Governance of food and nutrition security
Factors for viability and sustainability
Case studies from seven Latin American countries
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Contents

Presentation .................................................................................................................. iv

Introduction ................................................................................................................... 1

1. Governance of food and nutrition security ................................................................. 3

2. Key factors for the processes of FNS governance in the region ............................... 5

3. Case Analysis

3.1. Mexico .............................................................................................................. 20

3.2. Brazil ............................................................................................................... 32

3.3. El Salvador .................................................................................................... 42

3.4. Guatemala .................................................................................................... 56

3.5. Ecuador .......................................................................................................... 66

3.6. Peru .................................................................................................................. 78

3.7. Nicaragua ..................................................................................................... 86

4. General recommendations ....................................................................................... 96

5. References ............................................................................................................ 97
PRESENTATION

The book “Governance of food and nutrition security: Factors for viability and sustainability. Case studies from seven Latin American countries” seeks to provide an analytical description of the different governance schemes chosen by certain countries in the region, in order to organize the actors involved in the decision-making regarding the issues affecting food insecurity. The book is expected to contribute to the improvement of forums for cooperation and public policy agreements, with the understanding that the purpose of governance is not to simply establish a space for agreement, but rather to establish rules of social harmony in order to attain an objective. In this case, the objective of overcoming hunger and malnutrition is vital for the development of the countries.

This publication is part of the regional project: “Support to the National and Subnational Strategies of Food and Nutrition Security in Latin America and the Caribbean,” within the framework of International Cooperation between the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Government of Brazil. The book was written by professionals Marco Moncayo Miño and Alberto Ramírez Fiora del Fabro.

In the first part of the book, a critical analysis is carried out of the key factors for good governance of food and nutrition security policies, seeking to identify the challenges and gaps that must be overcome. Next, the framework observed in seven countries of the region is presented in detail, revealing that the reality is quite different in each respective country. However, they do share one common element: they are all winning in the fight against hunger. The eradication of the scourge of hunger has been a part of the political agenda in these countries over the last 20 years; however, there are challenges that must be overcome in order to meet the Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG 2: Zero Hunger.

We hope that this publication can contribute to the efforts being made to overcome the issues of hunger and malnutrition, which still affect millions of people throughout the region.
INTRODUCTION

The efforts undertaken to eradicate hunger in recent decades in Latin America have allowed for achieving the objectives established by the World Food Summit and in the Millennium Development Goals. During this time, the region has acquired vast technical and political experience in combating an issue with multiple causes, such as hunger and malnutrition. Undoubtedly, the political commitment shown and the growing social involvement have been key factors in attaining these achievements. A series of measures, policies and programmes have been established within each country in order to promote food and nutrition security (FNS) with a multisectoral approach; seeking the participation of a variety of social partners and aiming to respond to the social needs related to the issue. It can be stated with certainty that the classical approach - in which the crux of the issue is seen as being of a strictly agricultural-productive nature - is a thing of the past.

Public policy initiatives on the subject have presented positive results in the region. Since 1990, more than 31 million people have overcome situations of undernourishment; representing 1.2 million in Central America and 30 million in South America. The countries with the highest percentage reductions among undernourished populations between the 1990-1992 and 2014-2015 biennia are Nicaragua (from 54.4% to 16.6%), Panama (from 26.4% to 9.5%) and Mexico (from 6.9% to 4.2%) in Central America, along with Peru (31.6% to 7.5%), Bolivia (from 38% to 15.9%) and Brazil (14.8% to 1.5%) in South America (FAO y FIA, 2015). Additionally, in the same period of time, these efforts have led to a 12 percent reduction in chronic child malnutrition in the region.

After achieving the international goals of reducing hunger, Latin America faces the challenge of definitively overcoming malnutrition; which can be seen in more than 26 million people with undernourishment, 6 million children with chronic malnutrition and another 3.6 million people with issues of overweight (FAO, 2015). In other words, it is necessary to eradicate hunger and malnutrition so that future generations do not suffer these same maladies. This is reflected in the message of the Director-General of FAO, Jose Graziano Da Silva, “...with hunger, the only acceptable number is zero.” Accordingly, it is important to remember that this is a truly global challenge. Ending hunger, achieving food security, improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture are objectives framed within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which were approved by the international community in 2015 and now comprise the new global agenda, which seeks to eradicate poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity over the next 15 years.

For Latin America, the SDGs support the continuity of the actions currently underway, in addition to formulating new guidelines of action and calling for innovative initiatives to solve urgent issues. It is therefore an appeal to evaluate the actions thus far, as well as understand the main constraints that have delayed the attainment of food and nutrition security, and the human right to adequate food.

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1 Undernourishment is considered to be an insufficient level of food intake that is needed to meet food energy requirements.
2 Speech given in Rome (2013) to celebrate World Food Day on 16 October.
3 Corresponds to the second objective of the Sustainable Development Goals. The goals of this objective are set as targets: end hunger and ensure access to food for all, end all forms of malnutrition, increase agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, ensure the sustainability of production systems, increase investment in rural infrastructure, prevent trade restrictions and distortions in agricultural markets, and adopt measures to ensure the proper functioning of food commodity markets. These goals should be reached by 2030. Other objectives which promote FNS are Objective N° 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages, Objective N° 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all, and Objective N° 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns. For more information, visit: http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/es/hunger/
Some of the regional efforts in recent years have addressed the establishment of legal and programmatic frameworks, and through these, the creation of a set of entities which promote FNS, with particular commitment at the national and local levels. These initiatives have allowed for historically excluded actors to enjoy temporary or permanent participation - in specific cases - within the processes of public policy-making, along with expanding the multisectoral approach of the initiatives in the area of FNS. These have improved the coordination and have been key contributors to food and nutrition security within the priorities for action in public and private institutions, academia, cooperation agencies and social organizations in general.

While the legal framework of FNS has been strengthened, similar strategies have been implemented and policy-making bodies have been established in the region at different territorial levels, the progress made in reducing hunger has still presented mixed results. Thus, the conditions, mechanisms and instruments that have enabled certain countries to advance more rapidly than others gives cause for reflection. An initial observation of the regional progress is that there has been a certain degree of difficulty when implementing the legal and operational instruments of FNS. Among the potential causes is the lack of political and social consensus prior to approval of the legislative framework and upon its implementation, as well as a weak political culture when it comes to promoting joint responsibility of actions, the discomfort which leads to - in certain governmental entities - ceding positions of power and decision-making to other actors, and the difficulties of assimilation faced by certain FNS bodies within the (prominently sectoral) traditional government framework.

The progress made is clear evidence of the importance of having specific legal and programmatic frameworks in place, as well as “specialized” institutions in the area of FNS. However, the constraints faced underscore that the relationships, agreements or the interdependence generated by the current institutional actors are equally or perhaps even more important in solving this collective issue. Given that food and nutrition security is a complex issue which must be urgently solved in the region, and which requires both public and private actors as well as civil society in general in order to maintain consistent, coordinated and effective interventions, it is therefore necessary to analyze the factors and mechanisms that have promoted the cooperation and joint action between the sectoral actors linked to FNS.

Therefore, it is necessary to better understand the behavior of the actors involved and the dynamics that exist between them when effecting solutions to the issue of hunger from within the public sphere.

This document intends to assist in understanding Governance of food and nutrition security in Latin America, and accordingly, begins its analysis with the emblematic cases in the region with regard to FNS; comparing their respective contexts and dynamics, to then reflect on the main conclusions and recommendations for improvement. The logic was to identify the common factors of these experiences, which could be key to the success of these processes. The second part of the document will address seven national cases in detail, seeking to make an analysis using the same methodology for each one and thus allowing for comparability. First, a brief conceptual perspective on governance shall be presented.
1. GOVERNANCE OF FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

Governance is a social practice that is present in all political systems. This term emerged from the need to reform and strengthen the models of action applied in recent decades, which attempted to promote an optimal relationship between the state and other actors in order to guide and address government actions through a comprehensive social agreement. In the true sense of the word, it is the process of governing that corresponds to structurally interdependent societies, in which both governmental and non-governmental actors join forces to carry out activities of particular interest and to achieve common objectives that have been prioritized by society. These interactions occur as a result of acknowledging the need for joint action, due to limited technical or economic resources, and because the actors recognize that there are other initiatives being carried out which could help them to achieve their individual goals (Aguilar, 2013).

Given the importance of dialogue, the adjustments or agreements made between the government, private actors and the general public to define common goals and objectives, along with the preferences and guidelines for action, governance has become a meeting point for social research; aggregating several fields of study and actions. This has led to a breakthrough in recent years in the development of its theoretical and analytical framework.

The connection between governance and Food and Nutrition Security is based on the understanding that social issues, such as hunger, are caused by an accumulation of interdependent factors, and in order to solve them it is necessary to address such factors as a whole. It has been acknowledged that the technical and political knowledge and necessary funds to tackle this issue are distributed unevenly among several actors. For this reason, the application of mechanisms which encourage good governance is one of the main challenges in the eradication of food insecurity.

1.1. Understanding governance of Food and Nutrition Security

The theoretical and empirical contributions of governance in general, along with the experience acquired in Latin America in the last decade - through strategies implemented in order to ensure FNS - have been fundamental to understanding and conceptualizing the link between governance and food and nutrition security, which has been defined as:

"The rules and formal and informal processes through which public and private actors articulate their positions and interests for decision-making and implementation”
(FAO, 2011; FAO, 2013; FAO, 2014a)

The application of these new rules and processes has transformed the relationship between actors involved in FNS. The progress made in the region is proof of the importance of the following premises:

- The new dynamics encourage mechanisms to promote change in government practices, which has led to the breakdown of traditional barriers to action between the state and civil society. In this regard, they have created opportunities at the national and local levels, where there is greater shared responsibility in the implementation of FNS initiatives.
The entities involved recognize that no actor - governmental or not - possesses sufficient technical and financial resources to unilaterally take on the challenge of ensuring FNS. Accordingly, it has been recognized that food and nutrition insecurity cannot be tackled on an individual basis, which has allowed for the incorporation of an intersectoral approach, to a greater or lesser degree, as one of the principles of action for food and nutrition security.

The new processes of governance allow for several stakeholders to actively participate in consensus-building. This has become a key tool to validate governmental initiatives by linking the government programmes to the social needs, and to facilitate the allocation of funds and initiatives in order to achieve common goals.

1.2. Analytical process of governance of FNS

The analysis of governance of FNS in the region should begin under the premise that this involves a multidisciplinary and multisectoral area of work. This implies that in these processes, there is some difficulty in identifying the formal or informal agreements made between coordinating actors; therefore any changes made may affect or benefit third parties. In these type of processes, the relations between actors tend to be dynamic and may differ over time, due to the entry of new participants, the renegotiation of functions or the establishment of new agreements. All of these factors make it difficult to explain the governance processes with certainty, and consequently, they entail constant follow-up.

Several researchers have proposed methodological approaches which allow for explaining the processes of governance, identifying the constraints observed when implementing the agreements between actors, and seeking potential solutions to promote the operability of the system. From the Policy Assistance and Governance Unit of FAO, the following five methodological steps are proposed (FAO, 2011):

- Define the problem, taking into account that the definitions are not neutral. This task is critical in the process in order to avoid individual influences and subjectivities.
- Understand the formal or informal rules which govern and have an impact on societal actions.
- Characterize the actors, their influential capacity and how they interact with one another.
- Identify the convergence of the entities, how their spheres of action are shaped, and how they operate.
- Understand the intervention processes, as well as the behavior of the various actors, in order to generate collective or specific proposals to change and improve the system.
2. **KEY FACTORS FOR THE PROCESSES OF FNS GOVERNANCE IN THE REGION**

2.1. **Legal and Regulatory Frameworks**

It has been more than ten years since the passage of the first law specific to food and nutrition security in Latin America. Moreover, the Region has a Framework Law on the Right to Food, Food Security and Sovereignty, adopted by the Latin American Parliament (Parlatino). At the national level, the following countries already possess national laws on FNS or food sovereignty: Guatemala, Brazil, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Honduras, and recently, Dominican Republic. At the subnational level, Mexico City (previously known as the Federal District) is worth mentioning, as it has also approved a law on FNS. Additionally, in Argentina, Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, Paraguay, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Panama, Haiti and Mexico, draft laws on FNS are currently under consideration; albeit in different stages of discussion, depending on the country. Furthermore, it is worth noting that in at least nine countries in the region, their respective constitutions directly mention the exercise of the Human Right to Adequate Food (HRAF) for their citizens (CELAC, 2017).

The promotion of these legal frameworks has led to greater involvement of both political and social actors. This is substantiated by analyzing the origin of the laws. Even though some were presented by the Governments (Brazil, Ecuador, and Guatemala), and others were generated within the Congresses (Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, and Paraguay), there are three notable cases in which social organizations have submitted bills to the legislative bodies: Mexico, El Salvador, and Peru. Unfortunately, only that of Peru has been approved to date, lacking only a legislative procedure for its respective enactment.

In order to strengthen legal frameworks, a series of presidential decrees have been declared along with specific national policies, and several laws related to production and nutrition have been also approved; which, together, provide adequate support to fulfill the goal of eradicating food insecurity. It should be noted that these processes have been the catalyst for FNS and the human right to food to be recognized in the constitutions of countries such as Brazil, Ecuador, Bolivia, Nicaragua, Mexico and Guatemala; which promote legal standards that will lead to the attainment of individual rights.

Regional experience shows that laws, decrees and national policies for FNS have laid the foundation for developing an institutional structure and programmes that have been adapted to the public domain. In addition, these political instruments have been crucial to the establishment of formal agreements of joint action among government entities, and between the state and civil society. Nevertheless, the region has advanced at a different pace in the implementation of legal frameworks for FNS. Certain countries have made structural or functional adjustments to new FNS bodies in order to promote compliance, while in other cases, the inter-agency framework designed for such purposes has not yet been established.

Despite the aforementioned difficulties, the legal and regulatory frameworks have established mechanisms of governance that are adapted to national and local realities, and seek to be the driving force for social participation and involvement. These experiences are valuable inputs with potential for replication in future processes.

Table 1 details some of the features of the legal instruments which can play a distinguishing role in the governance of FNS.

By carrying out a comparative analysis, all laws on FNS or food sovereignty in the region - to a greater or lesser degree - possess common elements which guide the public policy process in the respective areas of action.

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5 It should be noted that in the majority of cases, the Law on Food Security or Sovereignty itself determines the creation of a subsequent national strategy or plan.
Table 1. Summary of the contributions of governance of FNS public policies, conferred by the various legal instruments in Latin American countries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Differentiating mechanisms to strengthen governance of FNS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>Law on National Food Security System</td>
<td>With the aim of promoting sustainable finance within food security initiatives, this law, in Article 38: Specific budget allocation, establishes that the Ministry of Finance, through the Technical Department of the Budget, must earmark 0.5% of the General Budget of Income and Expenditure of the State of each fiscal year for the funding of FNS programmes and projects which address populations living in poverty and extreme poverty. These funds shall be distributed to ministries and other institutions, as defined by the National Council on Food and Nutrition Security, according to the Strategic Plan for Food and Nutrition Security.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>Law on Food and Nutritional Sovereignty and Security</td>
<td>Within the institutional FNS framework, the law in Nicaragua proposed forming a National Council on Food and Nutritional Sovereignty and Security (CONASSAN) as the highest authority for decision-making and inter-agency coordination. In contrast to other laws that propose similar entities, in addition to uniting the most significant sectoral ministries, this authority incorporates representatives of NGOs, productive unions, private companies, and indigenous peoples’ organizations; with the same opportunities for decision-making as the government actors. Without a doubt, this encourages the representation of CONASSAN and thus becomes a tool for transparency. In addition, Article 32 - Infractions recognizes that public servants and others who violate or contravene the provisions of this Law, its regulations or rules derived from these, may be committing administrative offences pursuant to relevant laws and codes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>Organic Law on Food and Nutrition Security</td>
<td>To promote the empowerment of civil society in the processes of governance of FNS, within the institutional structure proposed by the law in Brazil, there is a proposal to duplicate the number of social representatives in relation to the government representatives in the National Council of Food and Nutrition Security (CONSEA); to be responsible for policy-making, in order to ensure inter-agency coordination and evaluate the government’s actions. Within this entity, all of the actors participate under the same conditions and share the same decision-making responsibilities. In addition, with the same mutually beneficial relationship between government and social actors, this encourages the convening of local and national conferences to identify the key social issues and address the government programmes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>Law on Food and Nutrition Security</td>
<td>In its Article 3, this law recognizes that all initiatives of FNS will obligatorily address the principles of equity and non-discrimination; in particular the right to produce, obtain, provide and have access to sufficient nutritious foods, and transparency, compelling all institutions which manage public funds to provide accountability and access to public information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>Presidential Decree N°63/2009</td>
<td>Article 4 of this Decree establishes that, based on the national policy of FNS, an information system should be developed as the primary tool for food and nutrition surveillance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unfortunately, some of the mechanisms described in the table above have not been implemented nor are they operational, due to the lack of political consensus prior to and after approval of the legislation, and which has therefore limited the commitment of the actors responsible for its implementation. This demonstrates that in order to generate better conditions in the implementation of FNS laws, it is necessary to adequately manage the political convergence and obtain
the appropriate social consent before the approval of the legislative framework. Certain countries have presented changes in political commitment and have prioritized other issues or opted for other tools, which has undermined the enforcement of FNS laws. Furthermore, in some cases, the new mechanisms of governance have clashed with obsolete institutional frameworks resistant to change.

2.2. National FNS Systems

In Latin America, the recognition of hunger as a complex issue required a new institutional approach, which was developed based on legislative frameworks and sought to incorporate a multisectoral structure, where sectoral ministries modified the traditional manner of working and opted for joint, coordinated and comprehensive actions which venture beyond their thematic barriers; thus creating synergies and complementing efforts to have greater and improved impact in practice. At the same time, this approach has opened up spaces of convergence that promote shared responsibility among governmental and non-governmental actors, where civil society has had the opportunity to join and influence the political processes relating to FNS.

National FNS Systems are created in this same spirit, and are composed of a governmental structure at different territorial levels, demonstrating that the state assumes greater responsibility in ensuring food and nutrition security. Within this institutional structure, opportunities for interaction are created in which the social actors can participate in the generation of policy proposals, as well as influence the decision-making processes. Among the main functions carried out by the National FNS Systems is the coordination and promotion of the planning and implementation of multi-sectoral initiatives, in accordance with the objectives and common goals, in order to carry out monitoring and evaluation of the initiatives linked to FNS and to ensure the progressive incorporation of actors which encourage the empowerment of these processes.

2.2.1. Similarities between National FNS Systems

Countries which have adopted FNS laws, such as Guatemala, Brazil, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and Honduras, have made significant efforts to establish national systems. On the other hand, countries such as El Salvador, Dominican Republic, Bolivia, Colombia, Mexico and Peru have launched similar initiatives based on presidential decrees or other legal instruments. Regardless of the legal backgrounds of these models of governance, it is possible to identify certain common characteristics among them:

A. They create institutional frameworks, which have different models, but in general establish a high-level decision-making body (FNS Councils, Council of Ministers, etc.) in addition to a more technical and operational body. For the latter, two paths are usually taken: (i) an existing sectoral government institution is designated as a technical body, responsible for leading a collegial body whose purpose is to generate policies and follow-up measures, which in turn create political entities (technical secretariats for FNS, technical committees, etc.), or (ii) they create a new institution specialized on the topic, such as FNS secretariats.

B. The laws promote changes in the traditional course of action, seeking to replace the sectoral and individual approach with cross-cutting processes of planning and operations, aiming to find a comprehensive solution to the multiple causes of hunger.

C. Generate opportunities for political and/or technical decision-making at the different territorial levels of public administration (regions, departments, municipalities, local level, etc.). The legal FNS frameworks tend to decentralize responsibilities, to be assumed by local governments. This has enabled the replication of entities at this level, where actors in the territories can have an impact on decision-making.
D. Seek to include the greatest number of entities in the implementation of FNS initiatives, in order to correctly allocate technical and economic resources from various actors to attain the shared goals.

E. Create formal and official spaces for consultations with civil society organizations, so that they can be involved at some stage of the public policy cycle, as well as in the measures and actions taken by the state in relation to FNS.

F. Promote targeted actions for the most vulnerable populations. However, these actions must be progressive over time in order to meet the needs of all sectors concerned.

G. Contemplate the creation of monitoring systems, with the aim of providing feedback with information on the effectiveness of the actions being carried out. These systems generally intend to measure the phenomenon of food insecurity, along with the monitoring and follow-up of the public policy actions in the area of FNS.

Figure 1 shows the most typical scheme of a national FNS system, highlighting that in general, they possess a political decision-making scope at the macro level, as well as technical support which provides assistance, implementation, follow-up and evaluation. Civil society is included most of the time in these spaces with an advisory role.
2.2.2. Key elements of the different national FNS systems

The national FNS systems possess a structure which aims to adapt to the political and social reality of each country. The most notable differences are a result of these systems being connected to the government framework, and the need to strengthen the actions of certain actors or thematic areas of work, according to territorial needs. Hereafter, a brief analysis is made regarding some of the unique and distinctive characteristics among the national systems currently operating in the region.

• In Brazil, the participation of civil society is institutionalized in prioritizing issues through local and national conferences, which have become the key instruments of social impact on public policy in FNS. In addition, the National FNS System implements a participation policy of 1/3 governmental actors and 2/3 non-governmental actors in such conferences and in the National FNS Council, which is responsible for formulating proposals for initiatives, ensuring the coordination of sectoral actions and evaluating the actions of the system in general. This characteristic is undoubtedly unique among other governance frameworks in the countries of the region, highlighting the Brazilian model for the most optimal process of civil society participation in FNS policies.

• In Honduras, the Food and Nutrition Security Monitoring Commission is the entity responsible for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of policies which are promoted by the National System. This Commission should submit a semiannual report with recommendations on improving the system operations, which is of a binding nature for future decisions.

• Ecuador is anticipating managing the national system through the Plurinational and Inter-cultural Conference on Food Sovereignty (COPISA); which, in turn, is the representative body of civil society. This is an unprecedented case in the region; that civil society shall oversee the political decision-making in the area of FNS. This model certainly raises some questions with regard to its operations. For example, if the state and its entities are willing to have their policies guided by civil society, this bypasses the traditional sectoral framework of each entity.

• In Nicaragua, priority was given to the socialization of the Law on Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security, as one of the first activities to be carried out by the municipal FNS committees. In the municipalities where such committees were formed, the citizens were aware of the main features of the law, along with the entities which must assume responsibility for ensuring FNS, and the mechanisms proposed; so that civil society is able to contribute to these processes. The socialization of the legal framework has been a key tool in promoting civic involvement and commitment to the initiatives implemented. In addition, this can be a determining factor for civil society to become empowered through the process of citizen oversight of government actions.

