for food security, nutrition and agriculture). These frameworks, which are a key to turning policy statements into action, allow different sectors to agree jointly on investment priorities and key features (e.g. target groups, geographic location, type of intervention) and to align donor financing with national priorities. Regular monitoring allows oversight of progress in achieving planned targets, including the implementation of coordinated programmes. In Bangladesh, for example, the Country Investment Plan identifies the respective roles of agriculture and social protection – among other interventions – in achieving a common set of food security objectives and is used by the government and development partners in planning related investments.

→ **Pooling funds into basket funding:** in Ethiopia, for example, funding partners agreed to use one channel of funding for both social protection and agricultural components of the Food Security Programme. The pooled funding, which is administered by the government, simplifies harmonization of planning and the delivery of activities.

→ **Creating incentives for coordination:** incremental financing, provided on condition of achieving targets related to coverage of smallholders, can be used by ministries of finance and aid agencies to create incentives for ministries of agriculture to work with small family farmers. In addition, development partners can help draw attention to coordination by providing investment support to interventions that bring together agriculture and social protection. However, as governments are gradually beginning to increase their contributions to social protection programmes, opportunities for using development partner financing to influence coordination are likely to diminish.
2.5 HUMAN CAPACITIES

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

While policy frameworks and institutional mechanisms are important for achieving coherence, they are not sufficient. Staff people responsible for implementing policies and programmes and for facilitating collaboration between institutions need to have the required skills to make these things happen.

WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT?

Using various modalities, such as in-class training, e-learning, experiential learning, on-the-job coaching, etc., technical and functional capacities can be developed by:

→ Sensitizing staff on the design and implementation of coherent agriculture and social protection: staff within ministries of agriculture might require training to gain a basic understanding of social protection and its nexus with agriculture; similarly, staff dealing with social protection may require training on agriculture and its linkages with social protection. Further training may involve reviewing different avenues for achieving coherence (e.g. adapting single interventions, combining interventions into a single programme, coordinating and aligning different policies and programmes), as well as programme design (e.g. size of transfer, targeting) and operational and implementation issues (e.g. predictability of transfer, single registry) (for more details, see issues covered in Section 3).

→ Developing capacities to generate and exchange evidence: where necessary, the capacities of staff working in universities and research institutions to evaluate the impacts of complementary agricultural and social protection interventions using quantitative and qualitative techniques should be developed. This will help in understanding what works and what does not work so well and in improving the design of interventions.
Political commitment is important for providing the leadership and momentum required to push forward the coherence agenda. Political commitment can be mobilized by generating and disseminating evidence on the value-added of coherence between agriculture and social protection, building coalitions of support, identifying policy champions and windows of opportunity and leveraging regional and global commitments.

A policy architecture that recognizes the complementary roles of agriculture and social protection can provide the strategic vision and guidance necessary to translate political commitments for coherence into action. Possible entry points for instilling this vision include policy design and/or revision processes related to food security, rural and agricultural development, poverty reduction and social protection.

Institutional arrangements for coordination can facilitate collaboration across different agencies. Existing coordination mechanisms related to food security, social protection, agriculture and rural development can be strengthened by ensuring adequate representation of agricultural and social protection domains, harmonizing existing mechanisms and developing programming guidance.

Financing is key to establishing coherence between agriculture and social protection because it helps determine priorities, including the attention given to coordination. Options for making financing supportive of coordination include identifying the complementary roles of agriculture and social protection within investment frameworks related to food security, rural development and poverty reduction, using basket-funding and using incremental funding to create incentives for collaboration.

Adequate human capacities are also needed so that government staff people are able to identify potential complementarities between agricultural and social protection programmes and so that researchers are able to generate evidence on what works and what does not work so well. These skills and knowledge can be developed using a variety of approaches including in-class training, e-learning, experiential learning and on-the-job coaching.
Section 2 reviewed the key issues that affect the enabling environment for coherence. This section discusses the practical approaches and interventions that policy-makers and programme staff can adopt in order to systematically pursue coherence. It introduces both programming approaches (Section 3.1) and operational arrangements (Section 3.2) that can support coherence.

### 3.1 Approaches to Strengthen Linkages

We will now look at possible modalities for each approach, building on country experiences.

Avenues to build coherent agricultural and social protection interventions

- **Design or Adapt Standalone Interventions**
  - “Freestanding” programmes can be designed or adapted to maximize coherence between agriculture and social protection objectives. Agricultural programmes can be designed to reach small family farmers and can incorporate social protection into their designs. For example, plant breeding can prioritize crop varieties that are resistant to drought, pests and diseases; input subsidies can target poor and vulnerable farmers who struggle to afford commercial fertilizers. Social protection interventions can be designed to be coherent with the agricultural livelihoods of their beneficiaries. Kenya’s Hunger Safety Net Programme, for example, allows beneficiaries to

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5 “Interventions” here refers to policy instruments (e.g. price stabilization measures) and programmes/schemes (e.g. public works programmes).
collect transfers when and where they like and is therefore consistent with their semi-nomadic pastoralist livelihoods. Similarly, public works programmes that are timed to avoid conflicting with beneficiaries’ agricultural activities are consistent with their livelihoods. In addition, productive elements can be incorporated into the design of social protection interventions to increase and diversify their livelihood impacts. In Malawi, the Local Development Fund (LDF) PWP provides temporary employment to ultra-poor farmers during the “lean season” to help them smooth their consumption, protect their productive assets, and obtain income to access subsidized fertilizer through the FISP. In Ghana, the work activities funded through the labour-intensive PWP, such as building feeder roads, planting trees and creating water sources for livestock, help support various objectives of the agricultural strategy (Harman, 2016a).