• In Mexico, upon implementing the National Crusade against Hunger, approximately 60 government programmes that were already in progress joined together. This allowed for proceeding with work that was already underway; drawing upon all of the technical capacities of the sectoral ministries and local governments, as well as incorporating a multisectoral approach among local technical personnel and the target audience. In addition, mechanisms have been established to ensure that the local government funds are utilized for FNS initiatives.

• The proposals for national FNS systems in Nicaragua, Peru and Venezuela seek to create diverse and comprehensive bodies at the departmental and municipal levels, where government and non-governmental actors can converge and assume responsibility of the implementation of FNS public policies, as well as encourage the participation of other local actors.
### 2.2.3. Challenges for current and developing National FNS Systems

It is essential to know that prior to adopting laws or presidential decrees relating to FNS, there were sectoral and multisectoral initiatives already underway, which intended to fulfill their role as coordinators of actions in the productive, nutritional and social sectors. Drawing from the creation of national FNS systems, institutional processes were becoming stronger and sought to coordinate various sectors by establishing common goals and defining joint plans of action. Notwithstanding the above, FAO (2014)\(^6\), upon conducting a comparative analysis between the indices of food insecurity and the creation of FNS laws and policies in Central America, verified that there is no correlation between the two milestones. In other words, the fact that these instruments exist does not necessarily explain the decrease in hunger indicators in these countries. This may be attributable to two phenomena. On the one hand, the creation of these instruments may be driven by periods of food insecurity - which would explain the concurrence between the two events- while on the other hand, the instruments might have not worked as expected. In either scenario, it is necessary to analyze the causes and reflect on potential solutions.

The momentum of the National FNS Systems and similar entities began several years ago in the region. These experiences have been underway for 10 years in both Brazil and Bolivia, for 9 years in Guatemala, and 5 years in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Ecuador. Throughout this trajectory, most national systems have not been strengthened; highlighting the need for continuous development in order to meet social needs. According to FAO, the main challenges faced by the current systems, along with the entities seeking participation in them, are as follows:

- **The states in the region tend to operate in a sectoral manner; a tradition difficult to break with, as it is deeply rooted in the institutional frameworks and processes of budgeting, accountability, and in measuring the effectiveness of their actions. Thus, the actions carried out with a multisectoral approach must deal with that reality, and the institutional framework of FNS must be consistent with the government structure, in order to build on the existing coordinating bodies and to avoid the potential overlapping of responsibilities; as the lack of coordination among entities can diminish the effectiveness of the actions for FNS. Furthermore, a FNS framework that respects and adapts to the government characteristics will thus avoid the duplication and fragmentation of initiatives.**

- **The national FNS systems must meet the challenge of going beyond the internal political and economic cycles. This calls for ensuring the relevant consensus for its structure, an adequate foundation for the legal framework and implementation of the relevant mechanisms, so that civil society can become empowered and promote the continuity of these processes. The systems that are operational answer to the policy proposals made by those governments currently in power, and the importance they attach to the issue of food and nutrition insecurity. Accordingly, they must reflect on the achievements attained and make corresponding adjustments to guarantee their operability in the future.**

- **The processes of inter-agency action should be accompanied by the respective budget allocations, which allow for implementation of the operational instruments of FNS policies. In addition, the budgets should consider the requirements necessary to maintain an active and consistent social participation during the planning, implementation and evaluation of FNS initiatives, as well as to ensure that the institutional structure continues to function; having been created specifically to develop technical tasks, analyze information, design proposals and follow-up, monitoring and evaluation.**

The systems should improve the tools that they currently possess, in order to carry out the respective monitoring, follow-up and evaluation of their actions. These evaluations also serve as mechanisms of accountability and transparency regarding government actions, and should be the pillars on which new policies, programmes and projects are developed, in order to give continuity to the achievements made and to be useful in decision-making.

National FNS systems must evolve into frameworks which promote upholding the human right to adequate food. To this end; judicial, quasi-judicial or administrative bodies could be incorporated into the institutional structure. Within these spaces, complaints could be received and addressed with the corresponding legal procedure.

Diverse and broad civil society participation should be promoted by these bodies, with the inclusion of private actors in the decision-making processes. In addition, the systems should be willing to share responsibilities with non-governmental actors, in order to encourage empowerment and prevent over-reliance on government entities.

2.3. Governance processes

As mentioned earlier, evidence shows that there has been significant progress in terms of governance in the last ten years. The main efforts have been aimed at developing and strengthening the legal and operational instruments, which create a suitable environment to consolidate the organization of FNS.

In general, certain common traits have been identified which distinguish the process of adopting frameworks of multisectoral governance for food security in countries of the region: (i) The national governments assume the leadership and the main responsibilities of ensuring food and nutrition security and the right to adequate food; (ii) Promote the participation of both governmental and non-governmental actors in the decision-making process at national and local levels; (iii) The actions are targeted to vulnerable populations in the short term, but are of a progressive nature in order to reach the general population; (iv) Identify the need to improve the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms at the local, national and regional levels; for which the creation of FNS information systems are proposed based on the legal frameworks; and, (v) Promote transparency and accountability as fundamental pillars of governance.

2.4. Territorial scope - local governance bodies

In the region of Latin America, in general, there is a broad recognition of the importance of spaces for governance for the discussion and implementation of FNS policies at the territorial level, and especially those at the municipal and local levels. This is expressed by the fact that within six of the seven FNS systems supported by law, there is some form of governance body at the local and/or municipal level, with the exception of Honduras (Table 2). Nevertheless, in practice, implementing these bodies has not been easy. For example, in Brazil, there are approximately 3,000 formally established bodies at the municipal level, which represents more than half of the municipalities in the country. However, few are actually functional. In Nicaragua, 55 COMUSSANES (Municipal FNS Commissions) were established (Moncayo and Yagüe, 2016); equivalent to 36% of the municipalities of the country, echoing the phenomenon of the lack of continuity in their operations. What exactly is jeopardizing this process? What are the factors influencing the lack of continuity of these spaces for discussion? We shall address these points hereafter.
In general, two major issues are frequently addressed in these local spaces. On the one hand, these spaces help bring attention to the needs of local communities, which are then channeled to the corresponding public institutions by means of the municipalities or representatives of the same sectoral bodies. On the other hand, decision-making is carried out in these spaces for the implementation of programmes, projects and investments regarding food and nutrition security issues, which are often previously assigned in advance to those territories. When analyzed from the perspective of public policy cycles, the challenge still remains to involve the territories in the development of policy proposals - in other words, in developing solutions - since, in general, the territories are involved in the diagnostic at the local level and later in the implementation and execution of solutions that were developed and designed beforehand; leaving them out of the intermediate stages of the cycle. This logic of centralism in key public policy decisions is widely exemplified in the various processes of territorial development. For the specific instance of FNS policies, Moncayo and Yagüe (2016) report this occurrence in the case of the COMUSSANES in Nicaragua. Moreover, this topic was noted as a challenge by public actors from various territorial levels within Mesoamerican countries, during the “Seminar on challenges and actions to strengthen management of food and nutrition security in Mesoamerica,” held in September 2015 in El Salvador.7

Another relevant factor is the connection to technical capacities in the area of FNS at the local institutional level. In general, most of the technical responsibility for issues related to FNS lies with professionals from the municipalities in the areas of health and agricultural production and development. It is well known, however, that the availability of professionals - and institutional capacity in general - is scarce in those territories affected by poverty and food insecurity, therefore limiting their ability to develop solutions with the relevant technical expertise.

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7 More background on: “Systematization of the Conference on Challenges and Actions to Strengthen Management of Food and Nutrition Security Governance”
2.5. Civil society participation: unresolved challenge

There is nearly total consensus among the stakeholders involved in public policy development regarding the fact that civil society participation greatly enriches the discussion, debate, design and implementation of such policies, since it is an element that provides transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in government administration. It also gives credibility and legitimacy, guaranteeing that the policies are based on actual needs, and that the grassroots-level demands are included in the political agenda (FAO, 2010). In order to illustrate this point, Araujo and Bogus (2012) analyzed the themes discussed in the CONSEA of Brazil between the years 2004 and 2007, finding that civil society was an innovative force in terms of content and discussion of the FNS agenda in the country; evidenced, for example, in the link between production and food consumption, as well as in the cross-cutting approach to related policies.

As was previously mentioned, in general, all frameworks of FNS governance in the region have allowed for opportunities, to a certain degree, for civil society participation. Certain countries have included representatives from the relevant sectors in one of the entities created within their national FNS systems; generally in the spaces for policy discussion (FNS councils or similar), in which government bodies are also included. A classic case of this can be found in Peru, where civil society is included through two quotas within the Multisectoral Commission on Food and Nutrition Security, which is mainly composed of ministries and government entities. In other cases, such as those of Brazil, Guatemala and Ecuador, institutional bodies are created exclusively to guide this relationship with civil society: The National Council of Food and Nutrition Security (CONSEA), the Entity for Civil Society Consultation and Participation (INCOPAS) and the Plurinational Conference (COPISA), respectively. This is the first challenge when establishing mechanisms of governance with civil society: they are either included within the government entities, they create their own spaces for discussion or they opt for a combination of the two.

Another aspect that has been seen as a challenge is the progress towards greater representation of the civil society sectors participating in these spaces. At first glance, in the institutions comprising the various official bodies of FNS, one can observe a tendency in which the agricultural production sector is given a more visible profile, both at the level of small-scale and family farming as well as the agro-industrial sector. However, upon analyzing Table 3, which indicates the civil society sectors included in the national FNS governance bodies in eight countries of the region, it becomes evident that there are certain sectors which still lack representation in all of the countries. This is the case, for example, of the professional associations in the areas of health linked to FNS, such as physicians, pediatricians and nutritionists. Within the productive sector, the fisheries sector, including artisanal and industrial, is frequently absent. It is also worth mentioning that there is a low presence of organizations which represent vulnerable groups; usually those most affected by the phenomenon of food insecurity, such as women, youth and children’s organizations. Without a doubt, the pluralism of civil society which integrates these spaces is an element which needs improvement within the governance bodies in the region.
Table 3. Types of civil society organizations included in participatory processes, as defined by the laws on food and nutrition security in Latin America.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of entity</th>
<th>Brazil</th>
<th>Ecuador</th>
<th>Guatemala</th>
<th>Honduras</th>
<th>Peru</th>
<th>Venezuela</th>
<th>Nicaragua</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Universities or clusters of universities</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private research and development entities</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gastronomic organizations</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic or Protestant Church</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous associations</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food industry</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Women’s Associations</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Youth Associations</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Rights Organizations</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer groups</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional associations linked to FNS</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizations of small agro-silvo-pastoral producers</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizations of artisanal fisherfolk and resource-poor culture farmers (ARELs)</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
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<tr>
<td>Large Agricultural and Agro-industrial Producers’ Associations</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizations of large-scale fisheries and aquaculture</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International cooperation agencies</td>
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<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative sector organizations</td>
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<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural education organizations</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Workers’ Organizations</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil society associations linked to education</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special consumer associations (celiac disease, diabetics, etc.)</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of entities recognized in each country</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from FAO (2016).

8 In the case of Peru, civil society actors are included in the current framework of policy governance (Multisectoral Commission on FNS), which is not supported by law but rather by decree.
Another aspect associated with representation is the question of whether those selected as delegates of a certain sector to take part in these participatory bodies will be able to convey the requests and proposals from the grass-roots level. In this case, the path taken by INCOPAS in Guatemala and CONSEA in Brazil appears to be well-focused, in the sense that it respects the autonomy of the organizations and allows them to choose the representative of each sector within the FNS system.

In terms of participatory processes, various actors\(^9\) have reported that civil society has an active role in the consultation phase and in assessing the issues affecting them, but afterwards, they have no further influence in the design of plans and programmes. A woman from civil society and member of INCOPAS in Guatemala declared “...for the majority, they (civil society) are only informed...in certain aspects they are consulted (...) but I would say that there is very little consultation.” This demonstrates that in general, civil society has been actively involved in the diagnostic stages of the issue and in developing outlines of the government actions to tackle the issue, which results in strategic planning instruments, such as national FNS policies. Nevertheless, there is still a major gap to overcome in terms of involving civil society in the design of national policy instruments, which would vastly improve its effectiveness when implemented in the territories. This phenomenon may have arisen from the fact that decision-making on key aspects in the design of public policies - and therefore regarding government funds - is, in itself, a matter of handing over power; something that public institutions are not always willing to do. Flores and Gomez-Sanchez (2010) reported this phenomenon in the Development Councils of Guatemala, characterizing them as “asymmetries of power” between public and private actors in these decision-making bodies.

There are two exceptions to this situation: Brazil and Ecuador. In Brazil, the CONSEA, a body located within the spaces where direct proposals are made to the government, actively participates in policy. In Ecuador, there is consensus among those involved in the COPISA, who have had a valuable space in which to put forth legislative proposals related to the Food Sovereignty Law (LORSA), which gives rise to targeted actions in specific areas, subject to budget availability.

Another aspect that represents a challenge for the spaces of social participation in FNS policies that are still being developed is the difficult synchronism with current participatory spaces; as the majority possess a sectoral character, including those that the governments have created in recent decades. In many of the countries in the region, the forums for dialogue have been developed over time, for example within the agricultural sector; usually led by the ministries of agriculture and comprised of the business sector, and more recently by the sectors representing family farming (FAO, 2014). In this context, in which a traditional and deep-rooted sectoral approach is included through the government framework to implement the actions, the spaces for the collective construction of policies with a multisectoral and/or territorial approach must also be established. Thus, a dilemma is presented: should new participatory spaces be opened up under the auspices of FNS policies, or should they draw upon the existing spaces in order to include civil society in the decision-making process? In addition, should we take the risk of implementing too many spaces for consensus-building around the policies, therefore discouraging, in the long-term, the civil society organizations from forming part of these spaces? A case which demonstrates this issue can be found in the Sectoral Citizen Councils of Ecuador, created under the auspices of the Citizen Participation Law, whose function is to generate sectoral social dialogue on public policies\(^10\). MAGAP has given strong momentum to these bodies, and as a result, the spaces for dialogue which attempt to move COPISA forward end up losing viability, due to the prior existence of a space for policy discussion which already deals with key issues of FNS, and which boasts a deep institutional recognition from the state. On the other hand, there is the successful case of Guatemala, where the Development Councils (local and municipal), operational since 2002, have been used to address the issues of FNS without the need to create new coordination bodies and multi-stakeholder action.

\(9\) This was declared by 11 interviewees (9 from Ecuador and 2 from Guatemala), associated with the national governance bodies of FNS policies in the respective countries, who were approached between November 2015 and March 2016.

\(10\) Downloaded from: http://www.cpccs.gob.ec/index.php?mod=ConsejosCiudadanos
The development of spaces for civil society representation at the different territorial levels is another process with pros and cons. How can a “bottom-up” approach be used regarding the opinions of the beneficiaries? Is it necessary for civil society to be included in all of the spaces for discussion at the territorial level within the FNS systems? This discussion should start with a contextual background, as the local decision-making bodies for FNS policies in the countries are still far from achieving national coverage.

It is necessary for all of the previous observations to be framed within a process of “democratic innovation”, where in the current model of democracy in the region - that is, representative democracy - the participatory spaces tend to be part of the administrative processes of the governments; enduring a strong formalization and rigidity, with substantial legal regulations and standardized methodologies (Ramírez and Welp, 2011). In many cases, this is in conflict with the expectations of civil society regarding their ability to freely participation in and influence the processes, creating a sense of skepticism which has an impact on their involvement in these institutional bodies.

A recurrent theme and key factor in the performance of civil society representatives is the funding of the participatory process. In the case of Brazil, for example, funds for civil society are provided by the state, as guaranteed by the Law on FNS, and allocated to the development of certain tasks and activities of the participatory processes. The most prominent of these is the National Conference on Food and Nutritional Security, held every four years and featuring representatives from all areas of the country, who meet to discuss policy proposals over the course of a week; a meeting that can include up to nearly three thousand people. There are other cases, such as in Guatemala and Ecuador, where, although it is true that civil society possesses sufficient funds to develop activities at the national level; the financing, on the other hand, of technical equipment and availability of physical spaces to carry out their work, among other expenses, is still an unresolved issue in terms of funding that would otherwise enable them to provide greater territorial coverage. Consequently, this limits their ability to attend to the proposals and needs in the different areas of the country. A leader of a representative entity from the family farming sector in Ecuador illustrates this in the following manner: “...According to LORSA, there are nine speakers from COPISA here in Quito, who are expected to magically multiply in order to be present in 24 provinces, without funding”. Nevertheless, this situation can be offset with excellent work at the territorial level, by empowering the leaders in the territories and establishing a framework that allows for expedited channels of communication in the direction of the centers of decision-making. In this regard, a noteworthy case is the strategy effected by certain representatives of INCOPAS, who draw upon the connections to their home organizations in order to collect information from different regions of the country.

Another aspect linked to financing, and also showing up as a recurrent theme in the discussion on how civil society representatives can operate more efficiently, is whether they should work on a voluntary basis without financial compensation, or receive payment. In the latter scenario, the only such case in the region are the COPISA representatives in Ecuador, who receive monthly compensation for their work. In the opinion of the representatives themselves, while this does allow them to commit a greater amount of time to their work, it can certainly be a factor which misrepresents the real reasons why a leader would be willing to act as a representative of this body. Another complex factor in this matter is the fact that, due to the current legal framework, as well as issues of transparency and integrity, the representatives must be elected through a public tender; the same process that a government official must undergo. It should be noted that they will receive a salary for this. The candidates must go through a selection process for technicians and staff, which seeks those most suitable in terms of knowledge and skills for the position, but who are not necessarily required to be representatives in their respective sectors of civil society. On the other hand, in the case of INCOPAS in Guatemala and CONSEA in Brazil, representatives are elected ad honorem by grass-roots organizations. However, in the opinion of a member of INCOPAS, “...it is necessary contemplate an option for the representatives of INCOPAS to be able to have more time to carry out their work...”
Lastly, there is also the challenge of modernizing and improving the effectiveness of the mechanisms and instruments through which the participatory processes operate. Upon reviewing the formal participatory spaces in the area of FNS in the region, the most widely used information/consultation mechanism is by far the in-person modality, such as a public-private advisory committee. The question arises regarding the need to incorporate new methodologies in order to facilitate these processes; for example, along the lines of e-government systems. While it is true that, in general, public services in the countries are moving toward providing the information on their websites - thus appealing to a broad compliance with the concept of transparency and accountability – the social actors have reported that there is still a significant gap to overcome in terms of civil society’s ability to access digital media, and understand and analyze the information. This is particularly evident in the topic of FNS, considering that the majority of the civil society actors involved come from rural areas.

An additional factor that has not been observed in the decision-making process with civil society regarding FNS policies is the use of binding mechanisms, such as public consultations. At present, civil society participates via representatives in public-private councils, where their views are heard and where - in consensus with the public actors - they decide on the actions to be taken. It is worth asking whether the use of binding mechanisms in decision-making processes are relevant to use, in regard to key or structural aspects of FNS policies, since they have the advantage of allowing for broader representation from the grass-roots level of civil society; thus conferring greater validation on the decisions made than on the currently utilized mechanism, incidentally solving the problem of civil society representation in these spaces due to the process of direct citizen participation.

2.6. Regional Governance: spaces for discussion

Several opportunities for collaboration have been generated at the regional and subregional levels among national and local governments and social actors, through which the countries have been able to expand their technical and political capacities when confronting complex issues, whether common or individual. In addition, they can coordinate actions in different areas in order to create synergies and complementarity, to expand the debate, exchange of experiences and thereby increase interdependence within the region. However, in some of these spaces, it is still necessary to consolidate their operations and support activities for the countries, in order for these regional bodies to avoid having to deal with political and economic shocks, and through the consensus of their members, be able to promote binding instruments to strengthen the work carried out in FNS.

Among the most representative regional institutions which promote governance of FNS are:

**Union of South American Nations (UNASUR)** - The Union of South American Nations (UNASUR). This is an international organization comprised of 12 South American countries, and serves as a space for cultural, economic, social integration. Among the main challenges that UNASUR faces are to eliminate socio-economic inequality, attain social inclusion, increase civic participation, strengthen democracy and reduce the existing disparities. Among the objectives addressed are those of eradicating poverty and overcoming inequalities in the region, strengthening the political dialogue, developing mechanisms to overcome the power imbalances, and promoting productive integration; with an emphasis on small and medium-sized productive organizations.
Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) - An intergovernmental body at the regional level, composed of the Heads of State of the 33 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. Its purpose is to “move forward in unity and in political, economic, social and cultural integration, make progress in social well-being, quality of life, economic growth, and promote independent and sustainable development...”

Within the scope of this policy-coordinating body, the CELAC Plan for Food and Nutrition Security and the Eradication of Hunger 2025 was approved in January 2015\(^\text{11}\), with the support of FAO, ECLAC and ALADI. With this Plan, FNS is positioned within the regional public agenda and strengthens the fight against hunger. There are four pillars supported through the Plan: the coordination of national and regional FNS strategies, ensuring sustainable access to nutritious food for all, guaranteeing adequate nutrition while respecting dietary traditions, and promoting stability in food production.

The members of CELAC are committed to promoting inter-agency coordination in their countries to implement the 2025 CELAC FNS Plan\(^\text{12}\). Additionally, in 2016, the Plan of Action of the Ad Hoc Group on Family Farming was established, with the aim of stimulating public purchases and supply systems, rural services, the inclusion of youth in the processes of rural development, and the sustainable intensification of family farming production\(^\text{13}\).

Parliamentary Front against Hunger (FPH) - It is a group within the Latin American Parliament (PARLATINO), open to all regional, national or local parliaments committed to eradicating hunger and malnutrition in their respective countries. Its objectives include promoting proposals for the organization of a fairer global economic system, which ensures the right to food for all and advocates for the fight against food insecurity in all areas of society; through legislation, FNS institutions and sufficient funding support to define national strategies.

Ten framework laws for the region have been proposed by this body, among which are the Framework Law on the Right to Food and Food Sovereignty\(^\text{14}\) and the Framework Law on School Feeding\(^\text{15}\), among others. Additionally, in 2015, the attainment of the human right to adequate food was acknowledged as a priority for governments in the region, and was reflected in the clear commitment to achieve the objectives established in the Sustainable Development Goals\(^\text{16}\), as well as in the fulfillment of the 2025 CELAC FNS Plan\(^\text{17}\).

Central American Integration System (SICA) – the institutional framework of the Central American Regional Integration, created in 1991; it brings together the States of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Belize and Dominican Republic. The creation of SICA was supported by the General Assembly of the United Nations, which enables the regional bodies and institutions of SICA to engage with the United Nations system.

\(^{11}\) For more information, visit: [http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4493s.pdf](http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4493s.pdf)  
\(^{13}\) For more information, visit: [http://www.familyfarmingcampaign.net/archivos/documentos/declaracion_espanol.pdf](http://www.familyfarmingcampaign.net/archivos/documentos/declaracion_espanol.pdf)  
\(^{17}\) For more information, visit: [http://parlatino.org/pdf/frente-parlamentario/documentos/declaracion-vi-foro.pdf](http://parlatino.org/pdf/frente-parlamentario/documentos/declaracion-vi-foro.pdf)
Its main objective is achieving the integration of Central America, to establish it as a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development. Its principles include strengthening support for sustainable economic, social, cultural and political development, along with overcoming extreme poverty, and environmental protection. Food and nutrition security is considered one of the priority integration themes, for which the Regional Programme for Food Security and Nutrition in Central America (PRESANCA II) has been launched. This programme is aimed at contributing to reducing food insecurity among the most vulnerable populations of Central America, through the strengthening of regional, national and local policies and strategies in FNS, along with professional and institutional capacity-building in order to generate data and knowledge management in the area of FNS, and the promotion of territorial development.

In addition, the Regional Program on Information Systems for Food and Nutrition Security (PRESISAN) is under implementation, which aims to develop an information system for FNS to support decision-making, accountability and transparency within the initiatives that are carried out. Through this programme, it has been recommended to contribute to Central American integration by improving the effectiveness, allocation and optimization of resources in order to develop and strengthen information systems specialized in FNS; thus enhancing diagnostics tools, monitoring, early warning, human resources training and the creation of public policies.

**Specialized Meeting on Family Farming of Mercosur (REAF) -** A space for collaboration between family farmers and rural organizations in Uruguay, Argentina, Paraguay, Venezuela, Chile, Ecuador and Bolivia. Since its creation in 2004, REAF has been operating with the objective of creating a framework for regional public policies for family farming. It has become one of the major regional mechanisms for overcoming power asymmetries, as it brings rural populations closer to the government representatives and civil society.

REAF is the result of recognizing the importance of family farming in the region. It seeks to create consistency among the regional and national actions, strengthen the public institutions responsible for family farming, and reinforce participatory dialogue on policies.
3. CASE ANALYSIS

3.1. Mexico

3.1.1. Background

Mexico represents an exemplary case in the implementation and constant adaptation of its social programmes in the fight against hunger. One of the key initiatives was the Programme for Education, Health and Food (Progresa). Launched in 1997 and reaching 300,000 families in rural areas, this was the first conditional cash transfer programme that was implemented in Latin America. Due to the results obtained, this programme received the necessary support to expand its activities, and was able to assist 2.4 million households in the year 2002, of which two thirds were located in indigenous communities. In the same year, the programme increased its coverage to 32 states, reaching 4.2 million households; consequently improving social benefits by providing scholarships for primary and upper secondary education.

The food price crisis that occurred between 2007 and 2008 resulted in an increase in the number of households and individuals affected by undernourishment. This attached greater importance to food and nutrition security within the national political agenda, prompting a series of structural changes to eradicate food and nutrition insecurity. As a result of these efforts, several public policies were targeted to guarantee FNS. Social organizations became more involved in the fight against hunger, and after several years of lobbying, it was recognized in 2011 that the responsibility of ensuring the right to adequate food for all within the Constitution lies with the state (SAGARPA et al., 2013).

In 2013, the National Crusade against Hunger (CNCH) was presented as the principal mechanism for coordinating efforts and resources at the national, state and municipal levels. This national strategy outlines the proposed policy guidelines for governmental action in the next six years. In 2014, the Mexico without Hunger National Program was implemented as the operational tool of the CNCH. In the same year, Progresa became the Prospera social inclusion programme, which provides a greater offering of productive, labor, education, food and health policies and programmes, which are primarily targeted to populations living in poverty.

These initiatives are the main government initiatives to combat hunger, which aim to eradicate undernourishment in more than five million Mexicans (4.27% of the total population) (FAO, IFAD & WFP, 2015). In addition, these initiatives seek to address the challenge of overweight and obesity present in 9% of children under five years of age and 32.8% of the adult population (WHO, 2016).

3.1.2. Current legal framework and operational instruments

The legal instruments which support food and nutrition security initiatives in Mexico include factors that encourage their implementation. Among them is the constitutional recognition of the right to food, along with the promotion of a multisectoral institutional framework that implements FNS policies and programmes, and the opportunity for civil society participation in decision-making bodies; which has become one of the driving forces of social oversight of governmental action. The current legal and operational framework is summarized below.
The Constitution of Mexico has been in force since 1917, and several adjustments and additions have been made in order to meet the current needs of Mexican society. It recognizes that all people shall enjoy the rights recognized in the constitution and in the international treaties of which they form a part; ensuring “the right to an adequate standard of living for all people and their families, including nutrition”, and that the state shall take such measures as may be necessary to guarantee that each person is free from hunger under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, to which Mexico adhered in 1981.

In 2011, after several debates, a constitutional amendment was approved, establishing that the state must guarantee the right to nutritious, adequate and quality food for all. Additionally, it emphasizes that all government decisions should meet the basic needs of children, which include food, health, education and development.

The Constitution recognizes that the state must promote conditions which enable comprehensive rural development and provide the necessary supporting measures to promote timely and adequate food production and supply. In addition, it promotes a roadmap to directly connect producers and consumers, through the supply of locally-produced food to schools with such needs.

Moreover, it recognizes the right of all people to health, education, work and social security, along with access to and the provision of clean and sufficient water; encouraging civic participation to ensure such rights are fulfilled.

President Decree establishing the National System for the Crusade against Hunger

This Presidential Decree, which entered into force in 2013, launched the national “Crusade against Hunger” strategy; bringing together 70 government programmes, with the aim of creating the mechanisms and adequate conditions to combine efforts and resources among the government institutions, social organizations and private enterprises, in order to ensure food security for the entire population.

In order to implement the strategy, the Inter-secretariat Commission was created as a space for coordination of the 19 sectoral ministries responsible for coordinating the actions, including the National Council as a forum for dialogue between government entities, private and public organizations, academic institutions, and international organizations - tasked with creating agreements to achieve the objectives of the strategy - as well as community committees formed by the beneficiaries of the programmes. These spaces intend to promote social participation in the process of implementation and monitoring.

General Law of Social Development

Adopted in 2004, with the latest reform carried out in 2013, the General Law of Social Development aims to guarantee the rights enshrined in the Constitution to the entire population. It recognizes that education, health, food, housing, work, social security and a healthy environment are all rights for the development of society. In order to fulfill such rights, it ensures that all citizens, especially those whose rights are threatened, shall have access to social development programmes and equal opportunities. Civic participation is one of the pillars for the operability, monitoring and evaluation of the National Social Development Policy.

19 For more information on the programmes comprising the Crusade against Hunger and the first 400 municipalities targeted for implementation, visit: http://dof.gob.mx/nota_detalle.php?codigo=5285363&fecha=22/01/2013
The law establishes that the national and local government entities should promote policies, programmes and actions in rural areas as a priority for the development of the country; with the aim of contributing to food sovereignty and security, thus supporting the social well-being of rural communities and producers. In addition, it recommends that the state promote adequate measures in order to guarantee the food supply, thus providing access to disadvantaged social groups and giving priority to domestic production.

Planning for rural development is understood as a participatory process, where the state has the obligation to create the spaces and mechanisms which allow for broad civil society participation, as well as the participation of private, local and national organizations.

The draft bill on the Right to Adequate Food was approved by Congress in 2015 and was sent to the Senate for ratification. This legislation plans to establish the foundation to guarantee the enjoyment and exercise of the right to food, as well as regulate food policy, and lay the groundwork for social participation in the actions to attain this right.

This legal instrument affirms that the state is primarily responsible for ensuring the right to adequate food, which includes the right to clean water for consumption and food preparation. With regard to the institutional framework, the Inter-secretariat Federal Commission on the Right to Adequate Food has been proposed; responsible for the programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the national policy. In addition, Food Councils are established as forums for social participation.

The Law on Food and Nutritional Security of the Federal District of Mexico (currently known as Mexico City) was approved in 2009, and became the first subnational FNS law in Latin America. It proposes to create a FNS system that ensures the human right to food and includes the participation of both public and private sectors, as well as civil society, in the design and implementation of public policies.

The district-level FNS system is led by the Head of Government, with the participation of the district’s Legislative Assembly, the Secretariat of Social Development and the municipal authorities of the district. Additionally, the FNS Programme established is of a permanent nature, providing coverage for the entire district.

The National Development Plan (PND) has become the main roadmap to address and achieve the national goals. This document establishes the public policy objectives, identifies strategies to achieve these and defines indicators to monitor and evaluate their implementation.

The guarantee of FNS can be observed in the national goals N°2 (“Inclusive Mexico”) and N° 4 (“Prosperous Mexico”). To achieve such goals, the following have been proposed: ensure adequate food and nutrition, with an emphasis on vulnerable populations; strengthen capacity development of households so that they can improve their quality of life; protect consumers’ rights; improve market information; boost the productivity of the agrifood sector; and promote models of economies of scale and added value, among other key strategies.

20 The creation of the National Development Plan incorporated various consultations between February and May 2013, including an online public consultation, which registered 129,299 participants. Physical and online sites were adapted for 37,871 citizen proposals, and 397 consultation activities were carried out (forums, discussion panels, sectoral roundtables), in which 61,779 citizens participated.
In terms of the connection between the state and civil society, cross-cutting strategies have been proposed, which seek to bring government entities and social organizations closer together, as well as to promote civic participation in public administration; supporting equal political participation and representation of men and women, and creating community development frameworks through social participation processes, among others.

The PND (National Development Plan) utilized the indicator of food insecurity to follow up on the implementation. This identifies the incidence of food insecurity among those living in extreme poverty.\(^{21}\)

- **National Crusade against Hunger strategy**

The implementation of the National Crusade against Hunger (CNCH) aims to meet the needs of the population living in extreme poverty through inter-agency coordination; for example, by structuring the frameworks and processes related to FNS, and maintaining consistency in the programmes and budgets to combat food insecurity. This approach seeks to overcome the fragmentation of initiatives and the duplication of efforts, and fill the gaps only partially met (CONEVAL, 2016).

The Secretariat of Social Development defined the target population of the Crusade as those earning less than required for the basic food basket, and who have at least 3 social gaps (lack of education and lack of access to health services, social security, quality food and basic household services). The main executing branch of the Crusade is the Mexico without Hunger National Program.

- **México Sin Hambre (Mexico without Hunger National Program)**

Having been established within the National Democratic Planning System and the National Development Plan, the Mexico without Hunger National Program 2014-2018 directs the general strategy that will guide the social programmes, in order to achieve the objectives and goals of the National Crusade Against Hunger. It is formed by approximately sixty national programmes, which seek to assist the 7.1 million people living in extreme poverty who are also food insecure. The objectives identified as priorities are as follows: Eradicate hunger in those segments of the population living in extreme poverty and who lack access to food; reduce acute and chronic childhood malnutrition and improve the height and weight indicators in childhood; increase food production; minimize post-harvest losses; promote economic development and employment in areas affected by extreme poverty; and promote civic participation in the eradication of hunger (SEDESOL, 2014).

The core strategies promoted in this programme are aimed at improving the purchasing power of citizens, improving food availability and rural production, and providing productive support to vulnerable groups, along with providing a roadmap for transparency and accountability that defines the responsibilities of the actors involved. The programme reached 1,012 municipalities in the second stage of implementation, and by 2016, coverage was expected to extend to 2,457 municipalities.

\(^{21}\) The food insecurity scale used by the National Development Plan was defined by the National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy (CONEVAL). This indicator recognizes three levels of food insecurity: low, moderate or severe, with a proposed biannual measurement.

\(^{22}\) The 1,012 municipalities correspond to the 400 selected as priorities in 2013, and the 612 selected in 2014. These municipalities were selected because they were affected by hydro-meteorological conditions, due to their location in border zones with economic issues or in areas of regional conflict, as well as the municipalities most affected by critical food poverty.
Table 4 - Legal and operational framework of FNS governance in Mexico

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Year approved</th>
<th>Reference to FNS governance</th>
<th>Emphasis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constitution of the United Mexican States</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>Art. 1, 4, 27, V temporary</td>
<td>Establishes that the state must guarantee the right to food for the entire population. Emphasizes children’s right to food. All governmental decisions must aim to meet the basic needs of children. It promotes local economic schemes when linking local producers to rural schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidential Decree to establish the National System of the Crusade against Hunger</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Art. 1-14</td>
<td>Defines the National Crusade against Hunger as a strategy of inclusion and social welfare, which seeks to unify the efforts between the government, civil society and private enterprises in order to ensure food security and the right to food. Possessing an intersectoral nature, it establishes the Inter-secretariat Commission, the National Council and the Community Committees as coordinating bodies of government entities and civil society, and among territorial levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Law of Social Development</td>
<td>2004 (amended in 2013)</td>
<td>Art. 6</td>
<td>Food is considered a right for social development, as well as education, health and work, among others. It proposes the formulation of the National Social Development Policy, which should consider food as one of its pillars in overcoming poverty. Defines access to food as one of the key variables with which to measure poverty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law on Sustainable Rural Development</td>
<td>2001 (amended in 2012)</td>
<td>Art. 5, 13, 82, 178</td>
<td>The federal government and its decentralized counterparts should promote policies and programmes to support the social and economic well-being of farmers, communities and society in general, as well as contribute to food sovereignty and security, with a special emphasis on disadvantaged social groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Development Plan 2013-2018</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Target 2.1, 2.2, 2.5, 4.7, 4.10</td>
<td>FNS is included in the second and fourth national goal, México Incluyente (Inclusive Mexico) and México Próspero (Prosperous Mexico), respectively. Among its lines of action, it proposes the following: adapt the legal framework to strengthen FNS and the right to food, generate coordinated and concurrent public policies which address food insecurity of families living in extreme poverty, and ensure the right to food; in particular for those living in poverty, children, the elderly, and indigenous peoples and communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Crusade Against Hunger Strategy</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Art. 1-14</td>
<td>It is an effort to coordinate the institutions linked to FNS, with proposals for FNS to be considered a cross-cutting theme in the actions of all sectoral ministries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico Without Hunger National Program 2014-2018</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Targets 1-6</td>
<td>Presents 5 strategies: social participation, inter-agency and intergovernmental coordination, principle of territorality, productive approach, and innovation and coverage strategy. Its cross-cutting strategies include a modern and open government, democratizing productivity and a gender approach.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: prepared by author.
3.1.3 Opportunities for governance of FNS

Through the implementation of the FNS framework, government actions at the national, state and municipal levels are sought; aimed at achieving the shared objective of eradicating hunger. This new mode of operating entails changes in the rules of programme operations and policy design. Two main pillars are inter-agency coordination and local participation.

- Inter-secretariat Commission of the National Crusade against Hunger

Established in 2013, the Inter-secretariat Commission of the National Crusade against Hunger is a national body that coordinates 16 sectoral ministries and 3 government agencies, with the aim of incorporating a cross-cutting approach in the public initiatives on food and nutrition security. In terms of its functions, the Commission should propose effective mechanisms for the coordination of government policies and programmes, as well as approve the evaluation and monitoring mechanism of the CNCH, create working groups in order to carry out studies, research and analysis to address specific issues, and propose adjustments in the targeting of FNS programmes, among others.

The multisectoral approach of the CNCH has led to important contributions in social policy, having improved governmental programme coordination, and has created some instruments to facilitate decision-making. Within this context, the Inter-ministerial Commission has functioned as a space where decisions are made by leaving aside special interests, thus strengthening efforts to implement the government agenda. The progress made by changing the operational modality of the Secretariats of the Presidency is undoubtedly one of the key achievements of the strategy.

Taking into account the assessment carried out by CONEVAL, the Commission launched a national strategy of social inclusion, with an emphasis on institutional coordination to guarantee the social rights of the population. Additionally, in order to encourage coordination among territorial levels, the Commission made an agreement that the entities comprising it shall review the CNCH community plans, with the aim of implementing the programmes and addressing the available funds.

- National Council of the Crusade against Hunger

The National Council of the CNCH is a space for participation, which has become the main communication channel between the state, the private sector and civil society. Among its functions is the formulation of proposals to achieve the objectives of the CNCH and promote the efficiency of the FNS initiatives. This body should support civil society participation in the implementation, follow-up and evaluation of public policies.

The Council is comprised of the Secretariat of Social Development, which presides over it, along with an indeterminate number of advisors from the private sector, civil society organizations, academic institutions and international organizations; recognized for their expertise in FNS-related issues, social development and territorial planning, among others. In order to assume their functions, they should be organized into thematic commissions for the purpose of carrying out debates, studies and analysis on the issues of food insecurity and poverty, and with these inputs, create specific proposals for the Inter-secretariat Commission.

These spaces should be replicated at the local level, as key generators of dialogue and local agreements which complement and strengthen the governmental action plans.
These committees, which form part of the Comprehensive Inclusive Development Agreements\textsuperscript{23}, are coordinating bodies for local government initiatives, and are primarily responsible for implementing the CNCH in their respective territories. They must create their own work plans, along with mechanisms of oversight, monitoring and evaluation of the CNCH. In addition, they are responsible for formulating and proposing new programmes, as well as adjusting the budgets to effectively carry out the initiatives (CONEVAL, 2013).

\section*{Community Committees}

These spaces are designed as mechanisms for vulnerable populations to participate in local political processes, know their rights, understand the programmes available through the government, and to manage their benefits. In addition, these spaces promote social oversight and control of the CNCH, thus establishing conditions for civil society to monitor the fulfillment of the objectives and transparency of government actions. These committees are assisted by 8,000 brigadistas (volunteers) from academic institutions who provide support for the dialogue and promotion of actions of the CNCH.

The community committees were established\textsuperscript{24}, however, their influence in the CNCH was limited due to the lack of political experience and coordination with the government entities. This diminished the community participation in the CNCH and weakened the civic oversight of government actions.

\section*{Expert Committee}

The Expert Committees are opportunities for technicians and academics with experience in these types of processes to provide their knowledge in developing and guiding proposals and recommendations, in order to encourage the coordination between public entities, facilitate actions at the different territorial levels and contribute to achieving the objectives of the CNCH. In 2013, the first Expert Committee was established, composed of 9 social representatives\textsuperscript{25}; which included specialists in nutrition, rural development, indigenous peoples, social assistance, food quality and food security.

\subsection*{3.1.4. Characteristics of governance}

Mexico is one of the countries in the region with the most experience in launching initiatives to combat hunger and poverty. In recent years, the country has adjusted its strategies; seeking to achieve a greater impact and meet the needs of all vulnerable populations. Its current actions demonstrate the intentions to build an intersectoral framework of FNS, without interrupting the sectoral activities currently underway. This is clear evidence that it is technically and politically convenient to construct the FNS framework based on the progress already made, thus seeking to strengthen national institutions and current programmes.

\textsuperscript{23} The Comprehensive Inclusive Development Agreements are instruments which encourage the coordination of joint action between the government agencies that comprise the Inter-secretariat Commission of the CNCH and the state governments. These agreements seek to carry out the objectives of social development, with an emphasis on food and nutrition, and to define the destination of social expenditures among the national, state and municipal governments.

\textsuperscript{24} 89\% of the Community Committees were established and minutes were taken of the work carried out by 87\% of the committees, while 72\% conducted a local assessment, and 71\% created a community plan.

\textsuperscript{25} Information available at: http://www.sedesol.gob.mx/work/models/SEDESOL/Cruzada/9_COMITE_DE EXPERTOS.pdf
Table 5 - Institutional and programmatic achievements attained by Mexico which support FNS governance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions of FNS governance (FAO, 2011)</th>
<th>Key institutional and programmatic achievements in Mexico</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>The proposed design to implement the CNCH contemplates civil society participation, in order to generate proposals aimed at improving the impact of the programme. Hence, the National and State Councils were created, where 50 private and public organizations were involved. The Expert Committee was also formed, with the participation of individuals with extensive experience in the field of FNS; also promoting the establishment of community councils, where beneficiaries of government programmes can join together in these spaces to put forth new ideas and proposals to improve the actions of the CNCH. Through the government actors, the CNCH strategy promotes the involvement of all sectoral departments, seeking joint participation when implementing national policies related to FNS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency</td>
<td>In 2013, the National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy (CONEVAL) published the diagnostic of the CNCH design (CONEVAL, 2013), and in 2014 it published the framework and achievements of the instruments of evaluation of the programme (CONEVAL, 2014), along with the Social Policy Assessment Report, which analyzes the two first years of the CNCH (CONEVAL, 2014a). In 2015 it published the interim results of the CNCH (CONEVAL, 2015). To date, the CONEVAL continues to follow up on the actions of the programme, and had planned on presenting the CNCH Budget in 2016. These studies, carried out by an external entity for the Inter-secretarial Commission, intend to serve as an input for transparency and accountability in the implementation of FNS initiatives. - The Secretariat for Social Development (SEDESOL) implemented the Information System for Development (SIFODE), establishing a database to integrate the social needs of households and update the programmes, thus aiming to avoid the duplication of efforts and to more accurately identify the target population of CNCH. - All of the information available at the national and local levels has been made publicly available through the website of the Mexico Without Hunger Program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility*</td>
<td>- The Mexican Government accepts its responsibility to implement CNCH through a new institutional framework that brings together approximately 60 governmental programmes at the national level, in order to reach the most vulnerable populations in the country. The governing body of CNCH is the Inter-secretarial Commission, which unites the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples, the National Institute for Women and the National System for Integral Family Development, in order to ensure that the actions carried out are inclusive. In addition, the Commission is supported by government entities, such as CONEVAL.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Dimensions of FNS governance (FAO, 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accountability</th>
<th>Key institutional and programmatic achievements in Mexico</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In 2013, the National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy</td>
<td>- In 2013, the National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy created the Assessment Framework of the National Crusade against Hunger (2013-2019) to evaluate the implementation of the strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>created the Assessment Framework of the National Crusade against Hunger (2013-2019) to evaluate the implementation of the strategy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance with the FNS legal framework **</td>
<td>- National bodies were established at the institutional level in order to implement the CNCH. At the decentralized level, efforts were made to launch the local CNCH bodies, which have shown certain limitations in trying to promote a new manner of coordinating among various territorial levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- National bodies were established at the institutional level in order to implement the CNCH. At the decentralized level, efforts were made to launch the local CNCH bodies, which have shown certain limitations in trying to promote a new manner of coordinating among various territorial levels.</td>
<td>- At the operational level, approximately 60 government programmes have been brought together to administer the CNCH.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Analyzed as the responsibilities undertaken by the main FNS bodies.