Adapting single interventions

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Agricultural programmes can be designed to be more socially protective</strong></th>
<th><strong>EXAMPLES</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>› Plant breeding can prioritize crop varieties that are resistant to droughts, pests and diseases</td>
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<tr>
<td>› Input subsidies can be designed to better reach poor and vulnerable farmers</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Social protection interventions can be designed to be coherent with the agricultural livelihoods of their beneficiaries</strong></th>
<th><strong>EXAMPLES</strong></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>› Delivery mechanisms can be adapted around livelihoods of beneficiaries (Kenya)</td>
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<tr>
<td>› Public works programmes can be timed to avoid conflicting with beneficiaries’ agricultural activities</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Social protection interventions can incorporate productive elements to increase and diversify their livelihoods impacts</strong></th>
<th><strong>EXAMPLES</strong></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>› Higher transfer levels can allow beneficiaries to meet their consumption needs and to invest in agriculture</td>
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<td>› Implementing public works that support agriculture (Ghana)</td>
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**COMBINE MULTIPLE INTERVENTIONS**

Agricultural and social protection interventions can be combined into one programme so that targeted households participate in both agricultural and social protection interventions. For instance, within its Food Security Programme, Ethiopia combines a public works component under the PSNP with the HABP which provides agricultural support. Similarly the beneficiaries of the Karamoja Productive Assets Programme, which operates in the semi-arid region of Uganda, receive food and cash transfers in exchange for working on land/soil conservation measures, livestock watering points and reforestation. To promote livelihood diversification, beneficiaries also receive complementary training and inputs for drought-resistant crops, kitchen gardens, and fruit orchards (Tirivayi et al., forthcoming). Still within a single programme, BRAC Bangladesh’s “Challenging the Frontiers of Poverty Reduction – Targeting the Ultra Poor” (Phases 1 and 2) includes an even more comprehensive package of interventions to address the multidimensional disadvantages and vulnerabilities of poor households. These interventions include income-generating asset transfers,
business development training, enterprise management assistance, subsistence allowances, health care facilities and social support networks. Adaptations of the BRAC “graduation model” are being piloted outside of Bangladesh, including in Ethiopia, Ghana, Honduras, India, Pakistan and Peru (Veras et al., 2016). On the one hand, the advantage of these single programmes is that they are implemented by a single agency, thus reducing transaction costs associated with coordinating across sectors. On the other hand, there is the risk of a loss of specialization whereby a single agency is required to implement programmes beyond its specific area of expertise.

Different components/programmes can be provided to the same households simultaneously or sequenced over time, depending on factors including household needs, the theory of change and perceptions with regard to “double dipping” (see Section 3.2). When interventions are sequenced over time, as a household’s welfare status and productive capacity improves, the package of interventions can expand from social transfers to include a broader menu of complementary agricultural interventions to assist farmers in expanding their production and boosting their income-generation capacity. For example, Rwanda’s Vision 2020 Umurenge Programme (VUP) first provides beneficiaries with social protection support through public works and cash transfers. After accumulating capital and savings, they gain access to microfinance and complementary agricultural skills development. It is imperative that there is a clear and shared vision across different components of the programme regarding how interventions can transition households across different welfare thresholds and interventions. Depending on the mix of interventions they can be used for supporting smallholder agricultural development or for assisting households in diversifying into non-agricultural activities.

### Combining multiple interventions: examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Simultaneously</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>› Including public works and agricultural support components in a Food Security Programme (Ethiopia)</td>
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<tr>
<td>› Providing food and cash-transfers in exchange for working on land conservation (Uganda)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Sequenced over time</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tr>
<td>› expanding from social transfers to include a broader menu of complementary agricultural interventions (Rwanda)</td>
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**COORDINATE AND ALIGN MULTIPLE PROGRAMMES AND POLICIES**

Synergies between agriculture and social protection interventions can be established even when these interventions are not delivered in the same locations or targeted to the same beneficiaries. For instance, in Lesotho, agricultural and social protection interventions are being coordinated to reach the same households, but through two independent programmes. The Government of
Lesotho delivers the Child Grant Programme and FAO and partner non-governmental organizations complement this with support for kitchen gardening, which includes provision of seeds and training. Alignment involves ensuring that interventions are consistent and that, as much as possible, conflicts are addressed or avoided.

In locations where cash transfers are implemented, agricultural interventions can be delivered to smallholders who are not targeted by the cash transfer programme, in order to take advantage of the increase in local consumer demand. Examples include the ongoing efforts in several African countries to link school feeding and public procurement programmes. The intention of these programmes is to promote smallholder agricultural growth by providing producers with a guaranteed market and production support while simultaneously contributing to better education, health and nutrition outcomes among vulnerable children. The World Food Programme (WFP) and FAO’s Purchase from Africans for Africa (PAA) programme develop farmers’ productive capacities (by developing skills and strengthening farmers’ organizations) so that they are able to respond to the increased demand for food created by school feeding programmes. While farmers who benefit from local procurement may not necessarily be the poorest (who may not be able to respond to demand effectively), these measures can help “more viable” farmers, who have productive capacity but find market access difficult, in order to exploit this potential. These synergies can also be developed on a smaller scale; in Kenya’s Turkana county Oxfam provides small grants to local food traders to ensure that they can provide a supply response to the increased demand resulting from emergency cash transfers to vulnerable households following a shock (Slater et al., 2016c).

Alignment can also involve coordinating a continuum of agricultural and social protection interventions so as to expand coverage. In contexts where many individual programmes exist in the same location and are well-functioning, the challenge is to improve their harmonization and coverage. As not everyone in the community requires the same type of support, a well-coordinated continuum of agricultural and social protection interventions can be established to cater to distinct groups within poor populations. For example, while households with land and labour can be targeted with productive activities (e.g. input subsidy, agricultural extension), the poorest labour-constrained families can be linked to social protection programmes such as social cash transfers. In Malawi and Zambia, for example, current policy discussions involve the development of a twin-track targeting system to distribute FISP benefits and cash transfers to distinct groups of poor rural households.

There is also a strong case to be made for alignment between policies and programmes in order to avoid negative policy impacts. Stronger vertical alignment between higher-level policies and targeted microlevel interventions can ensure that interactions between instruments are exploited for coherence and consistency. For example, it is important to ensure that macrolevel food policies, which lower the price of staples, do not undermine farmer incentives to produce food and thereby jeopardize the effects of productivity-enhancing measures for small family farmers, such as subsidized inputs. As in the case of Mexico (Gordillo et al., 2016) that switched from a universal subsidy on tortillas to a targeted cash transfer (PROGRESA), to manage these trade-offs, governments might consider replacing untargeted food price subsidies with social transfers to very poor net food buyers to ensure their access to food while stimulating local food producers. This approach is adopted within the Public Food Distribution System in Bangladesh, which sets a guaranteed price of purchase for wheat and paddy from farmers and makes this food available for distribution through targeted social safety net programmes (Scott and Rahman, 2016).
Alignment can also be used for managing policy transitions when these are expected to have short-term negative impacts on vulnerable populations. For instance, a cash transfer could be used for helping smallholder farmers transition to different production systems (or livelihoods), following the removal of import tariffs that protect the production of staples largely produced by small family farmers.

### Coordinating and aligning multiple programmes and policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delivering agricultural interventions to smallholders that are not targeted by cash transfers</th>
<th>EXAMPLES</th>
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</table>
| › Linking school-feeding with public procurement programmes  
› Providing small grants to local food traders to match the increased demand resulting from cash transfers (*Kenya*) |

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Harmonizing existing programmes to improve their coverage</th>
<th>EXAMPLES</th>
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<tr>
<td>› Distributing input subsidy and cash transfers to distinct groups of poor rural households, depending on household profiles</td>
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<tr>
<th>Aligning to avoid negative policy impacts</th>
<th>EXAMPLES</th>
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<tr>
<td>› Setting a guaranteed price for food from farmers and making it available for distribution through social safety net programmes (<em>Bangladesh</em>)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Aligning for managing policy transitions</th>
<th>EXAMPLES</th>
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<tr>
<td>› Using cash transfer to help smallholders farmers transition to different production systems</td>
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### Table 2: Pros and Cons of Different Approaches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Design</th>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
</tr>
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| **Design or Adapt Standalone Interventions** | › Easier to administer and monitor than joint programmes delivered by different agencies.  
› The majority of countries already have national social protection and/or agricultural programmes in place that can be more easily adapted to exploit synergies.  
› Implementation may cost less than interventions that combine several instruments/schemes in one package. | › Difficult for single interventions to have sustainable impacts on productive capacities of households, who often require layered and diversified support to transform their livelihood choices and strategies.  
› Possible danger of overloading schemes with too many objectives that diverge from core priorities. |
| **Combine Multiple Interventions** | › Well-suited to extremely and chronically poor households with productive capacities who find it difficult to raise productivity levels or participate in productive activities.  
› Can address diverse sets of constraints faced by smallholders and adapt to changing needs of beneficiaries through time.  
› Can address potential duplications of programmes by harmonizing programme delivery, resulting in more inclusive coverage and efficient use of financial and human resources. | › Coordination mechanisms to ensure joint planning and design of integrated approaches are typically weak, particularly across sectors; mechanisms to allow systematic and well-timed transition of beneficiaries across programmes are also often lacking.  
› Implementation depends on the availability of complementary schemes in the same locations and logistical capacity, including at local levels, to coordinate activities within and/or across programmes.  
› Start-up costs of integrated programmes can be high (budget, resources, time), although additional impact value as compared with single schemes can outweigh this. Interventions typically require sustained political commitment to recover the initial investments the programme requires to be sustained for a sufficient period. |
| **Align Interventions** | › Effective in contexts where policy goals and target groups are diverse and can exploit economies of scale in terms of large-scale policy coverage. For example, a farm input subsidy programme can be targeted to more commercial farmers and social cash transfers to small family farmers.  
› May be relatively cheaper than integrated livelihood programmes. | › Can be administratively quite complex to design and implement effectively. Requires effective and synchronized planning and delivery systems to harmonize the timing of programmes and targeting of beneficiaries, and a robust monitoring and evaluation system. Costs in time and resources can be substantial. |