** This dimension has been adapted from the original Rule of Law for the purpose of this document.

### Actors

Implementing the National Crusade against Hunger represents the effort to bring together 56 national government programmes. To achieve this, the Inter-secretarial Commission of the CNCH was formed, convening all sectoral bodies in charge of directing and coordinating actions in their specific areas in order to achieve common objectives. The challenge of this body is to create adequate planning and implementation mechanisms, so that the sectoral programmes are complemented by other actions that help improve their impact.

The sectoral ministries are joined by the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples, the National Institute for Women, and the National System for the Integral Development of the Family, to ensure that the activities are inclusive and equitable. This entity is responsible for top decision-making in the implementation of FNS policies, as well as in the capacity to share responsibilities and work in a coordinated manner; thus allowing for the participation of civil society and private sector actors in the administration of the CNCH.

*Figure 2- Background of the actors responsible for the National Crusade against Hunger at the national level*

Source: prepared by author, based on the legal FNS framework.
In order to support the actions of the Inter-secretarial Commission, the National Council of the CNCH was formed, and in 2013 it brought together 50 civic associations and non-governmental organizations; including the Unión de Productores de Hortalizas de la Central de Abastos (Union of Vegetable Producers of the Food Supply Center), Centro de Desarrollo Integral para el Campo (Center for Integral Rural Development), Save the Children, Asociación Mexicana del Banco de Alimentos (Mexican Association of Food Banks), Fundamex, Cáritas, Child Foundation, and Kilo de Ayuda.

In addition, the Expert Committee was formed at the national level, comprised of technicians and academics with extensive experience in FNS issues and local development, who contribute to the development and adaption of CNCH initiatives.

- Processes

The National Crusade against Hunger is a government strategy that aims to address the duplication and fragmentation of efforts through institutional coordination. During the initial years of implementation of the CNCH, emphasis has been placed on strengthening the institutional framework and coordinating the programmatic processes. In the medium-term, these efforts are expected to lead to greater unity of the joint actions, along with improved targeting to meet social needs.

The launching of the CNCH was marked by broad participation of key actors, who designed schemes for investment which the established individual and collective commitments, as well as their respective follow-up. In addition, social participation was included within the strategy of the CNCH, allowing for the formation of the Community Committees. The implementation of the CNCH was flexible in making adjustments and incorporating recommendations for implementation, as presented by CONEVAL. In turn, this has supported the implementation of programmes and evaluation of the actions.

The CNCH achieved coordinated work between the states and municipalities, where the local governments adopted the approach of the programme activities. Local information systems or planning frameworks have been created from these territorial agreements, which promote better use of resources. In situations where the local government do not incorporate the activities of the CNCH, the national programmes are implemented in the territory from the national level. In certain cases, the lack of coordination between territorial levels has led to the creation of parallel bodies and the duplication of efforts. Local community committees were formed as mechanisms for civil society participation. In some cases these bodies have been dismantled, prompting the Inter-ministerial Commission to modify its action plan in order to achieve greater participation and joint management of public programmes, together with civil society.

The institutional framework proposed by the CNCH strategy aims to encourage coordination between the internal governmental actors and civil society. For each territorial level, the creation of inter-ministerial commissions has been proposed, where all public sector entities could join forces to implement the initiatives of the CNCH. These spaces are supported by civil society during the initial stages of the public policy cycle through the national and state councils of the CNCH, as well as through the Expert Committee at the national level and the community committees at the local level. A willingness to share responsibilities and the opening up of consistent channels for dialogue will be fundamental for adequate interaction between these actors. Figure 3 outlines the institutional framework to involve public actors and civil society in implementing the programme.

The initial assessments of the CNCH indicate that it is changing the operational dynamics of the national government agencies. However, a sectoral approach is still taken at the local level; signaling the need to clarify the role and functions of the inter-agency state committees in order to avoid the duplication of efforts. It is therefore recommended that the institutional framework of the CNCH have a greater impact in the planning and design of government programmes to avoid
such duplication of efforts, along with strengthening the connection between the needs of the community and the available government programmes, among others (CONEVAL, 2015). Among the weaknesses in the implementation of the strategy is the methodology to identify the beneficiaries of the CNCH, as in some municipalities there are more beneficiaries than those identified by CONEVAL. In addition, the CNCH has not reached all of the vulnerable areas in the country. There are a lack of specific evaluation mechanisms for each programme, and the financial administration of the Crusade has not been assessed (SEDESOL, 2014a).

Among the challenges facing the CNCH is that of accurately defining the target population for the state programmes. It should be noted that at the time of initiation of the activities, the CNCH did not have any instrument to facilitate the proper identification of beneficiaries, which delayed the implementation and has caused some overlapping among government actions.

One of the significant changes observed in the CNCH is the adaption of the national regulations, in order for local governments to prioritize the funding of initiatives that address the goals of the Crusade. Through the Fiscal Coordination Law, it was established that resources from the Contribution Fund for Social Infrastructure can only be used to finance basic social projects and actions that are framed within the priorities of the Crusade.
The Mexican experience denotes the importance of developing a national FNS system, building on the progress made by the government. Recognizing that hunger is a multi-thematic issue, the efforts made by the Government of Mexico have prioritized the coordination of national and local programmes currently underway, which have funds allocated to the issue and are supported by various sectoral ministries. These actions have allowed for consistent progress in reducing hunger, in order to create the respective plans and specific programmes for FNS. This is undoubtedly a clear sign for the region that there are ways to give continuity to the work already underway and avoid starting from zero.

In order to ensure that part of the local government budgets address the funding of initiatives that support reaching the national hunger eradication goals, adjusting the regulations has become one of the main strategies to guarantee that actions for FNS receive the appropriate funding and that there is consistency between national and local initiatives.
3. CASE ANALYSIS

3.2. Brazil

3.2.1. Background

After several decades of social protests triggered by the government’s inability to meet societal requirements, the citizens of Brazil recognized the need to become involved in the search for sustainable and concrete solutions to the issue of hunger. Social movements began to see the fruits of their efforts in 1985, when the Ministry of Agriculture put forth a proposal to combat hunger, in which the term “food security” was officially used for the first time. One year later, the Ministry of Health held the 1st National Conference on Food and Nutrition, with participation from various social sectors. In 1988, the current Constitution was approved through the National Constituent Assembly, providing a new framework for Brazilian democracy; one which recognizes social rights, expands public power and acknowledges civic participation in the management of policies.

The following decade strengthened the process of Brazil’s fight against hunger. In 1991, the Workers’ Party put forth a national FNS policy proposal, and in 1993, the non-governmental organization “Acción de la Ciudadanía contra el Hambre, la Miseria y por la Vida” (Citizens’ Action against Hunger and Poverty and for Life) was created; awakening an unprecedented social mobilization. In the same year, the National Food Security Council was implemented by the government and served as the entity that held the first National Conference on Food Security, before being dismantled in 1995 by a change in priorities of the government in power at the time. These initiatives were key to bringing awareness to the issue of hunger and led the way for civic involvement in the forthcoming political processes.

The Zero Hunger Programme was created in 2001 by the Citizenship Institute26, as a proposal for the incoming President to address FNS in the country. The incoming government adopted the proposal and proclaimed that the fight against hunger would be a national priority. The political will enabled the revitalization of the National Council of Food and Nutrition Security in the year 2003, ensuring its functioning to this day. This key authority in the fight against food insecurity has organized and led four National Conferences on FNS, and has promoted various programmes to be implemented by government entities. In addition, CONSEA has promoted efforts to approve the Law on Food and Nutrition Security, along with the strengthening of the inter-agency framework of FNS and the Constitutional Amendment to include the right to food in the Brazilian Constitution.

Brazil currently has a solid institutional framework, which promotes the principles of multi-sectoral actions, civic participation and local-national coordination; with the aim of combating food and nutrition insecurity. Nevertheless, there are still significant challenges to overcome; such as the territorial nature of the institutional system, the support for civil society advocacy, and the adaptation of this framework to potential changes in policy. The legal and programmatic efforts made during the past decade have been key to reducing the incidence of undernourishment27, and have positioned Brazil as a point of reference for Latin America in the fight against hunger.

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26 The Citizenship Institute stemmed from the “parallel government” that was organized under the leadership of Lula da Silva after the electoral defeat in 1989. This entity put forth alternative public policies, while carrying out a critical follow-up of the government actions. The “Caravanas de la Ciudadanía” (Citizenship Caravans) were created as spaces for discussion, research, information and participatory formulation of inclusive policies.

27 There were 19.9 million undernourished people in Brazil in the 2000-2002 biennium, and after efforts were made, the country met the international hunger goals set by the World Food Summit and Millennium Development Goals. Statistical data from the year 2015 reveals that the percentage of those suffering from undernourishment in Brazil has fallen to 1.53% of the total population.
3.2.2. Current legal framework and operational instruments

In Brazil, the legal instruments for food and nutrition security have laid the groundwork to promote coordinated actions between government entities and civil society as key actors in these processes; providing the necessary tools to ensure the fulfilment of the right to adequate food in a progressive and sustainable manner. Hereafter, a brief overview is made of the Brazilian mechanisms which integrate the framework in the fight against food insecurity.

- Constitution of the Federal Republic of Brazil

Through the approval in 2010 of the Constitutional Amendment N°64, Article 6 of the Constitution was amended to recognize food as a social right, together with education, health, work, and housing (Constitución de la República Federativa de Brasil, 1988). It also recognizes the right of workers to receive a minimum wage, which should allow for meeting vital basic needs such as food, health and education, among others.

The amendment recognizes that ensuring the right to life, health, food and education to children and adolescents is a duty of both the state and society. In addition, it mentions that nutritional needs should be met through school feeding and health programmes, throughout all stages of basic education. These programmes shall be funded with resources from social contributions and other budgetary funds.

The inclusion of the right to food in the Constitution calls for the state to review and adjust its FNS initiatives, including its commitments to promoting agricultural production, organizing the food supply, and guarantees assistance and public health. With these adjustments, all of the national policies and programmes are encouraged to incorporate a rights-based approach.

- Organic Law on Food and Nutrition Security (LOSAN)

The Organic Law on Food and Nutrition Security recognizes food as a fundamental human right, and states that its promotion, monitoring and fulfillment are duties of the government. Accordingly, the policies and actions deemed necessary should be adopted for its implementation, along with the creation of adequate instruments to enable its enforceability.

The Law (LOSAN) promotes the development of the National System on Food and Nutritional Security (SISAN) as the main tool to ensure the right to food and food security. The guidelines of the SISAN include the intersectoral policies and programmes - both governmental and non-governmental - along with the decentralization of actions between state entities; seeking improved coordination between the budget and administration, and monitoring the food situation to support decision-making.

The SISAN aims to develop and implement FNS policies and plans, encouraging the integration of efforts among the government and civil society, and supporting the monitoring of the fulfillment of FNS strategies. It is composed of the National Conference on Food and Nutrition Security, the National Council of Food and Nutrition Security (CONSEA), the Inter-ministerial Chamber of Food and Nutrition Security (CAISAN), entities linked to FNS at the state, district and municipal levels, along with private institutions interested in participating under the guidelines of the national system.
Presidental Decrees

Presidential Decree No. 6.272 came into force in 2007, establishing CONSEA as a direct advisory body to the Presidency of the Republic, and recognizing that it must convene the National Conference on Food and Nutrition Security every 4 years, as well as monitor the joint actions within the National FNS Policy, promote permanent mechanisms for coordination between state, district and municipal entities, and ensure the fulfillment of the human right to adequate food. In addition, it involves all sectoral ministries and special secretariats, in order to support joint participation with civil society within this body.28

Presidential Decree No. 6.273 was established in the same year, and recognizes the responsibilities of CAISAN in developing a national FNS policy and the national FNS plan; taking into account the guidelines issued by CONSEA, coordinating the implementation of these operational instruments and monitoring their progress.

Presidential Decree No. 7.272 was issued in 2010, approving the objectives and guidelines of the national FNS policy, and supporting its management, financing, monitoring and evaluation.

National Food and Nutrition Security Policy (PNSAN)

The PNSAN is the tangible expression of the guidelines and principles arising from the LOSAN. It recommends the objectives of identifying the food and nutrition insecurity situation in Brazil and disseminating the findings, along with joint programmes and sectoral actions; promoting sustainable systems of food production, distribution and consumption, and incorporating food sovereignty and the human right to adequate food into state policies.

The PNSAN has become the main instrument for the administration of SISAN. The responsibility for its implementation at the territorial level is assumed by local governments, so that under their leadership the national coordinating bodies are replicated, along with the national and operational instruments at state and municipal levels.

In order to fund the PNSAN, it was decided that the sectoral ministries and government entities shall be responsible for allocating funds at the decentralized level; obtained through regular budgetary allocations and specific resources of the SISAN. In addition, all bodies comprising the SISAN shall guarantee the adequate conditions and financial resources for civil society to be able to participate in the policy implementation.

National Food and Nutrition Security Plan

PNSAN is the key instrument for implementation of the national FNS policy, and was developed with a cross-cutting approach by the CAISAN, based on the priorities defined in a participatory manner by the National Conference and the CONSEA. The Plan is aimed at strengthening programmes and priority actions to guarantee FNS, as well as consolidate its funding mechanisms.

Based on the guidelines established in the 5th National Conference on FNS, held in November 2015, the 2nd National FNS Plan 2016-2019 was created. It is composed of 121 goals and 99 actions, with the aim of overcoming nine challenges, such as promoting universal access to adequate food, developing democratic and healthy food systems, strengthening the institutional character.

28 This Decree was modified in 2014, and later in 2016 (Decree No. 8.743) to include new national secretariats within the composition of CONSEA. One of the strengths of this body is undoubtedly its intersectoral character, which is supported by the government.
of the SISAN at the decentralized level, food education, preventing malnutrition and expanding access to water for rural populations (MDS Brazil, 2016).

The CAISAN is responsible for identifying the necessary budget to comply with the Plan, thus promoting strategies to ensure coverage of the vulnerable population through actions for FNS, carried out in a sustainable manner.

<p>| <strong>Table 7- Legal and operational framework of governance of FNS in Brazil</strong> |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Instrument</strong></th>
<th><strong>Year approved</strong></th>
<th><strong>Reference to FNS governance</strong></th>
<th><strong>Emphasis</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constitution of the Federal Republic of Brazil</td>
<td>1988 (reform in 2010)</td>
<td>Art. 6, 200, 208, 212, 227.</td>
<td>Includes food as a social right, and recognizes that the state should review and adapt FNS initiatives in order to attain such right. It recognizes the right of all workers to a minimum wage that guarantees their basic needs, including food. Dictates that health is a priority for the different levels of government and tasks them with the responsibility of ensuring its fulfillment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic Law on Food and Nutrition Security</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Art.1-13</td>
<td>Establishes that adequate food is a fundamental human right and suggests that the formulation of policies, plans, programmes and actions should guarantee the fulfillment of such right. Creates a National Food and Nutrition Security System that includes the participation of government entities and civil society; with an intersectoral approach, civic participation and social organizations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidential Decree</td>
<td>2007/2010</td>
<td>N°6.272, N°6.273, N°7.272.</td>
<td>These decrees strengthen the operations of the SISAN, in order to identify the functions and characteristics of the Inter-ministerial Chamber of Food and Nutrition Security and the National Council on Food and Nutrition Security. Ratifies the objectives and guidelines of the National FNS policy and the National FNS Plan, providing political support at the highest level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Food and Nutrition Security Policy</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Art. 1-22</td>
<td>The objectives of the National Policy are: i) Identify, analyze, and disseminate the findings on the determining factors of food insecurity; (ii) Coordinate programmes in various sectors; (iii) Promote sustainable systems of production and food consumption; and (iv) Incorporate food sovereignty and the human right to food into state policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Food and Nutrition Security Plan</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Goals 1-9</td>
<td>Identifies 9 key challenges for the 2016-2019 period, including: promoting universal access to food, productive inclusion of rural areas, sustainable production, expanding access to water in rural areas, strengthening territories, and social participation in the SISAN, among others. Goals have been established for each challenge, along with the government institutions responsible for their fulfillment and alignment with other national operational instruments. A section of the Plan is dedicated to demonstrating the consistency with the Sustainable Development Goals. The Plan must be reviewed every two years, taking into account the guidelines of the CAISAN and the proposals of the CONSEA.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: prepared by author.
3.2.3. Bodies of multisectoral coordination linked to FNS

The National System on Food and Nutritional Security (SISAN) was formed by a partnership of shared visions and strategies between the government institutions and civil society, with the aim of achieving the collective goal of eradicating hunger and guaranteeing the human right to adequate food, as established in the Constitution. The institutional framework proposed by the SISAN is the most tangible response to the way in which the state assumes its obligations with respect to FNS, in an intersectoral and connected manner at the different territorial levels. The National System is comprised of the following bodies:

- **National Conference on Food and Nutrition Security**

  The National Conference is a space for discussion and national debate, held every 4 years and convened by the CONSEA. The guidelines for the National FNS Policy were established through forums and thematic roundtables with approximately 2,000 participants from across the country; one-third of whom represented government entities and two-thirds represented civil society. This participatory experience draws from similar processes, albeit of a smaller scale (state and municipal); seeking to include the different local requirements and specific proposals from each territory at the national level.

  Five conferences have been held so far, with the first taking place in 1994 and organizing a significant mobilization of social movements and citizens’ committees. This Conference provided several guidelines for achieving FNS in the country. This first initiative led the way for civil society to become empowered and have an impact on the future political processes of FNS. The second Conference was held in 2004 in Pernambuco, and its key challenge was to renew the social participation that had diminished for a decade. The main proposal that emerged from the local conferences, and which is underpinned in the National Conference, was the consolidation of the legal FNS framework. The third Conference was held in 2007 in Ceará, where the focus of debate was the expansion of the FNS system at the municipal and state levels, in order to support the implementation of the legal framework. The fourth Conference, held in 2011 in Bahía, focused on healthy diets with a rights-based approach, allowing the participants to discuss specific topics for the development of the national policy. The fifth Conference was held in Brasilia in 2015, centered on bringing food production closer to the end-consumers, and building bridges between urban and rural themes.

  These participation mechanisms have enabled the state to share responsibility with civil society, especially in determining the central social issues and identifying local solutions in an inclusive manner. These activities have meant that government institutions are more receptive to the demands and opinions of the general public. The key results of these discussions are, in part, the sense of ownership and involvement of civil society in the fight against food insecurity, and the legitimacy of the activities that are undertaken by the government.

- **Inter-ministerial Chamber for Food and Nutrition Security (CAISAN)**

  Created in 2007, the CAISAN is a political body where the key decision-making of the SISAN takes place. It brings together the highest authorities of the 21 sectoral ministries and secretariats of the Presidency, in order to develop and coordinate the implementation of the National FNS Plan. In accordance with the responsibilities established by law, the CAISAN should develop the National FNS Policy and Plan, as well as manage their implementation and ensure the coordination of initiatives in each state.

  The CAISAN is formed by a plenary session, where government representatives participate; tasked with forming technical committees to support the activities carried out by the CAISAN. It has created two national FNS plans since its inception. These mechanisms stem from the guidelines
prioritized by civil society in the participatory bodies, thus seeking to ensure that the government programmes meet the basic needs of the citizens.

Through compliance with the National FNS Plan and policy, 27 state-level CAISAN have been formed as bodies which possess a decree and rules of operation, thus strengthening their institutional framework. In addition, they have led the development of the state FNS plans.

- **National Council of Food and Nutrition Security - CONSEA**

The CONSEA is a consultative body for dialogue the government entities and civil society, created in 1993 but dissolved two years later. In 2003 it was reactivated, when the government at the time considered hunger to be a maximum priority issue in the country. The CONSEA is comprised of one-third government representatives and two-thirds civil society. Its president must answer to civil society and it should operate as a body attached to the Presidency to provide guidance. This institutional design ensures the influence of civil society in the decision-making of the government. It is organized by plenary speakers who meet every two months, along with the Secretary General, the Executive Secretary and seven thematic commissions to discuss specific topics.

The role assumed by CONSEA within SISAN makes it an arena for political deliberation and decision-making, aiming to avoid potential tension between the particular decisions and interests of the sectoral bodies. Its intersectoral approach enables FNS policies and programmes to include various ministries and secretariats. As an advisory body, all resolutions issued by CONSEA must be approved by the Presidency before going into effect (Menezes, 2012).

The National Council is in charge of convening and leading the National FNS Conference, which has made it the most important proponent of mobilization around the issue of FNS in Brazil. Among the most significant milestones of its administration are the creation of the Food Purchase Program (PAA), the incorporation of improvements to the Bolsa Familia Program, the development of the Harvest Plan specifically for family farmers, and the recovery of the value per capita of the National School Feeding Program. In addition, CONSEA was a mediator between the government and the Articulation of the Semi-Arid Coalition (ASA) for the implementation of the One Million Cisterns Program. At the legislative level, the CONSEA has had significant impact on the development of the Organic Law on Food and Nutrition Security and the School Feeding Law, in addition to spearheading the campaign “Food: a right for all”, which defended the approval of the Constitutional Amendment N°64 to include the food as a social right.

In compliance with the National FNS Policy and Plan, bodies with these characteristics are being replicated at the state level. There are currently 27 State Councils for Food and Nutrition Security, which organize their respective state conferences; where local needs are identified and solutions are proposed from within the territories, and the representatives are selected to participate and transmit these local concerns at the National Conference.