*For example, where the principal objective of cash transfers is to improve investments in children’s human capital (e.g., access to health and education), a focus on boosting agricultural productivity may take secondary importance in order to avoid potentially conflicting choices about spending.*
3.2 DESIGN AND OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS THAT CAN SUPPORT COHERENCE

This section describes some considerations of design and operational arrangements that may prove useful for improving coherence in programme or policy work. They include:

**IDENTIFYING FEASIBLE ENTRY POINTS TO ESTABLISH SYNERGIES**

Entry points will differ across countries, depending on local needs and existing operational systems. Working out a feasible approach to bringing together programmes can be informed by:

(i) mapping existing programmes and identifying gaps; and

(ii) assessing whether ongoing programmes should be revised, merged or better harmonized and coordinated.

Generally, it is best if this is done around existing interventions in the same location where there is good potential for government buy-in; however, this also depends on how well existing programmes are operating in practice and if any difficulties are encountered during roll-out (Interview, 2014).

The **DIAGNOSTIC TOOL** is useful for assessing the existing state of coherence within a country and for identifying potential entry points for strengthening it.

At the design stage, it is important for stakeholders in social protection and agriculture (as well as other sectors) to build a common understanding of the theory of change, including the objectives and how best to achieve them. Case studies (Slater et al., 2016b) reveal a typical lack of formal consideration with regard to these issues within and across programmes and sector agencies. That said, Peru’s “Include to Grow” social protection strategy articulates a clear theory of change across four programmes, with an aim to move people out of extreme poverty and gradually develop their capacity as producers with market potential (see Box 6).
framework for analysis and action from protection to production

Strengthening coherence between agriculture and social protection to combat poverty and hunger in Africa

selecting the best instrument or combination of instruments to be used

The choice of instruments or combination of instruments is informed by a number of factors; among these are the planned objectives, the nature of the issues to be addressed, national development priorities and resources available. For instance, in countries with large populations of very poor subsistence farmers, where household-level food security is a policy priority, a mix of long-term social transfers and light-touch agricultural measures (e.g. improved inputs and training for building keyhole gardens) may be sufficient to safeguard household-level food access. This approach is adopted by FAO in Lesotho within the “Linking Food Security to Social Protection” pilot programme. However, if the goal of agricultural policy is to support a shift away from subsistence farming towards commercially oriented agriculture, a more comprehensive and well-sequenced form of support will be required to encourage small-scale farmers to intensify their food production and commercialize (including measures to enhance productivity and access to markets, and eventual linkages to risk management instruments such as crop insurance). As described in Section 3.1, instruments do not necessarily need to be combined into one programme. Agricultural interventions can be designed so as to be more socially protective and social protection interventions can be designed so as to support agricultural livelihoods. While different, the interventions may in fact achieve the same objective. For instance, depending on the specific context at hand (e.g. production potential, functioning of input and output markets) household-level food security may be increased through a cash transfer or by an agricultural intervention that supports smallholder production.

Box 6
Supporting people in moving from extreme poverty to sustainable agricultural livelihoods in Peru

1. *Juntos*, a conditional cash transfer programme, is a first step towards ensuring the proper growth of children and protecting families from destitution. *Juntos* provides conditional cash transfers to encourage the use of schools and health services for children and mothers living in poverty.

2. The next step includes programmes such as *Haku Wiñay*, which aims to increase household production, improve living conditions, stimulate small rural businesses and provide financial education for poor families in areas where Juntos operates.

3. Once a family has achieved sufficient improvements in these dimensions (having exited from poverty and away from cash transfers), the next step aims to consolidate rural businesses and link them to larger markets, through programmes such as MINAGRI’s *Aliados*. This programme provides training, technical assistance and capital for rural business and community development projects; *Agrorural* also provides technical assistance and inputs to small farmers.

4. Finally, the farming household can take the final step to access formal credit and commercial services in the market.

Source: adapted from Espinoza and Wiggins, 2016
STRIVING FOR TARGETING EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

Improving targeting of agriculture and social protection interventions can be a way to promote coherence. There are two main issues to consider with regard to targeting:

→ Firstly, agriculture and social protection interventions generally target different populations: this is due to the different targeting criteria and methods used, which in turn depend on the different objectives and strategic approaches of the two types of interventions. Social protection measures typically provide welfare support to the poorest households, with few assets and often limited labour availability, or focus on households with social and/or life cycle vulnerabilities. Targeting criteria in these programmes include welfare status, dependency ratios, etc. On the other hand, agricultural interventions generally target households with existing agricultural potential (Interview, 2014) and use criteria such as land size, agro-ecological characteristics, etc. to assess this potential.

→ Secondly, in many instances, there is fragmented coverage of the population across different programmes: this can be due to disconnected targeting guidelines, lack of beneficiary lists or different lists across different programmes. In Malawi, for example, beneficiaries of the LDF PWP are provided with access to short-term seasonal work. The income earned by participating in the programme is expected to help households to survive through a lean period and to invest in agriculture by purchasing subsidized inputs (fertilizer and seeds) provided by FISP. However, the targeting criteria of the FISP are such that they do not guarantee inclusion of participants of the LDF PWP. Partly as a result of this, many LDF PWP beneficiaries do not receive the FISP voucher, and are therefore unable to use the income earned through the PWP to purchase subsidized inputs (Gavrilovic et al., 2015, draft).

Do the above-described issues interfere with achieving coherence? The answer largely depends on the goals and objectives adopted by policies and programmes; in cases where the core objectives of agriculture and social protection programmes differ substantially, common targeting criteria are not needed. However, this can create challenges for working with poor (yet commercially viable) small family farmers who do not benefit from either agricultural or social protection programmes. In Lesotho, for example, the bulk of agricultural programmes cover large-scale farmers, while social protection consists primarily of categorical benefits focused on life cycle vulnerabilities rather than livelihood promotion objectives, resulting in a large “missing middle” – the working poor. Lack of support prevents this group from transitioning away from subsistence into more commercialized production and achieving a gradual exit from poverty (Slater et al., 2016b). A similar finding was observed in Zambia (Harman, 2016b). Finally, on a practical level, different targeting criteria may result in a complex process of defining common standards to identify households for integrated livelihood support.

In cases where livelihood promotion among poor and vulnerable smallholders is a commonly adopted objective, “double dipping” (i.e. when a household participates in more than one programme) restrictions might pose challenges to coherent programming. In cases where livelihood promotion among poor and vulnerable smallholders is a commonly adopted objective, “double dipping” (i.e. when one household participates in more than one programme) restrictions might pose challenges to coherent programming.
Concerns about “double dipping” and about exclusion of eligible households are among the many motivations for setting up sector-wide, or even national, management information systems (MIS). For instance, in Kenya, Lesotho and Rwanda there is hope that programmes can be harmonized by setting up comprehensive MIS, particularly with regard to beneficiary identification and payments. Investing time and resources in the development and adoption of a harmonized approach to targeting is critical for coherence and coordination across programmes, because it can enhance programme coordination and efficiency, and ultimately poverty reduction and food security impacts. A harmonized targeting system incorporates the following elements:

→ **Synchronized targeting guidelines and eligibility criteria:** conducting a shared beneficiary identification process may reduce administrative costs through joint data collection and analysis. It is critical to provide clear guidance, including information and implementation manuals, and to sensitize local leaders and staff at the local level in order to assist them in managing targeting processes effectively.

→ **Unified or harmonized registries:** cross-sectoral programme coordination and alignment can be managed through a joint registry and/or by sharing an MIS. Single or harmonized registries link programmes within and across sectors, increasing targeting efficiency and improving monitoring of benefit coverage. In particular, a single shared registry allows programme planners to access information on potential and actual beneficiaries of various programmes, enabling referral of beneficiaries across programmes and between schemes as their circumstances change. In Brazil, for example, the Unified Registry for Social Programmes – known as *Cadastro Unico* –

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**What are “double dipping” restrictions?**

Particularly where resources are scant, there may be restrictions on beneficiaries participating in more than one programme. These restrictions may be set formally by the government, or communities may set informal restrictions on “double dipping” due to concerns about fair distribution of resources when the vast majority are deemed poor and in need of support.

Restrictions on “double dipping” can vary – they may limit simultaneous access to: i) both agricultural and social protection; or ii) more than one social transfer programme (as in Zambia) (ibid).

Despite this, there is a firm understanding among social protection sector stakeholders that when one programme includes different components that are provided cross-sectorally, such as the VUP, which has a public works component (or a direct transfer depending on whether the household is labour-constrained or not) and a training or asset component, it is fine for eligible households to access the multiple components. This understanding derives directly from the programme theory of change that underpins these more complex programmes that it is only by providing multiple interventions, simultaneously or sequentially, that productive livelihood benefits can be realized.