### 3.2.4. Characteristics of governance

The formal inter-agency agreements, which have been supported through the legal and programmatic framework in Brazil, bring together all of the sectoral ministries and special secretariats of the Presidency in a clear multisectoral effort. In addition, civil society joins the decision-making process; recognizing, on the one hand, that the actors - whether governmental or non-governmental – cannot solve the problem of hunger unilaterally, and, on the other hand, aiming to create a broad network of actors who cooperate, coordinate and communicate in order to achieve common goals. These processes have achieved several important milestones that have become points of reference in Latin America, some of which are outlined in the table below.
### Table 8 - Institutional and programmatic achievements in Brazil which support governance of FNS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions of governance of FNS (FAO, 2011)</th>
<th>Key institutional and programmatic achievements in Brazil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Participation**                          | - Civil society actively participates through two formal advocacy channels (the National Conference and the CONSEA), through which it seeks to correct the asymmetries in decision-making.  
   - The National Conference on FNS is a space for interaction between the state and civil society, in which a variety of interests and values are expressed and considered, in order to determine the next steps for government actions. This participatory exercise has not only promoted civil society involvement but has also strengthened the democratic system.  
   - The CONSEA, as a participatory space for civil society and government entities, has become the main catalyst for the institutional framework of FNS. It assumes the task of positioning civil society as a leader in this space of decision-making and evaluation of initiatives.  
   - On the other hand, the government actors participate within a high-level political space, where the leaders of sectoral ministries and secretariats of the Presidency come together for joint decision-making. |
| **Transparency**                           | - The Monitoring System of the National FNS Plan\(^{29}\) aims to guide and monitor the implementation of the Plan’s objectives. This tool enables transparency of government actions and supports decision-making.  
   - Participatory mechanisms, such as these local and national conferences, have become spaces which seek to ensure the legitimacy of the public administration, in order to allow civil society to determine the lines of action of the government. This inclusive decision-making structure has not only strengthened transparency within these processes, it has also encouraged civic involvement as an active part of the actions for FNS |
| **Responsibility\(^{30}\)**               | - The institutional framework proposed in the LOSAN has been consolidated and is in compliance with the commitments made. Five national conferences have been held thus far. The CONSEA actively participates throughout the policy cycle, and in cooperation with the CAISAN it has developed operational instruments for the SISAN to be able to fulfill its responsibilities.  
   - In order to improve the performance of the SISAN, the actors involved have assumed responsibility for the progress made with the institutional framework of FNS in local governments; strengthening the intersectoral process, and building on the mechanisms for social participation (national system and policy of social participation). |
| **Accountability**                         | - In order to promote accountability, several monitoring and evaluation tools have been developed by the SISAN. Among these is the DATASAN\(^{29}\); which brings together systems of sectoral monitoring; along with the Brazilian Food Insecurity Scale, which is carried out every four years and allows for disaggregating specific information; and the Food and Nutrition Insecurity mapping of traditional peoples and communities. In order to perform such mapping, the single registry of the government’s social programmes is consulted, along with the FNS mapping that is carried out on a yearly basis and which provides data on the administration of the SISAN at the state and municipal levels. |

• Actors

The National FNS System is comprised of government representatives from all sectoral ministries and special secretariats of the Presidency, as well as civil society representatives. Newly created public entities have been incorporated into the SISAN to promote greater coordination with this body. This endeavor undertaken in Brazil has undoubtedly become the most influential intersectoral experience in addressing food insecurity in Latin America.

The government actors participate in two decision-making bodies at the national level. With the adopted framework and the incorporation of all sectoral government entities, this clearly demonstrates the political will of the SISAN. The intersectoral approach within the framework and the actions recognizes the causes of hunger, and gives a clear example of the importance of including FNS as a cross-cutting strategy in the actions of the government.

*Figure 4* - Background of the actors responsible for implementing the National Food and Nutrition Security System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions of governance of FNS (FAO, 2011)</th>
<th>Key institutional and programmatic achievements in Brazil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compliance with the legal FNS framework **</td>
<td>- As established by the law, national bodies have been developed at the institutional level (National Conference, CONSEA and CAISAN). Additionally, other bodies have been formed that are similar to those of the state and municipalities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- At the operational level, the SISAN has been instrumental in establishing the legal framework of FNS to support the Law (LOSAN) and the Constitutional Amendment, in order to include the human right to food right in the Constitution. Thus far, SISAN has developed two national FNS policies and two national plans, and participates in the implementation and monitoring of programmes; such as the Food Purchase Program (PAA), the National Program for Strengthening Family Agriculture (PRONAF), and the National School Feeding Program (PNAE), among others.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Analyzed as the responsibilities undertaken by the main FNS bodies.
** This dimension has been adapted from the original Rule of Law for the purpose of this document.
Non-governmental actors, in turn, are seen as the most significant within the SISAN to participate in decision-making and follow up on the actions carried out. Within the CONSEA, relevant civil society organizations are coordinated, such as the National Federations of Farmers, and of Workers; second-tier associations of producers, nutritionists and consumers; indigenous peoples organizations and Quilombola communities; national forums for FNS and urban reform; industry associations and supermarkets; women’s movements; the Consumer Protection Institute; researchers and academia; and religious entities, among others.

The highest expression of civic participation in the framework of FNS is achieved through the national conferences, where territorial representatives put forth local proposals and provide guidelines to be able to begin creating public policies. In the fifth National Conference of FNS, 935 civil society representatives from 26 states were gathered to present and discuss local proposals to be included in the national policy. This forum for discussion was attended by 465 representatives of governmental entities who, through dialogue, sought to connect the territorial needs with the actions of the government (Presidencia de la República Federativa de Brasil, 2015).

The inclusion of social actors in the creation of the FNS policy has strengthened government activities and has given greater legitimacy to its actions, which could result in greater governance. The connection with civil society in decision-making, to be formally adopted by the public entities in order to solve the issue of food insecurity, has led to joint stewardship of the actions implemented; creating a sense of ownership and generating collaborative forms of governance.

• Processes

The institutional efforts to include civil society in public policy-making have proven effective through continuous political commitment, as well as through the government’s approach of recognizing citizens as fundamental actors in the implementation of FNS initiatives. Within the national conferences and in the CONSEA, social participation has played a fundamental role. These participatory spaces are present throughout the public policy cycle, especially in the identification of the public agenda through local and national consultation processes, in addition to ensuring joint initiatives and evaluating the efforts made. In these activities, the CONSEA has had the technical capacity and political support for institutionalizing participatory mechanisms, as well as coordinating public policy formulation in response to citizens’ needs.

The dynamic proposed by the LOSAN to implement public policy incorporates a set of actors and bodies, where it is articulated that they operate under principles of specialization. Implementing this proposal requires a joint institutional effort, in order to adopt a scheme which allows for sharing more responsibilities, and formalizing the spaces for debate, discussion and proposals. Hereunder, Figure 5 provides a basic description of the relations effected when implementing public policies, analyzing these through a connection of the functional and territorial levels\textsuperscript{31}.

\textsuperscript{31} The processes for creating public policies are a sequence of situations or moments, in which various stakeholders interact in a formal or informal manner. This analysis seeks to understand the basic manner of interaction between the entities associated with FNS, the potential overlapping that may exist between these or other actors, and the changes they might present throughout the public policy cycle.
This highlights the connection between all of the leading governmental entities in the respective sectors; in order to plan, implement and follow up on intersectoral initiatives to tackle food insecurity. In addition, the incorporation of civil society as an actor with decision-making power confers public support for the operational instruments that promote the right to food. On the other hand, the legal framework provides a solid foundation on which to strengthen these interactions between civil society and the government, so that they can achieve the necessary connection to take on future political, social, economic or external changes. All of these factors create a framework that supports individual and collective actions; lending consistency to the government programmes to address societal needs and generating increased participation, connection and coordination between actors, which strengthens the Brazilian political system.

Table 9- Summary of the key aspects of governance of FNS in the Brazilian context

- Based on the Brazilian experience, the process of governance is envisioned as a distinguishing element. The CONSEA is seen as a high-level political body which directly advises the Presidency, in which civil society actively participates and even takes the lead. This body, upon using a multisectoral approach, facilitates a wide and diverse network of actors to coordinate the activities.

- Unwavering political commitment has been a key factor in the development of the institutional structure of FNS, as well as in the implementation of the legal and programmatic framework.

- Civil society engagement during the public policy cycle represents the empowerment of citizens in these processes. These social actors have become a fundamental pillar in the creation of the National Plan and other strategies for FNS. This involvement creates favorable conditions to guarantee the sustainability of these initiatives and ensures the operability of the institutions over time.
3. **CASE ANALYSIS**

3.3. **El Salvador**

3.3.1. **Background**

After decades of internal armed conflict, which resulted in the worst economic and social crisis in the history of El Salvador, the Peace Accords were held in 1992; reforming the legal and institutional system as the foundation of democracy, in order to improve the political situation in the country and support a better future for society. The following years were marked by the momentum of the free market economic model, promoting structural adjustment measures, which led to a reduction in the size of the government, the privatization of state companies and the opening up of the economy to the international market. These adjustments, contrary to improving economic conditions and generating more employment, instead dismantled most of the programmes and policies in favor of the agricultural sector, also diminishing public investment in rural areas (Ávalos, 2013).

The efforts to guarantee food and nutrition security in El Salvador were strengthened after the global economic crisis in 2008 and 2009, which saw historic price shocks and volatility, along with the beginning of a new political cycle in 2009 with the entrance of a center-left government for the first time since returning to free elections in 1989; which proposed a political strategy of structural and institutional changes characterized by a gradual approach, predictability and compatibility with the current constitutional order (Gobierno de la República de El Salvador, 2012). With this foundation, the Government of El Salvador promoted new processes for social dialogue and participation, which resulted in the creation of the National Food and Nutrition Security Council (CONASAN), along with the National Food and Nutrition Security Policy 2011-2015, the Family Farming Plan, and the coordination of social programmes through the Universal Social Protection System (FAO, 2015a).

In recent years, the political processes on the topic of food security have been strengthened, providing a multidimensional perspective within the human rights based approach. These actions have shown tangible results, such as the establishment of specific institutions which promote the processes of FNS, the approval of laws that support continuous work, and the programmes currently under implementation. Among the challenges remaining are those of maintaining the political decision to promote FNS from the highest level, strengthening and modernizing the government capacities to render the legal and institutional framework effective, and encouraging compliance with the key pillars of governance; such as participation, accountability, institutional coordination, local capacity development, and mechanisms of monitoring and evaluation (FAO, 2014a).

3.3.2. **Current legal framework and operational instruments**

The institutional and programmatic efforts in El Salvador are carried out under a legal framework which, starting in 2009, has been enhanced through several laws, such as those of Promotion, Protection and Support of Maternal Breastfeeding; of Comprehensive Protection of Children and Adolescents; of Consumer Protection; of Territorial Management; and of Access to Public Information, among others. This legal structure aims to promote favorable conditions in order to guarantee the right to food. In addition, there are several legal and operative instruments which address the dynamics of FNS governance. Several of these are described hereunder.
The Constitution of El Salvador was approved in 1983, with the latest modification carried out in 2014. Although the right to food is not made explicit, the Constitution focuses on employment, social security and health as fundamental social rights; recognizing that “all people have the right to life, to physical and moral integrity, to freedom, to security, to work...” It emphasizes that health constitutes a public good, and that the state and its citizens are obliged to ensure its preservation, in addition to establishing that the Government of El Salvador is primarily responsible for determining, managing and implementing the national health policy.

The Constitution recognizes that the family is the core unit of society and that the state should protect it, calling for the necessary legal framework and institutional structure, in order to assure integration, well-being and social, cultural and economic development. In addition, it establishes that the state shall support increased production, productivity and sustainable use of resources, in order to generate basic conditions which support the development of the productive sectors, as well as defend consumers’ interests.

In 2012, a constitutional reform process was launched, in order to include the right to food and the right to water within Article No. 69. In the first instance, this modification was accepted in April of the same year by a concurrent vote of 81 out of 84 legislators of the plenary session. As of May 2012, a new legislative body entered into force, tasked with ratifying this constitutional reform. Unfortunately, no agreement was reached and the right to food has not yet been ratified in the Constitution (Procuraduría para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos de El Salvador, 2015).

Decrees which establish and modify the National Food and Nutrition Security Council

In 2009, through the Decree of the Presidency No. 63, FNS is established as a priority action for the government, to be addressed by means of a National Policy with a human rights-based approach. In addition, it recognizes the obligation of the state to implement the necessary measures to promote, respect, guarantee and assure the right to food.

In terms of the institutional character of FNS, the guidelines are established for the organization and functioning of the National Food and Nutrition Security Council (CONASAN), which is comprised of the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, the Technical Secretariat of Planning and the Secretariat of Social Inclusion of the Presidency. Among the responsibilities to be undertaken are, among others: the participatory development of the National FNS Policy, the construction of the National FNS Action Plan, the proposal of FNS guidelines which will have to be sent to the Presidency, and the approval of FNS-related projects that are created by governmental organizations, the establishment of follow-up mechanisms and monitoring of the fulfillment of the national policy (Gobierno de la República de El Salvador, 2009).

This Decree creates a Technical Committee (COTSAN), comprised of representatives of government bodies, chosen by the President, in order to support the CONASAN in fulfilling its obligations.

In 2011, the Presidential Decree No. 127 was enacted, improving the coordination of CONASAN and COTSAN, and giving primary responsibility for this task to the Ministry of Health.
Draft Law on Food and Nutritional Sovereignty and Security

In parallel to the creation of the National FNS Policy, a draft bill for the FNS law was prepared; the same which had previously been developed by the CONASAN, along with the key governmental organizations involved in this field. The first draft bill was submitted by the Economic and Social Council for discussion and was later presented to the Legislative Assembly, initiating its debate in 2013. In the same year, two additional proposals for the FNS Law were presented on behalf of farmers’ organizations gathered in the Round Table on Food Sovereignty, along with the University of El Salvador (Bak, 2015).

Taking these contributions into account, the Agricultural Commission of the Assembly developed a new draft bill on FNS. The objective of this proposed law is to coordinate and give coherence to the government actions, seeking an improved dynamic between governmental and non-governmental organizations through the conformation of the National System of Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security, in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the actions related to FNS. The draft bill is still being analyzed and studied within the Agricultural Commission, where each article is under debate and pending approval.

National Food and Nutrition Security Policy. Ensuring the right to a healthy diet with inclusion and equity (2011-2015)

Approved in 2011, this policy is the result of processes of consultation and dialogue, which defined the strategic lines of the policy and their respective actions for achieving food security. Its primary objective is to guarantee the right to a healthy diet for all in El Salvador, recognizing that intersectoral coordination, social participation, decentralization and permanent dialogue are key elements for its implementation.

The strategic lines include improving food production and guaranteeing access, promoting healthy eating practices, ensuring access to - and quality of - basic water and sanitation services, the implementation of an information system, monitoring and evaluation of FNS, and developing and strengthening the institutional framework of FNS, among others (Gobierno de la República de El Salvador, 2011).

Five Year Plan 2014-2019

The Five Year Plan of El Salvador represents a path to guide the way for the governmental and non-governmental organizations, in order to direct their efforts towards fulfilling the shared goals that have been established in a participatory manner, and which are expected to be achieved through dynamic participation of the actors involved in the country’s development.

This planning mechanism supports FNS through four objectives of the Five Year Plan, establishing strategies and guidelines which promote joint efforts in the main sectors of agriculture, health, social protection, inclusion, education and environment. In addition, it establishes a strategic line specifically aimed at strengthening food sovereignty and security, through which it supports the development of sustainable productive systems to promote inclusive production.

32 The consultation process to define the National Policy included 1,344 individuals from 42 municipalities of the 14 departments in the country. The groups who participated were comprised of educators, health sector employees, agricultural technicians, representatives from the Foro Oriental para la SAN (Eastern Forum for FNS), mayors, council members and other leaders. A total of 2,942 individuals participated.

33 The following objectives clearly allude to FNS: Objective 1) Revitalize the national economy, in order to create opportunities for prosperity for families, businesses and the country; Objective 2) Develop the human potential of the Salvadoran population; Objective 4) Progressively guarantee access and universal coverage of quality health services to the Salvadoran population; and Objective 7) Transition towards an environmentally sustainable society and economy; resilient in the face of climatic change.
In terms of promoting governance, Objective 11 states: “To advance towards the construction of a harmonious state, focused on its citizens and results-oriented”, strategies and guidelines have been identified which support improved agreements, such as strengthening the dialogue and the pact between the state, civil society and the private sector, along with the construction of multi-stakeholder bodies to support national agreements, strengthen joint national-local coordination by means of management systems of territorial development, promote a territorial approach in public policies, encourage the shared responsibility of civil society in government actions, and facilitate mechanisms for the people to exercise social oversight, among others.

**National Strategic Plan for Food and Nutrition Security 2013 -2016**

The National Strategic Plan for FNS is an instrument that encourages a multidisciplinary and comprehensive approach, in order to improve the conditions in which food and nutrition security initiatives are developed. For its formulation, a process of consultation was carried out between the CONASAN, the COTSAN and governmental organizations linked to FNS; building on the National FNS Policy.

In its initial year, the Plan proposed to strengthen the legal and institutional framework, as well as improve the conditions for FNS-related actions; through the design and implementation of the intersectoral coordination strategy, the design of the FNS surveillance and monitoring system, and the strengthening of social protection programmes. For its second and third year, it proposes consolidating the institutional structure, along with improving the quality and coverage of the programmes, capacity development, strengthening the intersectoral coordination, and maintaining the monitoring of initiatives carried out. For its third and final year, it contemplates evaluating the impact, reviewing the legal framework and updating the Plan.

**Departmental and municipal action plans for FNS**

Within the actions implemented by the CONASAN, and in compliance with the Strategic Plan, a territorial approach has been applied to the institutional structure of FNS. These activities have allowed for the formation of decentralized Food and Nutrition Security Committees; entities led by local authorities and which promote joint coordination between the government, social organizations, local development associations, NGOs and academia.

The preliminary results can be observed in the department of Chalatenango and the municipality of Las Vueltas; territories which have created their respective committees, and through local participatory processes, have identified their action plans for FNS. These planning instruments promote the intersectoral character of local actions, and serve as a mechanism of coordination between the national strategic guidelines and the local needs and proposals.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Year approved</th>
<th>Reference to governance of FNS</th>
<th>Emphasis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constitution of the Republic of El Salvador</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Art 1, 2, 32, 37, 65, 69, 101</td>
<td>It identifies the state as primarily responsible for guaranteeing health, economic well-being and social justice. Affirms that all people have the right to life, physical and moral integrity (...), and to be protected through the preservation and defense of these rights. Establishes the family as the foundation of society, to be protected by the state through the legislation and institutions, in order to ensure their well-being and social development. Health is considered a public good and the state is obligated to guarantee its preservation and recovery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidential Decree N°63</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Art. 1-10</td>
<td>It identifies FNS as a priority action for the state, which shall be addressed by means of a National Policy, based on a right to food approach. It states that the measures taken by the state to ensure the fulfillment of the right to the food shall be classified by: - Level of respect (abstention from negatively affecting the enjoyment of such right); - Level of guarantee (legal or administrative measures to prevent non-state actors from affecting the enjoyment of the right); - Level of promotion and development (measures to facilitate the fulfillment of the right to food for all); and, - Level of direct satisfaction (measures to ensure the right to food for vulnerable groups). The National Food and Nutrition Security Council (CONASAN) is established as the coordinating body of the actions in this area. The Technical Committee of Food and Nutrition Security (COTSAN) was created to support the work of the CONASAN.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Food and Nutrition Security Policy</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Strategic Lines 1-8</td>
<td>The National Policy establishes 8 strategic lines, their respective activities and the government agencies responsible for their implementation. The strategic lines seek to: Promote safe food production; guarantee access to food; encourage healthy eating; ensure access to health, water and sanitation services; implement a FNS information system; and strengthen the institutional structure of FNS, among others. It encourages the agreements between the state and civil society to be based, among others, on the principles of rights, inclusion, intersectoral coordination, social participation, solidarity, joint responsibility, and decentralization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Year approved</td>
<td>Reference to governance of FNS</td>
<td>Emphasis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
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<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five Year Plan 2014-2019</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Objectives 1, 2, 4, 7, 11.</td>
<td>It establishes a specific strategic line to strengthen food sovereignty and security aimed at developing elements which support production, in order to improve the supply system and cooperation among small producers. Determines that the agreements between the state and civil society must promote strengthening the dialogue and consensus, as well as the construction of intersectoral bodies; encouraging coordination at the national and local levels, in order to encourage greater shared responsibility of civil society in the policies and to encourage social oversight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Strategic Plan of Food and Nutrition Security 2013-2016</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Strategic lines 1-8</td>
<td>The Plan identifies government leaders responsible for fulfilling the 8 objectives and the 34 lines of action. For its implementation, an intersectoral approach is encouraged with the Legislative Assembly to strengthen the legal framework of FNS, and grants the CONASAN and COTSAN a coordinating role to ensure organized actions. It recognizes the importance of capacity development for a comprehensive approach to FNS, and promotes institutional coordination at the national, departmental and local levels in order to support the implementation of the FNS initiatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Plans for FNS at the departmental and municipal levels</td>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td></td>
<td>These local planning tools have identified their strategic guidelines along with the programmes to be promoted by the local governments, with support from both governmental and non-governmental organizations. They serve as a mechanism that allows for launching the National Plans and aligning the national FNS strategies with local problem-solving.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: prepared by author.
3.3.3. Multisectoral coordinating bodies linked to FNS

Applying the legal framework of FNS required the formation of two national bodies, where the governmental organizations of a sectoral nature can convene to plan and identify joint actions. The construction and functioning of such institutional coordination has represented a new management method at the governmental level, and requires further opportunities to share responsibilities among the sectoral entities. The achievements represent a strategy, albeit one that is still being developed, in order to generate and implement a comprehensive and consistent set of initiatives to guarantee food and nutrition security.

- National Food and Nutrition Security Council (CONASAN)

The National Council for Food and Nutrition Security, created in 2009, is the governing body of FNS in El Salvador. It is a space for coordination between the government and civil society, for the formulation of public policies and intersectoral action plans. It is formed by the Ministry of Health (MINSAL), which leads it, along with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG), the Technical Secretariat of Planning of the Presidency (STPP), and the Secretariat of Social Inclusion (SIS)34.

The functions of the CONASAN include creating guidelines to guarantee FNS, the approval of projects formulated by the government agencies, analyzing the importance of international cooperation activities in order to avoid duplication of efforts, elaborating tools of monitoring and follow-up, and evaluating the implementation of the National Policy.

The National FNS Policy was approved in 2012. Following these guidelines, the CONASAN created the National Strategic Plan of FNS, along with its operational plans and intersectoral coordination; joining diverse organizations of the public and private sector, civil society and international cooperation. One of the key actions carried out by this body was the development of the first draft of the Law of FNS, which was presented to the Legislative Assembly.

The CONASAN and the Technical Committee hold periodic meetings to follow up on the implementation of the key FNS programmes and other activities planned for this year. Fulfilling its stewardship duties, it has become the key link between the national territories and the actors involved35, and is coordinating efforts with international organizations that are implementing programmes in El Salvador36. Together with the Ministries of Education and Health, the preliminary activities are currently being coordinated to initiate the IV Census of Height and the I Census of Weight among primary school students.

- National Technical Committee for Food Security and Nutrition (COTSAN)

The COTSAN is a body attached to the CONASAN. In charge of formulating technical proposals which ensure the integration of the interventions, it also administers the funds and inter-agency resources, and carries out joint efforts. It is formed by the CONASAN and representatives of government organizations, as designated by the President of the Republic.

34 In order to improve the actions and increase the representation within the CONASAN in the Draft Law of FNS, which is currently under debate, the composition of this Council will expand to include the President of the Republic, along with the Minister of Education, the Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, the Minister of Health, the Minister of Finance, the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the Ministry of Environment, the Minister of the Interior, the Consumer Protection Authority, the Association of Salvadorian Municipalities, representatives of the industrial production sector, business associations, farmers’ organizations, rural women, the Counsel for Human Rights, and the Citizen’s Council of FNS.