The concern arises when households are seen to be accessing two separate programmes with similar eligibility criteria. As indicated by key informants during research in Malawi (Fisher, Pozarny and Estruch, forthcoming) sensitization activities are needed to facilitate buy-in for “double dipping” at different levels.

* “Double dipping” refers to a targeting outcome whereby the same household receives transfers from more than one development programme. While “double dipping” has negative connotations, the same phenomenon can be more positively termed as “complementarities.”
Section 3. Opportunities to strengthen coherence through programming presents a key entry point for identifying low-income beneficiaries for various national social programmes. Over twenty Brazilian Federal Government programmes, including the *Bolsa Familia* Program,\(^6\) currently use the Registry to select beneficiaries (World without Poverty, 2014).

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**Box 7**

**Examples of Some Ongoing Efforts to Develop MIS in Africa**

Mali has established an MIS to act as a common targeting system whereby stakeholders of different social protection interventions use the same set of indicators to identify potential beneficiaries; the government is also developing a central registry of the target population to better link them to other benefits and services (Rawlings *et al.*, 2013). In Lesotho, a redesign of the National Information System for Social Assistance is perceived as an important mechanism for harmonizing targeting and coordination of different social protection programmes and complementary agricultural interventions (Ulrichs *et al.*, 2016).

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**Matching the Characteristics and Needs of the Targeted Households**

As previously highlighted, small family farmers have varying levels of productive capacity, which are determined by their diverse economic and social characteristics and varying roles in the rural economy. Even within a single programme, beneficiaries may have different needs and livelihood characteristics. For example:

- Many recipients of cash transfer programmes are elderly or disabled and therefore constrained from engaging in more commercial agriculture; as a result, they require alternative livelihood support beyond labour-intensive agriculture, or they may depend upon cash transfers.

- Poor farming households headed by females may face constraints (e.g. access to land, financial services and markets) to improving their income-generation capabilities.

- The gender and structural factors that underpin the current vulnerability, food insecurity and poverty of farming households influence the extent to which they can construct sustainable agricultural livelihoods; therefore these elements must be reflected in programming design and the selection of complementary interventions.

Programme designers must recognize this heterogeneity through ensuring flexibility in the design of integrated support “packages”. Brazil’s “*Assistencia Technica e Extensao Rural*” targets producers based on different productive units, local productive potential and productivity levels (e.g. average income per acre).

\(^6\) *Bolsa Familia* is the country’s largest social welfare programme.
Table 3 maps a mix of interventions across four interrelated characteristics: poverty and vulnerability, productive capacity and constraints, agro-ecological factors and production systems, and occupational/economic roles.

**TABLE 3**

**SELECTING A COHERENT “PACKAGE” BASED ON HOUSEHOLD ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS*</th>
<th>IMPLICATIONS FOR COHERENCE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Poverty and vulnerability</td>
<td>The ways in which synergies are pursued depends on household poverty dynamics; for example, an extremely poor and food-insecure household might require long-term social transfers to protect its welfare, in combination with a mix of livelihood promotion measures (e.g. asset transfers, credit, training) in order to gradually raise its income-generation capacity, while for a vulnerable and moderately poor household, short-term risk-prevention support might suffice to protect consumption, income and assets in times of shock.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Productive capacity and constraints</td>
<td>Different types of support are relevant to smallholders with different levels of productive capacity. For example, marginal farmers with a very low asset base (notably land and labour) might require predictable employment assurance schemes or social transfers, combined with redistributive measures to increase access to working capital (e.g. a land redistribution programme combined with complementary agricultural support such as low-cost, labour-saving farming equipment, access to farmer field schools or inputs) to increase land and/or labour productivity. However, financially better-off farmers with relatively established productive potential may prefer agricultural measures that enhance access to markets to exploit their potential, combined with access to insurance and savings schemes to accumulate assets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agro-ecological factors and food production systems</td>
<td>Support for farmers and pastoralists working in fragile agropastoral systems should prioritize agricultural measures that increase the resilience of farming systems in the face of climate change, such as: social transfers to encourage small family farmers to adopt sustainable farming and livestock practices (including conservation techniques to promote soil fertility and water conservation); promoting adequate use of inputs and use of improved (e.g. drought-resistant) seed varieties. For those working in small-scale fisheries and forestry sectors, unemployment insurance and seasonal public works programmes can target the poorest and most vulnerable producers to reduce the risks of overexploiting natural resources (e.g. collapse of fish stocks, deforestation) and protect their livelihoods in the long term. This approach has been piloted in Brazil’s Defeso programme, whereby small-scale fishers receive unemployment benefits in months when the fishing season is officially closed in order to protect fish stocks (Béné et al., 2015).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different occupational/economic roles in rural settings</td>
<td>Landless farm labourers who rely on agricultural employment can benefit from low food prices, reliable employment support and decent work legislation, and access to off-farm rural entrepreneurial income-generating activities. They may also benefit from cash transfers that enable them to free up time and/or resources to invest in their own income-generating activities. Those unable to engage regularly or fully in economic activity (e.g. households headed by elderly and/or chronically ill members or children) may require access to long-term social welfare support, including transfers and social services.</td>
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* These categories overlap and are fluid (i.e. some smallholders appear in different categories at the same time).
Qualitative and quantitative analysis could be used to develop a better understanding of how household livelihood conditions, incentives and behaviours, as well as prevalent structural features (e.g. high dependency ratios, elderly-headed households) influence poverty status and capacity to increase productivity, reduce poverty – including through building resilience – and sustain livelihoods.

**PAYING ATTENTION, EARLY ON, TO IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES**

Smooth programme implementation is crucial for supporting coherence. For instance, cross-country evidence shows that the reliability and predictability of cash transfer payments influences the extent to which they are spent on productive activities. In Zambia, where transfers were more regular and predictable, cash transfers were more likely to be spent on productive activities than in Ghana, where payments were less regular and predictable (Handa et al., 2014b). In the case of Malawi (Gavrilovic et al., 2015, draft), contrary to what was planned, beneficiaries of the LDF PWP were not able to benefit from the income earned by participating in the agriculture programme to purchase subsidized inputs (fertilizer and seeds) provided by the FISP, partly due to delays in the delivery of these subsidized inputs.

**SETTING A TRANSFER SIZE COMMENSURATE WITH DESIRED IMPACT**

Commensurate transfer size does not necessarily mean “bigger,” but rather that the benefit size corresponds with the objectives of the programme. For example, if social transfers are intended to have productive impacts, transfers must be large and predictable enough7 to enable ultra-poor households to make meaningful agricultural investments, without compromising their basic consumption needs. Likewise, the size of a fertilizer package must be commensurate with smallholders’ needs and productive capacities (e.g. land size) to ensure that it is used effectively and wastage is avoided. Where resources for agricultural and social protection support are frequently constrained, there is a fundamental policy trade-off between increasing the level of transfer and expanding the number of beneficiaries.

**ENSURING THE TIMELY AND PREDICTABLE DELIVERY OF TRANSFERS**

Social transfers that are provided frequently and predictably can facilitate consumption-smoothing, expenditure-planning and risk-taking, in anticipation of future payments. This assists households in accumulating assets and precautionary savings (Daidone et al., 2015).

Transfers that are irregular and/or “lumpy”, either by design or poor implementation may be spent differently – on productive investments (e.g. purchase of livestock, land rental, storage, business diversification), drawing down debt, or bulk purchases of food.

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7 Some evidence shows that a cash transfer value of approximately 20 percent of per capita consumption is the minimum amount necessary to generate results in terms of welfare and production (Handa and Davis, 2006; Slater et al., 2014).
BUILDING PROGRAMMES THAT ARE SENSITIVE TO RURAL AND AGRICULTURAL SEASONALITY

Cycles in agricultural production, labour markets and food price fluctuations – as well as variability of well-being in rural areas – have important implications for the timing of interventions designed to support production and consumption, as these should consider fluctuations in income and access to food throughout the year and the agricultural calendar. For example, providing subsidized fertilizer during the planting season can relax financial constraints that prevent households from investing in productive inputs at critical times in the agricultural cycle. Similarly, public works programmes can be timed to avoid the withdrawal of households from key agricultural activities while allowing them to smooth consumption during periods of seasonal underemployment. However, this is difficult to achieve. The employment guarantee scheme in India, such as the 100 Days of Work guaranteed to every rural household, is a rare example of a seasonal safety net programme that – in addition to crop farmers – also targets small-scale fishing families, which suffer from regular seasonal underemployment stresses (Béné et al., 2015).

MESSAGING REGARDING USE OF THE TRANSFERS AND SUPPORT

Consistent and regular messaging can provide beneficiaries with information that can help them to make informed choices about how to best use and invest social protection benefits and productive assets. The nature of messaging will depend on the profile of beneficiary households and programme objectives. In Latin America, cash transfers are typically conditionally attached to health care and education-related areas, while the predominantly unconditional nature of programming in sub-Saharan Africa creates stronger opportunities for coordination with agriculture. Programme staff of Rwanda’s VUP provide beneficiaries with information on the benefits of investing in productive activities; this advice is typically followed, particularly by the less poor – probably because investment in productive activities may come only after basic food and social needs are met (Barca et al., 2015; Davis, 2014). In Lesotho, during a drought emergency, the Food Emergency Grant was accompanied by messaging encouraging households to invest in agriculture, and households did so (Daidone et al., 2014). Kenya’s Equity Bank, which delivers transfers to beneficiaries of the Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP), goes a step further and provides agribusiness training to its account holders – which include HSNP beneficiaries – via Pastoralist Field Schools (Slater and Nyukuri, 2016). While messaging can help direct the use of transfers in line with programme objectives, care should be taken to avoid a dogmatic approach that undermines beneficiaries’ autonomy in deciding how to better their own livelihoods or to encourage investments in one area (e.g. agriculture) at the cost of under-investing in other areas (e.g. health).