35 With the support of the CONASAN, the CODESAN of Chalatenango has organized visits of national legislators of the Agricultural Commission of the National Assembly, in order for them to learn of the progress made with the implementation of the FNS activities in their respective territories. It is worth noting that this group of legislators are debating the Draft Law of FNS.

36 Proof of this can be seen in the active participation that the CONASAN has maintained with the Joint United Nations Programme. Within the programme Food Security and Nutrition for Children and Salvadoran Households (SANNHOS), the CONASAN has coordinated the development of the work plan for the year 2016.
In 2015, this body assembled 29 representatives from 17 governmental and non-governmental institutions, including: MINSAL, MAG, STPP, SIS, the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, the Ministry of Education, the National Center of Agricultural Technology, the Social Investment Fund for Local Development, the National Water Sewerage Administration, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women, the Consumer Protection Authority, the University of El Salvador, and the Association of Salvadorian Municipalities.

- **Departmental Committee of Food and Nutrition Security (CODESAN)**

  The institutional development of FNS at the departmental level revealed its initial result in 2013, with the creation of the Departmental Committee of Food and Nutrition Security in the department of Chalatenango. Led by the local government, priority actions were identified through this body; promoting a multisectoral approach, local capacity-development and management of economic resources to increase its operations.

  In the CODESAN, the government sector is represented by the Government of Chalatenango, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, the Ministry of Education, Directorate General for Civil Defense, the Consumer Protection Authority, the Salvadoran Institute for the Advancement of Women, the Agricultural Development Bank, and National Police. Civil society is represented by the University Andrés Bello, Arnulfo Romero University, Ayuda en Acción, Plan International, Mancomunidad La Montaña, the Environmental Committee of Chalatenango, Salvadoran Program of Investigation for Development and the Environment, and Fundación para la Cooperación y el Desarrollo Comunal (Foundation for Cooperation and Communal Development) (Ministerio de Salud de El Salvador, 2014).

  From CODESAN, proposals are being generated to provide solutions to local requirements in a consistent and coordinated manner with the National FNS Policy. With support from the CONASAN, municipalities have been chosen to implement priority actions, and the departmental Strategic Plan for Nutrition, a tool managed by the Ministry of Health, has been created. The actions carried out by the CODESAN include the management of funds and the development of local capacities to extend operations throughout the entire department.

- **Municipal Committee of Food and Nutrition Security (COMUSAN)**

  At the municipal level, the first COMUSAN was formed in 2015 in the municipality of Las Vueltas, of the department of Chalatenango. Its objective is to support the coordination between the various actors to apply a comprehensive approach to the initiatives of food and production that are implemented in the municipality. The local government is tasked with leading this body, and with the support of CONASAN and CODESAN will initiate regulations, along with mechanisms of action and including participation of other actors, in order to strengthen the local institutions.

  COMUSAN is comprised of 31 representatives, among which the government sector is represented through the local government, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Justice of the Peace, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock. Civil society is represented by the Fundación para la Cooperación y el Desarrollo Comunal (Foundation for Cooperation and Communal Development), the Salvadoran Program of Investigation for Development, Cáritas, Plan International, the Coordinator of Rural Communities, PROVIDA, Associations of Communal Development, the Women’s Association, the Women’s’ Committee of Ara Urbana, the Youth Committee, Mancomunidad La Montaña, the Committee of Producers and representatives of the church.
COMUSAN possesses an Action Plan for FNS, in which concrete actions are taken into account to promote health, education, economy and infrastructure; making it the main operative instrument at the local level, which supports joint and organized efforts between governmental and non-governmental actors. The commitment to its fulfillment has been made official, with the support of CODESAN and CONASAN.

### 3.3.4. Characteristics of governance

The creation of the institutional structure of food and nutrition security in El Salvador has shown great dynamism at the national level, as compared to the local level. The strategies advocated by CONASAN and COTSAN to include a territorial approach within the FNS bodies have shown their initial results, but the challenge remains of constructing these bodies in other departments and municipalities. This demonstrates the importance of building awareness among the local authorities regarding the necessity of changing the sectoral and disjointed manner of work seen at the national level, to a new strategy of territorial and intersectoral coordination. The institutional and programmatic achievements made in El Salvador for FNS are presented hereafter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions of governance of FNS (FAO, 2011)</th>
<th>Key institutional and programmatic achievements in El Salvador</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participation</strong></td>
<td>- Within the institutional structure of FNS that is supported by the legal framework, civil society enjoys greater representation at the local level, while at the national level, its permanent participation in the CONASAN and COTSAN is limited. This has led to the creation of spaces such as the Round Table on Food Sovereignty, which convenes over 200 social organizations throughout the country, and directs its actions to promoting, monitoring and demanding the effective fulfillment of the right to food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- In the participatory process of constructing the operational instruments of food security, civil society was a key element at various moments, especially when determining the strategic lines of action of the National FNS Policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- In terms of the government actors, they actively participate in the national bodies, as well as in CODESAN and COMUSAN, which they form part of. At the local level, these spaces allow for a diverse participation, seeking joint efforts among the sectoral ministries, local governments and other actors from academia, NGOs and social organizations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transparency</strong></td>
<td>- Since 2011, the Access to Public Information Law has been in effect in El Salvador, establishing the right to public information for all. One of the mechanisms under implementation to fulfill this right is the transparency portal[^37], where information is available regarding the strategic management and the budgetary framework of sectoral ministries, local governments and other governmental organizations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility</strong></td>
<td>- The creation of the CONASAN and the existence of the National FNS Policy not only enhance public institutions, but they also demonstrate the government’s intention to assume responsibility for guaranteeing food and nutrition security for all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- CONASAN has taken on the responsibility of formulating the Strategic FNS Plan 2013-2016, along with promoting institutional coordination at the departmental and municipal levels, and coordinating actions for the implementation of initiatives, such as the Census of Height and Weight, among others.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[^37]: Available at: [http://publica.gobiemoabierto.gob.sv/institutions/presidencia-de-la-republica](http://publica.gobiemoabierto.gob.sv/institutions/presidencia-de-la-republica)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions of governance of FNS (FAO, 2011)</th>
<th>Key institutional and programmatic achievements in El Salvador</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>- As a result of the administration of CONASAN, the National Observatory on Food and Nutrition Security[^38], was created as a virtual tool to permanently compile, analyze and disseminate information. It provides an information system for the surveillance, monitoring and evaluation of FNS, incorporating a mechanism for the mapping of actors where governmental and non-governmental efforts are carried out, as well as the geographic areas of intervention, and the human and financial resources available to implement their activities. This tool undoubtedly encourages accountability and transparency of the institutions related to FNS at the national level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance with the legal framework of FNS[^39]</td>
<td>- At the institutional level, the national coordinating bodies anticipated in the Presidential Decree have been created (CONASAN and COTSAN), and at the decentralized level, these bodies are taking shape.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[^38]: Analyzed as the responsibilities undertaken by the main FNS bodies.
[^39]: This dimension has been adapted from the original Rule of Law for the purpose of this document.

### Actors

According to the legal and operative framework of food and nutrition security in El Salvador[^39], the government actors are in charge of the national FNS bodies. Under the Ministry of Health, the CONASAN must act as a governing body for FNS and ensure the coordination between sectoral ministries. However, this has caused some concern among the actors linked to FNS, as they believe that political support diminishes when coming from a sectoral ministry that summons their political counterparts and secretariats of the Presidency. In addition, the participation of these Secretariats of the Presidency within the CONASAN have displayed potential overlapping as well as a lack of definition of competencies; an example being the School Feeding and Health Program (PASE). An intersectoral committee was created for its implementation, directed by the Technical Secretariat of Planning of the Presidency, in which the process suffered a weak coordination with the CONASAN[^40].

The COTSAN has more government actors, which enhances the involvement from the public sphere. This body convenes the Association of Municipalities, opening a direct channel of communication with the territories, which then promote the implementation of initiatives and support for local institutions. If this level of participation is replicated in the CONASAN, as is proposed in the draft law, it will certainly serve as an incentive to generate greater intersectoral coordination in decision-making, and in the actions to be carried out through this body.

[^38]: Available at: http://sisan.conasan.gob.sv/onsan/portada.html


[^40]: CONASAN is the governing body of FNS in the country and is tasked with coordinating the intersectoral efforts at the national level. With regard to PASE, it is necessary to clarify two points. On the one hand, the CONASAN does not have decision-making power; while on the other hand, it has the participation of the STPP, SIS and the ministries of Health and Agriculture. Upon creating an intersectoral committee within the STPP to carry out the PASE - where the CONASAN does not have any influence – there was a disconnection in the structure, along with an overlapping of functions.
Although the decentralized bodies of FNS are still being formed, the initial experiences show that there is a balance between governmental and non-governmental representation. At the municipal level, the number of social representatives involved in the COMUSAN stands out, which indicates the importance of promoting diverse strategies and with broad participation in the local political scope; so that this diversity of actors involved are able to participate and commit to the decision-making.

- **Processes**

In a country facing several social challenges, the implementation of the operational instruments of FNS and their respective sustainable financing has been affected by the emphasis placed on activities and resources for other national priorities, such as security, employment and education. This illustrates the necessity of seeing FNS as a cross-cutting issue that can strengthen and coordinate sectoral planning and government actions as a whole.

In order to rise above the traditional method of sectoral work, several spaces of convergence have been created (such as the CONASAN and COTSAN). Gradually, the sectoral ministries have begun to show interest in these joint efforts. This institutional process has been a learning experience at the national level, laying the foundation to develop the institutional framework of FNS in a more consistent, comprehensive and effective manner. Additionally, the National Observatory of Food and Nutrition Security (ONSAN) was created in order to promote the joint efforts. This tool compiles and disseminates permanent and updated information on FNS. In contrast to the other experiences, the ONSAN incorporates a mapping tool that presents information on the 46 actors involved in FNS, as well as their fields of work and the main activities they carry out, and is an important contribution to the decision-making and intersectoral planning.

The proposal put forth by the current legal framework for public policy-making (see Figure 7) encourages decentralization of the institutional structure of FNS, particularly in the processes of prioritization and implementation. These bodies aim to strengthen the dialogue and interaction between the state and civil society, to empower the local governments in these processes, and to encourage greater interest and involvement among citizens. This initiative, undertaken by the
CONASAN, has obtained its preliminary results in the department of Chalatenango, where social needs and the commitment of the authorities have led to the formation of the CODESAN. Building on this, activities at the municipal level have been prioritized\(^41\), creating a FNS Committee in the municipality of Las Vueltas.

\(^{41}\) Driven by the CONASAN and the CODESAN of Chalatenango, the activities at the municipal level have been prioritized using the following indicators: high incidence of undernourishment, presence of public and private institutions in the territory, the commitment of local governments, and the level of local organization and security.

\(^{42}\) Similar experiences in Latin America reveal the importance of respecting the existing coordinating bodies, as well as strengthening them with additional actors, so that they are able to carry out the functions of the FNS Committees. For example, in certain municipalities of Nicaragua, the municipal FNS committees were formed by incorporating actors from the health and education sectors into the municipal Productive Committees that were already operational; thus enabling them to take on the responsibilities as outlined in the respective laws.

In addition, this has facilitated the most optimal use of resources and has been a key factor in avoiding the loss of interest by the actors involved, due to the duplication of efforts for consensus-building.

**Figure 7 - Proposal to create and implement FNS public policies, building on the current legal framework**

### Proposal for a legal and operational framework to create FNS public policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National</th>
<th>Public Agenda</th>
<th>Formulation</th>
<th>Approval/Implementation</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>88% COTSAN</td>
<td>12% COTSAN</td>
<td>100% CONASAN</td>
<td>100% CONASAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>53% CODESAN*</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>53% CODESAN*</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16% COMUSAM*</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>16% COMUSAM*</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages based on the current composition of FNS bodies

Source: prepared by author, based on the current legal and operational framework.

Although important achievements have been made within the institutional scope and in the joint planning for FNS, some challenges still remain. One such example is to overcome the duplication of coordinating bodies at the departmental and municipal levels, for which it is possible to build on the existing structures in the territories. The departmental cabinets already in place are where the health and education sectors jointly coordinate, and include other actors so that together, they fulfill the responsibilities of the CODESAN\(^{42}\). Another ongoing challenge is to incorporate a comprehensive approach to FNS within the local development agendas, and to promote inter-agency coordination in the implementation phase. To achieve this, the national initiatives currently in progress - such as the Family Farming Plan, the School Feeding and Health Program, and the Glass of Milk Program, among others - can be key elements to support the intersectoral actions, along with raising awareness of the importance of the issue and strengthening local participatory bodies.
The clear willingness of the Government of El Salvador to tackle the issue of food and nutrition insecurity has become more tangible with the creation of instruments that incorporate a rights-based approach, along with the formation of coordination mechanisms for their respective implementation. One of the most pertinent instruments is the Universal Social Protection System, which supports the responsibility of the state to guarantee social rights for all. Through the implementation of 11 national programmes, the System seeks to create the right conditions for Salvadoran citizens to be able to fully enjoy their rights to an adequate standard of living. An intersectoral committee was created to implement this System; comprised of 15 institutions, and 10 sectoral ministries among these. It is presided over by the Technical Secretariat of Planning of the Presidency.

In certain cases, the diverse bodies and initiatives related to FNS and the fight to overcome poverty have overlapped in responsibilities or leadership; generating confusion among the decision-makers and leading to a lack of coordination when carrying out actions. In spite of these disadvantages, public policy-making for FNS is identified by the formation of national bodies, where several sectoral ministries have joined forces, and multisectoral coordination is strongly encouraged when implementing initiatives.

Figure 8 addresses the current dynamics observed in public policy-making. In the absence of departmental and municipal institutions, the national coordinating bodies take the lead in identifying priorities and formulating policy proposals. Under this scheme, civil society representation within the institutional framework is scarce, and its participation has been limited to consultation or articulation activities; which has resulted in the governmental organizations having a greater presence and impact throughout the public policy cycle.

*Figure 8 - Scheme outlining public policy-making for FNS in El Salvador*

**Scheme of FNS public policy formulation in El Salvador**

- **Public Agenda / Formulation**
  - National:
    - 88% COTSAN
    - 12% CONASAN
  - Local:
    - Specific activities of consultation, debate or socialization with civil society

- **Approval / Implementation**
  - STTP - SPSU*
  - Sectoral ministries

- **Evaluation**
  - Sectoral ministries

Percentages based on the current composition of FNS bodies
*Technical Secretariat of Planning of the Presidency - Universal Social Protection System

Source: prepared by author, based on the current legal and operational framework.
The unwavering political commitment has enabled the construction of a powerful legal and programmatic framework to guarantee FNS - albeit with financial restrictions and limited institutional capacities - and has also allowed for the creation of a basic structure to coordinate actions for FNS. In addition, it has allowed for the implementation of intersectoral initiatives in order to reach the most vulnerable populations, such as the Universal Social Protection System, the Family Farming Plan, and the School Feeding and Health Program, among others.

With guidance from the national level, the creation of local spaces of intersectoral coordination for FNS are being promoted and supported. This allows for overcoming the lack of capacities that is sometimes observed in the municipalities and departments when constructing territorial FNS plans. It also provides comprehensive coordination with the national initiatives and the strengthening of spaces for consensus-building.
3. CASE ANALYSIS
3.4. Guatemala

3.4.1. Background

Guatemala is one of the countries of Latin America with the most critical indicators in the region in terms of food and nutrition security. The analysis of available data places Guatemala among the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean with the highest level of vulnerability of Food and Nutrition Insecurity. Although the incidence of undernourishment decreased from 14.7% in the period 2009-2011 to 14.3% in 2012-2014, it remains high. On the other hand, despite the fact that the Global Hunger Index dropped from 17.0 in 2005 to 15.6 in 2014, it is still the highest rate in Central America.

The first attempts to organize and provide an institutional framework for FNS-related actions in the country date back to 1974, when the General Secretariat of the National Economic Planning Council (SEGEPLAN) prepared the Guidelines for a National Nutrition Policy (COPREDEH, 2011). Since then, at least five institutional arrangements have taken place during the 1990s and 2000s, with the enactment of Decree 32 in 2005 signifying the most recent legal initiative, which gave rise to the entire governance structure currently in place.

3.4.2. Current legal framework and operational instruments.

Guatemala is one of seven countries in the region with a Food and Nutrition Security Law / Decree, supported by the Human Right to Adequate Food in its Constitution.

- Constitutional Recognition of the Human Right to Adequate Food (HRAF)


Article 51 declares this right for two vulnerable age groups: Protection of children and the elderly. The State shall protect the physical, mental and moral health of children and the elderly. It shall guarantee their right to food, health, education, security and social welfare. In turn, Article 99 extends the coverage of this right to the entire population: Food and Nutrition. The State shall ensure that the food and nutrition of the population meets the minimum health requirements. The specialized institutions of the State shall jointly coordinate their actions, or together with international organizations working in the field of health, in order to achieve an effective national food system.

- FNS Decree

The foundation of the actions carried out in the fight against hunger in Guatemala can be found in Decree 32-2005, “Law of the National Food and Nutrition Security System”, which was created in the Congress of the Republic in 2005. The Law considers it the right of every individual to have physical, economic and social - as well as timely and permanent - access to food that is adequate in both quantity and quality, culturally relevant, and preferably of national origin. The State is obligated to respect, promote and ensure food and nutrition security, for which it defines a series
of institutional responsibilities for the state entities to guarantee the correct development of the pillars of food and nutrition security, among other aspects. For example, it indicates that as far as "Food Availability" is concerned, it is incumbent upon the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food to encourage actions that contribute to food availability for the population, and for that purpose, it may establish partnerships with other public entities (CELAC, 2016).

In addition, the Law establishes the National Food and Nutrition Security System (SINASAN), comprised of government and public bodies, with technical and financial support provided through international cooperation. It assigns specific responsibilities to its members, and based on those responsibilities and commitments, defines the evaluation of the achievements and results, in order to attain the proposed objectives. Accordingly, there are three governance bodies of FNS, which give rise to the SINASAN: The National Council for Food and Nutrition Security (CONASAN), the Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition of the Presidency of the Republic (SESAN), and the Entity for Civil Society Consultation and Participation (INCOPAS). (SESAN, 2016).

- Instruments for FNS Policy Management

In 2006, by order of Decree 32-2005, the National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security (POLSAN) (SESAN, 2006), which establishes the guiding principles, central themes and general guidelines, is designed to direct the actions of the various institutions that are developing initiatives to promote FNS. Within these, it would seem quite fitting to address the issues linked to the pillars of FNS, and with considerable emphasis on the issue of preventing and tackling malnutrition. Nevertheless, the document continues to be of a referential nature, without assigning specific tasks to the different institutional actors.

Once the conceptual bases for confronting the issue have been established, the challenge for the Law and the National Policy is to design and implement the Strategic Plan for Food and Nutrition Security (PESAN). This instrument has had four phases of implementation. The first phase lasted from 2007 to 2016, which was later amended and replaced by the PESAN from 2009 to 2012; while the third lasted from 2012 to 2016, and the fourth and final phase was recently approved for the period 2016-2020 (SESAN, 2012).

In the first phase, the PESAN establishes its actions in terms of the issues put forth by the National Policy, combining them with the pillars of FNS. Its successor, PESAN 2009-2012 (SESAN, 2009), includes the strengthening of the SISAN’s capacities as a strategic element, involving both the state institutions and civil society.
From 2012 to 2016, the PESAN proposed specific actions associated with the four basic pillars of FNS\textsuperscript{43}, reinforcing inter-agency coordination as a cross-cutting theme, and aiming to strengthen the SISAN in terms of its institutional and procedural structure. Another noteworthy proposal of the PESAN was to emphasize the importance of the Urban and Rural Development Councils as territorial bodies for the planning and coordination of actions around FNS. It differs significantly with its predecessor by including the creation of a scorecard, with indicators of achievement for FNS-related actions.

Lastly, the PESAN 2016 to 2020 emphasizes an improvement in the existing gaps, highlighting among its core strategies the formation and strengthening of the national (SISAN) and local governance spaces. In the latter, the aim is to promote the active involvement of the entities that support the system, including NGOs and cooperation agencies, collectively known as the Group of Supporting Institutions (GIA) and the INCOPAS. In addition, it aims to promote a “policy framework for action”, which should include the development of laws and programmes to tackle specific issues, as well as territorial coordination of public policy actions; together with civil society and the pursuit of policy agreements as key factors in achieving the objectives (CONASAN, 2016). This latest modification of the PESAN, in its strategic line 1.3, directly references the importance of having governance bodies and public-private partnerships in place at all territorial levels.

During the years 2012 to 2015, the “Zero Hunger Pact” came into force in the country, with its respective Plan for implementation (PPH0). This plan used two existing instruments as a points of reference: the National Strategy for the Reduction of Chronic Undernutrition (ENRDC) and the Scaling-up Nutrition Initiative (SUN) / Ventana de los Mil Días (1000 Day Window Programme) (CONASAN, 2016). The results it sought included a 10\% reduction in chronic child hunger by 2015, a reduction in short-term hunger, and overcoming poverty. The plan’s coverage reached the 166 municipalities with the highest rates of child malnutrition. The Zero Hunger Pact Plan (PPH0) was essentially a great political agreement that materialized in the form of a plan, aimed at tackling the most urgent issues of FNS in the country; specifically, chronic undernourishment among children under five years old, with actions focused on the municipalities with the highest incidence of the issue.

At the operational and budgetary level, the sectoral institutions work with an Annual Sectoral Operating Plan (POASAN), which defines activities and budgets. Together, these plans form the Intersectoral POASAN. These instruments enable joint coordination, allowing for the identification of possible overlaps, gaps and duplications in the budget assigned to a particular programme or initiative. These actions are framed within the guidelines established by another actor in the road map of government activities for FNS: the Secretariat of Planning and Programming of the Presidency (SEGEPLAN) (CONASAN, 2016).

In addition, within the POLSAN, Decree 32-2005 and the PESAN, the System of Information, Monitoring and Early Warning for Food and Nutrition Insecurity of Guatemala (SIINSAN) is defined as a national system, which facilitates decision-making in the different political and administrative areas. FAO is a member of the committee for the National FNS Information System (SIINSAN).

\textsuperscript{43} Namely: availability, access, consumption and biological utilization of food.
**Table 13 - Legal and operational framework of food security governance in Guatemala**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Year approved</th>
<th>Reference to FNS governance</th>
<th>Emphasis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constitution of the Republic of Guatemala</td>
<td>1985, (Amended in 1993)</td>
<td>Articles 51, 99</td>
<td>The Constitution defines the State as guarantor of the right to food for children and the elderly (Article 51), indicating that it will additionally ensure food and nutrition with the minimum health requirements for all citizens (Article 99).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decree 32-2005 &quot;Law of the National System of Food and Nutrition Security&quot;</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td></td>
<td>Created the National FNS System (SINASAN), which includes tasks for the State in matters of policies and initiatives for FNS, along with defining strategic planning tools for its initiatives. Three governance bodies were created: The National Council for Food and Nutrition Security (CONASAN), the Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition of the Presidency of the Republic (SESAN), and the Entity for Civil Society Consultation and Participation (INCOPIAS).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Decision No. 75-2006 &quot;Law of the National System of Food and Nutrition Security&quot;</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
<td>Operating Regulations of the SINASAN and the bodies created through this agency. Creates the Annual Sectoral and Intersectoral Operating Plans for FNS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Policy on Food and Nutritional Security (POLSAN)</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
<td>A framework instrument which generally indicates the purpose, guiding principles, cross-cutting themes, objectives and strategy in the fight against Food and Nutrition Insecurity in the country; highlighting the key role of the SISAN in the development of actions for FNS, and especially emphasizing the information system on the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Plan for Food and Nutrition Security (PESAN)</td>
<td>PESAN I (2007-2016)</td>
<td>PESAN II (2009-2012)</td>
<td>PESAN III (2012-2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Operational Plans of FNS (Sectoral and Intersectoral)</td>
<td>From 2009 onwards</td>
<td></td>
<td>Operating Plans with specific annual actions for each sector involved in the SISAN, and an Operating Plan that includes all sectors, known as the Intersectoral POASAN. They address the theme of FNS in the strategic guidelines provided by the Secretary of Planning and Programming of the Presidency (SEGEPLAN) in this area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Zero Hunger Pact” Plan (PPH0)</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td>Specifically focused on tackling chronic undernutrition, it facilitated the process of operationalization of the PESAN 2012-2016, through the development of annual operating plans for FNS.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: prepared by author.

3.4.3. Multisectoral coordinating bodies linked to FNS

The SISAN features three coordinating bodies, which have also established partnerships with one another.

The National Food and Nutrition Security Council (CONASAN) provides guidelines and devises strategic lines, and also has the mission of presenting FNS policy proposals to the SINASAN for approval. The CONASAN has the following local chapters: The Departmental Committee of Food and Nutrition Security (CODESAN), the Municipal Committee of Food and Nutrition Security (COMUSAN), and the Community Committee of Food and Nutrition Security (COCOSAN). It is important to note that the Secretary of the entity, in turn, participates in the three following decision-making bodies at the central government level: the General Cabinet, the Social Cabinet and the Rural Development Cabinet45.

At the national level, it is formed by the Vice-President of the Republic (who acts as Chair), the Secretary of FNS, eight ministers, two secretariats of State, and seven civil society representatives from each of the sectors comprising the INCOPAS (the representative body for civil society). As the governing body of the system, it has a more political and strategic role.

The Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition (SESAN)46 is responsible for managing the FNS system, and its focal points for action include social mobilization and inter-agency coordination. The SESAN is the coordinating body of the National Food and Nutrition Security System (SINASAN), tasked with the responsibility of coordinating the inter-ministerial operations of the PESAN. It also organizes the programmes and projects carried out by other governmental institutions on the topic. In other words, this entity has a technical role and is responsible for the planning, consensus, coordination, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of the actions related to Food and Nutrition Security (FAO, 2014b).

The Entity for Civil Society Consultation and Participation (INCOPAS) represents a space for civil society participation within the SINASAN, and was created with the objective of acting as the communication channel for public policy proposals in FNS, which are generated by the groups represented therein. In addition, it provides technical inputs to the SESAN and advising them on decision-making. There are nine sectors represented within the law: Indigenous peoples, small-scale farming; business, Catholic and Evangelical churches; universities and social research centers, trade union representative organizations; non-governmental organizations, women’s organizations and professional associations (FAO, 2014). The representatives of each sector are elected for two years through a public assembly. The entity also has an Executive Secretariat.

Within the INCOPAS assembly, five of its members are elected to represent civil society in the CONASAN47.

The Group of Supporting Institutions (GIA) are institutions that operate outside of the state and civil society spheres, and are represented in the INCOPAS and/or the CONASAN. They provide technical, financial or operational support at the request of the SISAN. These include United Nations agencies, embassies and cooperation agencies from various countries.

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45 Available at: http://www.sesan.gob.gt/index.php/glosario/item/conasan-2

46 http://www.sesan.gob.gt/

47 These are in addition to the two representatives from the private sector, thus completing the quota of seven non-governmental participants in the CONASAN.
3.4.4. Key elements of the process of FNS governance

It is clear that throughout the process undertaken by Guatemala to attain a governance structure for public policies in the field of FNS, the political will and agreements for taking action have proved to be essential. The two key milestones embodying this commitment are the FNS Law (2005) and the Zero Hunger Pact (2012).

A factor also distinguishing this case from most other countries in the region is the inclusion of civil society in the strategic policy processes; providing them with a stable space and clear rules, budgets, and their own institutional identity; while respecting their autonomous spaces in the selection of their members and decision-making.

Another key element is having an optimal information system (the SIISAN and the SIMON), which has led to improved information for decision-making, along with transparency of the processes.

An additional successful strategy is the use of existing consultation bodies at the territorial level (Urban and Rural Development Councils), thus avoiding the duplication of efforts in addressing the issue of FNS, and reducing the existence of multiple spaces for public policy dialogue with the same members; a common phenomenon that occurs especially in rural areas.

Although there have been consecutive changes in terms of strategic guidelines, the structure of the SISAN has not undergone major modifications, therefore giving some continuity and stability to the institutional framework.

One factor that could be seen as inconvenient for the development of public policies is the large number of strategic planning instruments in the area of FNS, which have been created in parallel or have existed alongside one another in recent years. Although this may be considered proof of their capacity to adapt, in practice, it tends to complicate the development of a long-term strategy.

Consolidating the governance structure at the territorial level is still a pending issue, as well as promote the integration of civil society into these spaces, through the development of a presence “on the ground” of the INCOPAS.

Another recurring challenge is the multisectoral coordination of policies, as observed in the PESAN 2012-2016: “The main obstacles to achieving the proposed goals are twofold: the lack of coordination and harmonization of national policies and sectoral programmes that are properly targeted, focused and coordinated among one another, in addition to the low level of effectiveness of the actions in achieving the desired impact on the vulnerable population.” This has been a challenge since the implementation of the PESAN, from 2009-2012 onwards; appearing as a strategic theme of the SISAN’s actions in all of the plans they have developed. It seems evident that despite the progress made in this regard, the issue has not yet been satisfactorily resolved.
### Table 14- Key institutional and programmatic achievements in Guatemala

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions of FNS governance (FAO, 2011)</th>
<th>Key institutional and programmatic achievements in Guatemala</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>The SISAN provides two spaces, designed to ensure civil society participation. On the one hand, it has the Entity for Consultation and Social Participation (INCOPAS), which has autonomy in its operations and decision-making to advise the CONASAN (space for consultation). In turn, this entity can choose five of its members to join and participate, who are given a platform and a vote in the Committee (decision-making body).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency</td>
<td>Decree 57-2008, known as the Law on Access to Public Information, grants the right of every citizen to have access to information on the administration and management of the State. The SIISAN is a powerful system that makes information available to citizens regarding the progress of the different FNS initiatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>The responsibility of the CONASAN lies directly with the Vice Presidency of the Republic, which possesses a FNS Secretariat, in charge of the monitoring and supervision of FNS-related actions. The technical responsibility for the proposals and the coordination of actions lies with the SESAN. In turn, the respective Annual Sectoral Operating Plans (POASAN) have decision-makers in each of the 21 institutions linked to the issue of FNS in the country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>In terms of accountability of financial resources, each body has its regular budget and the allocation of funds. In other words, the SESAN should exercise accountability of the funds used and budget implementation. In turn, the sectoral institutions which form part of the PESAN, and which are included in the respective Sectoral POASAN, should do the same (FAO, 2016).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance with the FNS Law or Decree*</td>
<td>At the institutional level, the Government of Guatemala has complied in creating all of the bodies as defined by the law for the operability of the SISAN: The CONASAN, the SESAN and the INCOPAS, providing them with a budget for their operations and continuity over time. At the operational level, the following initiatives have been carried out: the design of the National Policy (POLSAN), the four consecutive Strategic Plans (PESAN) and the preparation of the Sectoral and Intersectoral Operational Plans (POASAN).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This dimension has been adapted from the original Rule of Law for the purpose of this document.
• Actors

With regard to the actions of the institutional actors involved in FNS policies, we can observe three levels of interconnected initiatives that help shape the SISAN:

i) There are fourteen public institutions at the strategic and political level, led by the Vice President of the Republic; including five civil society entities (delegates from the INCOPAS) and two institutions comprised of private companies, which are members of the CONASAN.

ii) The SESAN operates at the technical level of planning, coordination and measurement of results, with its four units and eleven sub-units.

iii) The level of consultation, participation and support can be seen as cross-cutting in relation to the two previous levels. INCOPAS is active in both the day-to-day work of the SESAN (in fact, both bodies operate in the same building), as well as at the level of the CONASAN, including the five representatives that the INCOPAS may have by law within that space. In addition, as a body for consultation and technical advice, the Group of Supporting Institutions (GIA) is comprised of non-governmental organizations and cooperation entities, which provide technical and financial support when required.

With the understanding that the only body that integrates public entities with civil society is the CONASAN, and that furthermore, this body provides political guidance around the issue of FNS in the country, it seems pertinent to conduct a comparative analysis of the representativeness of the sectors within it.

In Figure 9, we can see that the CONASAN is predominantly comprised of public entities, leaving civil society with a representation of only 18 percent. However, if they are joined by the sectoral ministries, national authorities and local representative government bodies, then these together represent 73 percent of the aforementioned decision-making body.

Figure 9.- Background of the actors responsible for the public policy processes within the CONASAN in Guatemala

Source: prepared by author, based on the current composition of CONASAN.
Nevertheless, what is interesting about the case of Guatemala is the fact that civil society participation does not end there. As was previously mentioned, the INCOPAS is an exclusively technical advisory body that has been created by law, and serves as a space formed by civil society. Such body can be found in only two other countries, Brazil and Ecuador. A noteworthy feature of the INCOPAS is the manner in which the representatives of the sectors of civil society are elected, by voting amongst themselves; thus granting the entity autonomy and independence. Notwithstanding the above, the fundamental purpose of the INCOPAS is to provide technical advice, for which the majority of its capacity for impact at the political level lies with its representatives in the CONASAN.

- Processes

As was discussed in the previous section, the SISAN has three defined spaces (Political, Technical, and Participation and Consultation). It may be said that civil society participates in a cross-cutting manner, through the policy decisions and technical work. Within the CONASAN, the importance of civil society within the space is clearly defined. In regards to the SESAN, however, its relationship with the INCOPAS has become increasingly vague and is regulated neither by law nor by its binding documents.

Within the sphere of discussion and implementation of actions at the local level, civil society seems to be more organized, with the processes taking place in the Rural and Urban Development Councils.

Figure 10- Scheme outlining public policy-making for FNS in Guatemala

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National</th>
<th>Local</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public Agenda</strong></td>
<td>88% Regional, District and Municipal Committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SESAN</td>
<td>88% Regional, District and Municipal Committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formulation</strong></td>
<td>60% Regional, District and Municipal Committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SESAN</td>
<td>60% Regional, District and Municipal Committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COTESSAN</td>
<td>40% Regional, District and Municipal Committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Approval/ Implementation</strong></td>
<td>76% Regional, District and Municipal Committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONASSAN</td>
<td>76% Regional, District and Municipal Committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>24% Regional, District and Municipal Committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SESAN</td>
<td>24% Regional, District and Municipal Committees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Proposal by LSSAN to create public policies

Source: prepared by author, based on the current composition of CONASAN.
Table 15.- Summary of the key aspects of FNS governance in Guatemala

- The spaces for political and technical decision-making are clearly defined, as well as external consultation.

- Having a legally defined space for civil society (INCOPAS), which has an operational budget and autonomy in its decision-making.

- Having a technical unit (SESAN) in place, which performs the functions of coordination, control and monitoring, along with a budget, and professional and technical capacities.
3.5. Ecuador

3.5.1. Background

The efforts made to guarantee food and nutrition security in Ecuador were strengthened by the World Food Summit of 1996, which recognized that food insecurity is an issue with multiple causes; transforming the way public organizations operate, along with their initiatives under implementation. This was consolidated one year later with the enactment of the Special Programme for Food Security, which is recognized as one of the first initiatives to promote multisectoral action and to bring attention to the importance of FNS at the different territorial levels (Samaniego, 2012). Through a Presidential Decree, FNS was declared a state policy in 1998, and the constitution approved that year stated that the goal of achieving food and nutrition security must be guaranteed by the government (MAG, 2003). Unfortunately, the political instability and economic crisis of 1999 affected the implementation of these initiatives.

The following decade saw the consolidation FNS-related activities as a priority in the country, implementing national programmes to combat hunger among the most vulnerable populations, along with important initiatives; such as the National Food Security Strategy in 2003, and the Integrated Food and Nutrition System in 2005. Finally, in 2006, the National Food Security Law was approved (MAG, 2006), which established FNS as a state priority. In addition, the Law supported the National FNS Council, with a significant directing role and with the provision of a decentralized institutional structure.

These initiatives have been modified since 2007, when Ecuador experienced a change in its political leadership; prompting an institutional restructuring of the state to respond to social issues and to improve government interventions that had been weakened in previous decades. This restructuring was accompanied by the creation of key opportunities for civil society to actively participate in national planning processes. These changes led to an adjustment in the legal framework to promote food security.

In this new scenario, the state established food sovereignty as a priority in creating a change in the country’s production and consumption systems. A national debate was supported under these terms, enjoying broad public acceptance that would later be expressed in the new constitution, as well as in the national development plan and in the reworking of the specific legislation on this subject. The current legal framework presents food sovereignty as a cross-cutting issue that can effectively support the proposals for decentralization, civic participation and social equity; all of which are promoted by the state.
3.5.2. Current legal framework and operational instruments

**Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador**

Created through the National Constituent Assembly, the current Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador was approved in 2008. It recognizes guaranteeing the right to food as a principal duty of the state, and it establishes that all people and communities have the right to safe and permanent access to healthy, sufficient and nutritious food, for which it identifies the state as the entity responsible for promoting food sovereignty.

Food sovereignty is among the key strategic objectives and obligations of the state. To achieve this, it must undertake policy-making, strategies and mechanisms in order to promote small and medium-scale production, as well as create fair systems of production, commercialization and consumption of food, and strengthen the organization between producers and consumers. All this, in addition to seeking a balance between rural and urban dynamics, and providing the necessary inputs of production to carry out agricultural activities in a supportive and equitable environment (Constitución Republica del Ecuador, 2008).

The Constitution emphasizes the importance of coordinated efforts between the state and civil society, and to achieve this, it proposes establishing participatory bodies to support the development of national, local and sectoral plans and policies, in addition to creating participatory budgets and mechanisms of transparency, accountability and social oversight.

At the international level, the Constitution mentions the importance of regional integration of Latin American and the Caribbean as a strategic objective, and thus adopts the implementation of coordinated strategies of food sovereignty as one of its commitments.

**Organic Law of Food Sovereignty (LORSA)**

The importance of having an Organic Law of Food Sovereignty is highlighted in the transitional provisions of the Constitution. Within the established time frame, LORSA was approved in 2009, with the purpose of establishing mechanisms for the state to be able to fulfill its strategic objective (and obligation) of guaranteeing food sovereignty. The law recognizes that the system of food sovereignty is constituted “by the set of related standards, designed to establish sovereignty in agrifood policies...”, and that the state shall implement such policies, throughout the different governmental levels (LORSA, 2009).

The law envisions social participation as one of the pillars in the establishment of related laws, as well as in the formulation and implementation of public policies. Thus, the establishment of the Food and Nutrition Sovereignty System (SISAN) was proposed, as a space for coordination between governmental actors and civil society, allowing for the organization of FNS-related issues. The SISAN shall be composed of eight representatives of the state and of the Plurinational and Intercultural Conference on Food Sovereignty (COPISA); which serves as a space for dialogue, the generation of proposals, and the monitoring of compliance with the aforementioned law.
In addition, the LORSA seeks the following: promote the factors of production; prioritize access to and use of water and land; the protection of agrobiodiversity; research, technical assistance and a dialogue of knowledge; boost production and trade by facilitating access to productive capital and incentives; create direct sales channels between producers, consumers and food supply to ensure food health and safety; and promote the consumption of healthy food, preferably produced locally.

- **Organic Law of Citizen Participation**

This law states that sectoral citizen’s councils are “spaces for dialogue, discussion and monitoring of national and sectoral public policies”. They are also forums for discussion of the guidelines and the follow-up of ministerial policies, and should be developed as networks of civil society participation, linked to sectoral ministries (Ley Orgánica de Participación Ciudadana, 2015).

In this regard, the COPISA - as a Sectoral Citizen’s Council of the Ministry of Agriculture - should intervene in the formulation and implementation of sectoral policies, as well as monitor the sectoral ministerial plans, follow up on and evaluate the implementation of public policies.

- **Plan Nacional del Buen Vivir - PNBV (National Plan for Living Well) 2013-2017**

The most important operational instrument to fulfill the mandates established in the Constitution is the “National Plan for Living Well” 2013-2017 (PNBV). This planning tool establishes the national course and presents strategic objectives, policies and guidelines which seek comprehensive action by the state and the institutions that carry out national activities.

Food sovereignty is a cross-cutting strategic guideline, which was proposed in order to achieve 6 out of the 12 national development objectives. Within the Plan, food sovereignty focuses on key issues such as: improving the management and planning of rural territories; promoting the organization and socio-economic inclusion of the rural communities, strengthening commercialization mechanisms among family farmers and consumers, increasing the sustainability of the agricultural sector, transforming the national productive matrix, and encouraging good management of natural resources (Secretaría Nacional de Planificación y Desarrollo, 2013).

It is worth noting that the first objective of the PNBV seeks to strengthen the processes of decentralization of the state, support civic participation in the development and social oversight of public policies, and reinforce the participation of the Sectoral Citizen’s Councils in the processes of construction and monitoring of the sectoral public agendas.

The National Territorial Strategy to implement the PNBV places food sovereignty within the guidelines of the productive matrix, through which it aims to promote internal capacities and the sustainable use of resources for food production, as well as strengthen rural areas. Table 16 shows a summary of the legal and operational framework that defines the scope of the state’s action in matters of food sovereignty.

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Food sovereignty is alluded to in Objective 2: Support equality, unity, inclusion, social and territorial equity, and diversity; Objective 3: Improve the quality of life of the population; Objective 7: Guarantee the rights of nature and promote territorial and global environmental sustainability; Objective 8: Strengthen the social and solidarity-based economic system in a sustainable manner; promote the transformation of the productive matrix; Objective 10: Support the productive matrix; and Objective 11: Ensure the sovereignty and efficiency of the strategic sectors for industrial and technological transformation.
Table 16 - Legal and operational framework of governance of food sovereignty in Ecuador

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Year approved</th>
<th>Reference to FNS governance</th>
<th>Emphasis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Art.3; Art.13; Art. 100; Art. 281; Art. 423</td>
<td>Recognizes the right of all individuals and communities to safe and permanent access to healthy, adequate and nutritious food. Identifies food sovereignty as a strategic objective and an obligation of the state to ensure permanent self-sufficiency of food. Promotes the formation of coordinating bodies of the state and civil society at various territorial levels, for the participatory development of policies, plans and budgets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic Law of Food Sovereignty</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Art. 1; Art. 31; Art. 32; Art. 33; Art. 34; Art. 35</td>
<td>It establishes mechanisms in order for the state to meet its obligation to guarantee food sovereignty. It promotes the creation of the National Food Sovereignty System and the Plurinational and Intercultural Conference on Food Sovereignty. It recognizes that those responsible for implementing the related public policies are the national and subnational governments. Creates opportunities for civil society to contribute to the formulation and oversight of public policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic Law on Citizens’ Participation</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Art. 52; Art. 53; Art. 54; Art. 55</td>
<td>It encourages the creation of participatory networks for civil society and the sectoral ministries (sectoral citizens’ councils), in order to follow up on national and sectoral public policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Plan for Living Well(PNBV) 2013-2017</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Corresponding objectives: 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 10, 11</td>
<td>The objectives of the National Plan related to the governance of food and nutritional security are focused on strengthening the link between civil society and the state in public policy-making. Improves the quality of life of the population and generating greater equality, unity, inclusion and social and territorial equity. Thus, food sovereignty is established as a pillar for the development of the productive sector.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5.3. Multisectoral bodies of coordination linked to FNS

As recommended by the LORSA, the coordinating bodies of the government and citizens have been formed and are currently operational. The implementation of these relatively new spaces, where the state and civil society share responsibilities, has represented an institutional learning experience in terms of the strengths and difficulties in creating an institutional structure for a national coordinating body from civil society. The results achieved are important, especially considering that these spaces are a clear sign of the government being open to sharing responsibilities.
■ Food and Nutrition Sovereignty System (SISAN)

The System of Food and Nutrition Sovereignty is a participatory body formed by government entities and civil society, and is responsible for promoting the participatory construction of public policy proposals for food sovereignty. It is comprised of delegates from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Aquaculture and Fisheries (MAGAP); the Ministry of Environment (MAE); the Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES); the Ministry of Public Health (MSP); the National Secretariat for Planning and Development (SENPLADES); the Consortium of Autonomous Provincial Governments of Ecuador (CONGOPE); the Association of Municipalities of Ecuador (AME); the National Council of Rural Parochial Governments of Ecuador (CONAGOPARE); and the COPISA.

The actions of the SISAN shall be coordinated by civil society through the COPISA. Its responsibilities include submitting public policy proposals to the appropriate sectoral ministry for approval, which must then organize the debate on how to ensure food sovereignty among the different levels of government and civil society.

An initial effort to establish the SISAN took place in 2013. However, due to a lack of agreement between the institutions involved, its conformation was not achieved; which halted the institution-building process of FNS and diminished the impact of the COPISA (Vallejo, 2014).

In order to create the SISAN, starting in the second half of 2015, the technical teams of the participating institutions held meetings to establish the strategic objectives and an action plan. In October of the same year, the SISAN set out to generate a unified information system as one of their commitments, where the institutions linked to FNS could share their indicators and create coordinating bodies and mechanisms for food sovereignty at the provincial, cantonal and parochial levels.

■ Plurinational and Intercultural Conference on Food Sovereignty (COPISA)

The Plurinational and Intercultural Conference on Food Sovereignty, created in 2009, is a body that represents civil society. It is responsible for coordinating the participatory spaces to discuss issues related to food sovereignty. In addition, it serves as a Sectoral Citizen Council of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Aquaculture and Fisheries (MAGAP).