DEVELOPING A STRONG MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM

A well-coordinated and/or shared monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system can facilitate synergies by providing evidence on the coverage and impact of coherent interventions undertaken by different actors. It enables programme planners to monitor interventions effectively, ensure that programmes are reaching intended beneficiaries, avoid unintended effects, and better manage trade-offs between growth promotion and welfare protection objectives. Indicators must be relevant to both agriculture (food production and productivity) and social protection (poverty and vulnerability), with strong feedback loops – from design to delivery and M&E – in order to make adjustments as required. The inclusion of a clearly articulated, realistic and consistent theory of change is critical for programme design and impact evaluations.
Coherent agricultural and social protection interventions can be designed using three different modalities: i) designing or adapting standalone interventions whereby agricultural programmes are specifically designed to reach small family farmers and be socially protective and/or where social protection programmes are designed to be consistent with the agricultural livelihoods of their beneficiaries; ii) combining multiple interventions so that targeted households benefit from both agricultural and social protection (and possibly other) interventions; and iii) aligning interventions by establishing synergies between programmes that target different populations and/or areas.

Design and implementation issues to consider include: identifying feasible entry points to establish synergies; selecting the best instrument or combination of instruments to be used; striving for targeting efficiency and effectiveness; setting a transfer size commensurate with desired impact; ensuring the timely and predictable delivery of transfers; building programmes that are sensitive to rural and agricultural seasonality; messaging regarding use of the transfers and support; ensuring smooth implementation of programmes and developing a strong monitoring and evaluation system.
4. Concluding remarks

Hunger and poverty are still widespread in Africa and are concentrated in rural areas among households who largely depend on agriculture and who also constitute a large proportion of beneficiaries of social protection programmes. While agricultural interventions can address structural supply-side constraints in the agricultural sector, complementary social protection interventions are also needed to alleviate liquidity constraints and improve the ability of households to plan expenditures, make investments and take risks. Evidence shows that stronger coherence between agriculture and social protection can also support households in intensifying and increasing the efficiency of labour allocated to on-farm activities and increasing access to food. It can also contribute to stimulating markets and to economic diversification, promoting decent employment in rural labour markets and supporting the development of social networks. All these benefits have the synergistic effect of reinforcing household access to, and benefit from, agricultural interventions. Moreover, they can help households benefit from agricultural transformation, by assisting them either in becoming more commercially oriented or in diversifying livelihoods beyond agriculture.

Recent declarations at global and regional levels acknowledge the role of greater coherence between agriculture and social protection interventions in reducing hunger and poverty and there are examples of cases in which these domains are being brought together. However, these examples are relatively few. Agricultural and social protection policies and programmes originate from different disciplines, and are still viewed as parallel policies implemented by different authorities competing for financial resources.

Governments, CSOs and development partners can work together to strengthen coherence. This involves creating an enabling environment by mobilizing political support that provides the required leadership and “drive” for coherence. Champions for change must ensure that policy and planning frameworks for rural development, poverty reduction and food security articulate the roles that both agriculture and social protection can play in achieving these common goals. Furthermore, coordination mechanisms at national and subnational levels need to be strengthened by ensuring that relevant actors are engaged. Financing must be coordinated and predictable, so that it can facilitate collaboration across sectors. Human capacities also need to be developed, to help ensure that policy-makers and practitioners are able to identify opportunities for strengthening coherence and researchers are able to generate evidence to inform the design and implementation of policies and programmes.
Similar collaborative action is also needed at the programming level. Single registries are practical “tools” that can help to harmonize targeting across agricultural and social protection programmes. The size, timing and frequency of transfers should be consistent with the desired impacts, with rural and agricultural seasonality and with the profiles of targeted households. The theory of change for food security, rural development and poverty reduction interventions should take into account the respective contributions of agriculture and social protection, although the types of complementary interventions to be pursued and the priority sectors to be engaged will vary by context.
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# Annex 1

## Key Expert Interviews

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<th>NAME</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
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<tr>
<td>Niels Balzer</td>
<td>Policy Programme Officer</td>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bénédicte de la Briere</td>
<td>Senior Economist, Office of the Chief Economist for Human Development</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ana Paula de la O Campos</td>
<td>Gender Policy Specialist</td>
<td>FAO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stephen Devereux</td>
<td>Development Economist, Research Fellow</td>
<td>IDS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emily Louise Garin</td>
<td>Resilience Specialist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elisenda Estruch</td>
<td>Labour Economist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anna McCord</td>
<td>Social Protection, Research Associate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paula Nimpuno</td>
<td>Programme Officer</td>
<td>Ford Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mariam Sow Soumare</td>
<td>Principal Food Security Analyst</td>
<td>NEPAD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jennifer Yablonski</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mulat Demeké</td>
<td>Senior Policy Officer</td>
<td>FAO</td>
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from PROTECTION to PRODUCTION PtoP