Its mission is to generate a broad process of discussion for the construction of legislative proposals, public policies and programmes for food sovereignty, while ensuring the active participation of social organizations and government institutions. It is composed of 9 representatives from civil society, who are selected and appointed by the Citizen Participation and Oversight Council, through a public, merit-based contest. The sectors represented include: universities, polytechnic schools and research centers, consumers, small and medium-scale producers, farmers and pastoralists, artisanal fisherfolk and gatherers, the aquaculture sector, campesinos (peasant farmers), irrigation users, and ethnic groups.

The responsibilities assigned to the COPISA by the LORSA include: generating a broad participatory process of discussion to develop legislative proposals related to food sovereignty; to propose and recommend public policies, guidelines and agreements in order to comply with the law; cooperation agreements to ensure food sovereignty; to carry out oversight of the compliance with the law; and permanent training and education activities, among others.

According to the LORSA, in order to carry out the functions of the COPISA, it should coordinate spaces for civic participation that are designed to discuss the importance of and strategies for achieving food sovereignty. These spaces should be driven by the provincial, municipal and parochial governments.
In the initial phase of the COPISA (2010-2014) nine proposals were created; developed in a participatory manner through spaces for debate and discussion by territory, thematic area and proposals from social organizations. Through this process, 21,677 delegates from 5,004 organizations participated at the national level. In addition, its actions allowed for the establishment of thirteen agreements and resolutions with parochial governments to promote public policies in the areas of fisheries, commercialization, soil, nutrition, and consumption and production systems, among other activities.

The creation of the draft law proposals positioned the COPISA as mediator in the debate between civil society and the state. Its short-lived experience in the management of this type of process, among other factors, made it difficult to establish favorable agreements. Taking the land law proposal as a reference, expectations were high among the social organizations at the national level, which had actively participated in the discussion. In the formulation process, however, there were differences of opinion with MAGAP, which diminished institutional support for the proposal. In the absence of an agreement, signatures were collected to present this proposal as a grassroots initiative, attached to Article 103 of the Constitution. In 2013, eight legislative proposals were presented to MAGAP, whereas the draft bill on trade and consumption was the only proposal put forth in the beginning of 2014.

Among the legislative proposals submitted by the COPISA, only the proposal of Lands and Territories has been considered as the foundation for the draft law developed by the National Assembly. This same draft, through citizen round tables for dialogue and pre-legislative consultation, was presented to the plenary and approved in January 2016.

The second phase of the COPISA is currently underway (2014-2018), and the objectives established in its Strategic Plan include: creating greater political advocacy and public policy-making, strengthening the SISAN, and strengthening its institutional structure. To attain such objectives, it has held several workshops to articulate the role of the COPISA and discuss strategies that will allow for achieving food sovereignty. In addition, it has established agreements with strategic partners, such as local governments, academia, universities and NGOs to formulate policy proposals; as well as directing its efforts towards providing technical support to local governments in public policy-making. More than 10,000 representatives of public institutions and civil society organizations have participated in these processes (COPI-SA, 2015). In terms of their efforts to promote the institutional structure of FNS, the SISAN has been activated and is implementing its first pilot experiences at the decentralized level.

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50 The related laws of the food sovereignty system were: lands and territories; agrobiodiversity, seeds and promotion of agro-ecology; communities; fishing, aquaculture, mangrove and harvesting; agro-industry and agricultural employment; animal and plant health and food safety; credit, insurance and subsidies; food commercialization and supply; and consumption, nutrition and dietary health.

51 The 2012 COPISA accountability report is available at: http://www.soberaniaalimentaria.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/RENDICION2012/index.html#. The legislative proposals were prepared in 5 phases: dissemination of information, spaces for debate and discussion at the territorial level, technical committees of systematization, debate and discussion, and drafting proposed bills. In 2012, 23 workshops were held to raise awareness of the development process of the draft law proposals, with a total of 5,429 participants.

52 According to the accountability report of 2013, 83 workshops were conducted, along with 9 forums, 80 meetings, and 23 training sessions; through which 20 lines of research in areas related to food sovereignty were identified. Information available at: http://www.soberaniaalimentaria.gob.ec/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/m.-indicadores_informes_cumpli.pdf

53 Among the key organizations that participated in this process is the Agrarian Network, which is comprised of the National Confederation of Peasant, Indigenous and Black Organizations; the Ecuadorian Indigenous Federation; the National Federation of Agro-Industrial Workers, Peasant Farmers and Free Indigenous Peoples of Ecuador (FENACLE); the Council of Evangelical Indigenous Peoples and Organizations of Ecuador; the Confederation of Quechua Nations of Ecuador; the Coordinadora Nacional Campesina - Eloy Alfaro; and the Corporación Regional de Montubios del Litoral.

54 The LORSA establishes that legislative proposals be delivered to the corresponding sectoral ministry, so that with its approval, they are processed by the National Assembly.
As a relatively new institution, the COPISA has seen its management affected by the lack of political experience in defining an agenda for joint efforts. It has been difficult to maintain permanent participatory spaces that would otherwise allow it to influence the processes of food sovereignty. Its duty of coordinating the SISAN has been limited by a potential overlapping of functions with the coordinating ministries\textsuperscript{55} and with the National Secretariat of Planning.

Despite this, the process of participation has caught the attention of different social groups by engaging in actions aimed at achieving food sovereignty. The greatest advances in its work have been attained with the local governments, in terms of defining policy guidelines and raising awareness of the importance of FNS. There is currently a change in its interaction with the sectoral ministries, which, if handled properly, could produce positive results in the strengthening of national institutions in this area.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textbf{Sectoral Citizens' Councils}
\end{itemize}

Building on the Citizen Participation Law, the sectoral ministries are implementing sectoral citizens' councils to discuss issues of national interest and to receive contributions from civil society in the construction and implementation of public policies. It is expected that these networks of participation take on the responsibility of public oversight of the policies implemented by the executive power.

Through this mechanism of participation, dialogue with civil society is being encouraged regarding specific topics, and in specific territories. In the area of FNS, Citizens Councils are being shaped – as promoted by the Ministry of Agriculture - at various territorial levels to focus specifically on various productive sectors. In this respect, the decentralized absence of the COPISA is being filled in by connecting local needs with the programmatic offer of the government.

\section*{3.5.4. Key elements of the process of FNS governance}

The implementation of the legal framework of food sovereignty in Ecuador has attained several significant milestones in developing good governance. The formation of the COPISA as a space for interaction between civil society and the state is highly significant, as it places emphasis on the importance of involving citizens in the discussion of topics in which, historically, they have had no influence; such as access to land, subsidies for farmers and food safety, among others. Despite the limitations that may accompany this process, the strengthening of the social fabric - prompted by the discussion on food sovereignty - is one of these indirect achievements and forms an inherent part of the strengthening of the institutional framework of FNS in the country. The table below presents some of the institutional and programmatic advances made since the LORSA entered into force.

\textsuperscript{55} The coordinating ministries are supra-ministries, responsible for the coordination and promotion of political and strategic programmes. Those entrusted with carrying out these actions are the sectoral ministries.
Table 17 - Institutional and programmatic achievements attained in Ecuador which promote governance of FNS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions of governance for FNS (FAO, 2011)</th>
<th>Key institutional and programmatic achievements in Ecuador</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Participation                              | - The COPISA is regarded as a body which strengthens civil society participation in the processes of governance of FNS. It has recently directed its efforts towards the training of social organizations, supporting local governments in the generation of public policies of FNS, and evaluating government initiatives. In addition, civil society has an impact on public policy-making through Sectoral Citizens Councils, which support MAGAP in setting the public agenda.  
- On the other hand, the government entities have shown coordinated efforts among the sectoral ministries and government representatives at the different territorial levels, through the creation of the SISAN. |
| Transparency                               | - Ecuador has an Organic Law of Transparency and Access to Public Information. In complying with this law, the COPISA presents an historical report of activities on a yearly basis (2012-2013) on its website, as well as on a monthly basis (2014-2016); in which information is available regarding administrative, financial and operational matters, and compliance with the institutional planning. |
| Responsibility*                            | - The COPISA, as a civil society representative, has undertaken the coordination of the SISAN since the second half of 2015, as set forth in the law. With this responsibility, it should organize the dialogue and generate public policy proposals, to then be presented to the corresponding sectoral ministries for their respective approval.  
- The sectoral ministries involved in FNS have provided opportunities to share responsibility with civil society in defining the public agenda, for which they are promoting the formation of Sectoral Citizen Councils, as well as seeking greater specificity within public policies at the different territorial levels. |
| Accountability                             | Since its inception, the COPISA has carried out an annual report on accountability, detailing the activities undertaken, the resources utilized and the number of beneficiaries of these activities. This report is publicly accessible. |
| Compliance with the FNS **                 | - In institutional terms, compliance with LORSA has been achieved by establishing the COPISA in 2009, and with the reactivation of SISAN in 2015.  
- As for its operations, nine draft proposals of laws related to food sovereignty were established through the COPISA and various participatory mechanisms. These proposals were submitted to MAGAP, according to the law. |

* Analyzed according to the responsibilities undertaken by the actors linked to the food sovereignty system.  
**This dimension has been adapted from the original Rule of Law for the purpose of this document.
• Actors

The legal framework supporting the Food and Nutrition Sovereignty System recognizes a group of governmental and non-governmental actors as in charge of implementing new bodies for food sovereignty, as well as fulfilling the responsibilities that have been assigned to them. These actors, as seen in Figure 11, represent 8 government institutions at the national, sectoral and local levels, along with 9 civil society representatives.

Within the governmental scope, the SISAN aims to coordinate the actions of the Ministries of Health, Agriculture, Social Inclusion and Environment. Taking into account that food insecurity is an issue with multiple causes, one of the success factors of these spaces in similar experiences in Latin America has been the coordination of all of the sectoral ministries that intervene directly or indirectly to ensure FNS. In the Ecuadorian context, the SISAN could be strengthened by connecting the ministries of education, labor, urban development and housing, and finance, among others, of the 22 sectoral ministries and 6 coordinating ministries in the country. In any case, a second stage should be carried out when the SISAN is operating regularly and becomes consolidated.

The connection between the consortia and associations of local governments in the SISAN confers representation upon the provincial, municipal and parochial authorities. This initiative provides a territorial perspective within the institutional framework of food sovereignty.

Figure 11 - Background of the actors responsible for implementing the National Food and Nutrition Security System in Ecuador
As for civil society representatives, SISAN convenes delegates from small and medium-sized productive clusters, ethnic groups, universities and research centers. In order for these groups to have an impact on the structure of food sovereignty, actors with real representation at the national level should be chosen. On the other hand, considering the diversity of civil society involved in achieving food sovereignty, this space could be strengthened with the participation of representatives of professional associations, the formal and informal education system, NGOs and others.

The private sector lacks representation in the SISAN under the current legal framework, leaving aside important small and large-scale actors; such as companies, the food industry, intermediaries and traders, among others, as key actors in achieving food sovereignty.

- Processes

In order to interpret the governance processes that are supported by the current food sovereignty legal framework, the public policy cycle and two territorial levels (national and local) are taken as the framework for action that the actors may have, according to their responsibilities under the law.

Through the COPISA, civil society assumes the responsibility of identifying social issues, so that these are incorporated into the public agenda, as well as develop alternatives to solve them in a joint manner with other representatives of the SISAN. These proposals are presented to the sectoral ministries, who must then decide to apply, modify or refuse the proposal. The decisions made by this group of actors depends on the functionality of the proposed institutional structure.

The implementation of public policies is the responsibility of the sectoral ministries, with support at the territorial level from local governments. COPISA is responsible for public policy oversight (see Figure 12).

The process of institutional and operational consolidation of the COPISA is still underway. Although it has developed 9 draft laws according to the food sovereignty system, through participatory processes, these efforts have not been accepted. This can be attributed to factors such as the inconsistency between legislative proposals and instruments of government planning, weak coordination with government entities, and lack of consensus in the participatory processes. In addition, the coordination of the SISAN is still a challenge for the COPISA. Thus far, it has been difficult to adopt this new manner of operating, where civil society organizes the governmental actions in order to formulate public policy proposals. This aspect highlights the importance having adequate civil society representation in these spaces, thus granting it increased influence among the entities interacting in the public policy cycle.

On the other hand, the absence of the SISAN from 2010 to October 2015 lessened the interactions between civil society and the ministries to - at best - the sectoral level. Ideally, the proposals put forth by such body should have been in line with the visions of both the state and civil society regarding different topics, allowing them to obtain the necessary support for implementation. By not generating this space for negotiation or broad “social pact”, this meant that sectoral ministries received proposals that they did not consider to be their own.

56 Recognizing that the processes of development and implementation of public policies incorporate a variety of individual and collective activities, are non-linear, more complex and involve more actors than would appear at first glance, through this tool they seek to contribute to the understanding of how the actors and activities are organized, in order to implement a set of joint decisions that are defined as public policy.
The framework that guides the LORSA in creating and implementing public policies has established disproportionate roles for civil society and the government entities. While the adoption of policies is an activity corresponding to the government to turn these into public initiatives, these provisions should not disrupt a series of prior activities and decisions that are carried out between governmental and non-governmental actors, in order to effectively address the social issues. This lack of connection has hindered the functioning of the proposed institutional structure.

To restart the dialogue with civil society, the sectoral ministries promoted the formation of thematic Sectoral Citizens Councils, with the aim of defining the public agenda for food sovereignty at the different territorial levels. This participatory mechanism will help compensate for the lack of civil society participation in the public policy cycle. Nevertheless, the first obvious observation when analyzing Figure 13 is that social participation is relegated to the identification and consultation of issues that will form part of the public agenda, but with no further influence in the rest of the process.
The System of Food and Nutrition Sovereignty incorporates the consortia, which bring together provincial, municipal and parochial governments; thus facilitating a direct channel of communication between the local authorities and the governing body of FNS.

The Organic Law of Food Sovereignty outlines direct action by local governments in the implementation of public policies. This could encourage the processes of local empowerment of FNS.

Sectoral ministries promote the formation of Sectoral Citizens Councils for specific issues and at the different territorial levels. This mechanism for dialogue allows civil society to influence the public agenda regarding issues related to food sovereignty. However, it creates a duplication of efforts and of participatory spaces in FNS policies.
3. CASE ANALYSIS

3.6. Peru

3.6.1. Background

Like most countries in the region, Peru has made substantive progress in reducing food insecurity among the population, from 7 million people in 1990 to 2.6 million in the biennium 2014-16, which nevertheless still represents 7.5% of the population (FAO et al, 2015). On the one hand, these achievements are connected to the positive performance of the Peruvian economy in the last fifteen years. On the other hand, they are the result of a successful implementation of policies to tackle hunger and poverty.

The years 2013 and 2014 were key to the decades-long struggle of the Peruvian Government in combating food insecurity within the country. Following the creation of the Multisectoral Commission for Food and Nutrition Security - which shall be addressed in detail in the following paragraphs - Peru has taken two important steps in terms of policies that directly address the issue; with the creation of the strategy “Incluir Para Crecer (Include to Grow)” and the “National Plan for the Reduction of Chronic Child Malnutrition and Anemia Prevention”. Both instruments require a high level of coordination between the government institutions, which can only be achieved through an inter-agency approach.

3.6.2. Current Legal Framework:

Although Peru has had a food security law in place since 2015, it is has not yet entered into effect, with one final procedure to be carried out in the legislature, as well as the drafting and enactment of its operational regulations. There is no direct mention of the human right to adequate food in the current Constitution of Peru, referring only to the rights of citizens regarding health and social security. However, in its Articles 55 and 56, it states, “The (international) treaties concluded by the State are part of the national law”, including among these the Human Rights Treaty of 1948. With this, the human right to adequate food included within the aforementioned treaty is indirectly recognized (CELAC, 2015).

Beyond what is indicated in the Constitution, the country has made concerted efforts in FNS policies since the beginning of this century, where each decree gives rise to different structures and instruments, which, in turn, have provided a governance framework for the initiatives in combating food insecurity and poverty.

Supreme Decrees of FNS

The first of these was enacted in November 2002 as Supreme Decree No. 118-2002-PCM. It created the Multisectoral Commission for Food Security as a collegial body, responsible for guiding the actions to address the issue in the country (Comisión Multisectorial de Seguridad Alimentaria de Perú, 2013). Supreme Decree No. 009-2004-PCM was approved in February 2004, which defines actions for the strengthening of the social programmes and projects, along with the Social Policy and the fight against poverty. It consolidated the following three coordinating bodies into a single commission: (i) the Social Committee, (ii) the Technical Committee of the Multisectoral Commission for Food Security, and (iii) the Executive Committee for Overcoming Poverty and Economic Opportunities for the Poor.
However, the current institutional scenario of FNS is centered on both decrees issued in 2012, which determine the creation of the current governance and planning structure of FNS in the country, still in effect at the time of publication of this document. Specifically, the creation of The Multisectoral Commission for Food and Nutrition Security (CMSAN) and the National Strategy for Food and Nutrition Security (ENSAN). Among the most notable achievements of these two decrees is the inclusion of civil society within the vision of government institutions, at certain moments of decision-making, as well as conceptually introducing the “nutritional” component into the discussions that would take place (MINAGRI, 2014).

**Strategic Planning Instruments**

Peru has implemented two national strategies to address the issue. The first dates back to 2003 and covers the period 2004-2015. Among its main characteristics is the approach to the issue in terms of food (food security), leaving aside the nutritional aspect.

In June 2013, as a result of the joint coordination between the public and private sectors, the National Strategy for Food and Nutrition Security (ENSAN) was approved, thus replacing the previous one. Additionally, it was established as a national policy guideline, aimed at setting goals and defining concrete actions for the different public and private actors, with the aim of ensuring that all Peruvians have full food and nutrition security by 2021 (FAO, 2014c).

Table 18 shows a summary of the current legal framework and the instruments for action planning in Peru.

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57 Supreme Decree No. 102-2012-PCM: Declares food and nutrition security of the population to be of national interest and public necessity, thus creating the Multisectoral Commission for Food and Nutrition Security as a permanent entity, attached to the Ministry of Agriculture. In addition, the Supreme Decree No. 021-2013-MINAGRI: Supreme Decree that approves the National Strategy for Food and Nutrition Security 2013-2021.
Table 18 - Legal and operational framework of food security governance in Peru.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Year approved</th>
<th>Reference to FNS governance</th>
<th>Emphasis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supreme Decree No. 102-2012-PCM</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td>The food and nutrition security of the population was declared to be of national interest and of public necessity, whereas the Multisectoral Commission for Food and Nutrition Security was established as permanent and attached to the Ministry of Agriculture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law on Food and Nutrition Security</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Art. 7-15.</td>
<td>The National FNS System (SINASAN) was created, giving way to a National Council, Sectoral Technical Councils and Territorial Councils (Regional, Provincial and District levels). This law has not yet entered into effect, as it should be in the process of ratification by Parliament at the time of publication of this document. After this, its regulations must be drafted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National FNS Strategy</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td></td>
<td>The proposal contains the vision, goals and strategies that will guide the State interventions, with the purpose of guaranteeing food and nutrition security for the Peruvian population by the year 2021; encompassing the five strategic themes of food and nutrition security: Availability, Access, Utilization, Stability and Institutional Structures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National FNS Plan</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td></td>
<td>Planning developed as a Logical Framework Matrix, with objectives and measurable results in the four pillars of FNS. It is in effect from 2015 to 2021. In addition, it includes the attainment of Regional FNS Councils and Strategies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: prepared by author.

3.6.3. Multisectoral coordinating bodies linked to FNS

As was mentioned above, Supreme Decree No. 118-2002-PCM was enacted in 2002, creating the Multisectoral Commission for Food Security, with the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI) responsible for acting as the technical secretariat of this body. It was operational until 2012. That year, coming into existence by means of a decree, the Multisectoral Commission for Food and Nutrition Security (MINAGRI, 2014) was created, and is currently in force; bringing together eleven public institutions and three civil society organizations for actions in favor of food and nutrition security. It is led by the Ministry of Agriculture - the same as its predecessor -, which acts as the technical secretariat.

58 Specifically: The Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI), which presides over the Commission; the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism (MINCETUR); the Ministry of Health (MINSA); the Ministry of Production (PRODUCE); the Ministry of Environment; the Ministry of Education (MINEDU); the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (RREE); the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion (MIDIS); the Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations (MIMP); the National Agriculture Convention (CONVEAGRO); the National Assembly of Regional Governments; the Network of Rural Municipalities (REMRURPE); the National Association of Artisanal Fishing Enterprises of Peru; and the National Committee of Irrigation District Users of Peru.
of the Commission. Its functions are to design the FNS Plan and Strategy for the country, and to evaluate and monitor the progress of these as well as the sectoral policies related to FNS in general. In addition, its role is to promote the articulation between the institutions forming part of the body and coordinate the international cooperating entities (Decreto Supremo N° 102-2012 PCMHTTP, 2012).

In the Opening Ceremony, the members of the Commission agreed by consensus that there shall be a Technical Secretariat (a body not previously defined in the Decree); designating the MINAGRI to take on this role, through its Directorate-General of Agricultural Competitiveness.

At the territorial level, the objective of the National FNS Plan is for all regions of the country to have Regional FNS Councils and their respective Plans in place by 2021. However, this and other goals will certainly be affected to a certain degree when the FNS Law enters into force in the country.

3.6.4. Key elements of the process of FNS governance

The Multisectoral Commission for FNS is a body that draws from the extensive experience of the Peruvian Government in establishing an institutional framework with a multi-stakeholder approach to FNS policies, making use of strategic instruments to coordinate their actions. This body has had the advantage of serving as an opportunity to organize actions, while reducing the duplication of efforts and instruments within the policies aimed at assisting those experiencing extreme poverty and food insecurity. Another key factor has been the political will of the governments in creating these institutions and instruments, which have attained their institutional structures through supreme decrees.

The Commission’s inter-agency approach has the advantage of facilitating the coordination of sectoral actions, instruments and programmes in an executive manner; thus avoiding the duplication of efforts, while reducing the gaps and therefore the possibility of not being able to assist the population. Nevertheless, there is an urgency to move towards an institutional structure dedicated to the issue in a comprehensive and exclusive manner, as is the case in other countries, with a budget and a professional team to provide exclusive attention to coordinating actions for FNS. This need shall be met with the new FNS Law, which creates a commission with its respective technical body for implementation. The challenge will be to involve the commission in the initiatives carried out by the sectoral institutions linked to the issue of FNS, without creating a duplication of efforts.

The inclusion of civil society in a high-level decision-making body is another important milestone in the case of Peru. The integration of the commission with the National Agriculture Convention (CONVEAGRO), the National Association of Artisanal Fishing Enterprises of Peru, and the National Committee of Irrigation District Users of Peru represents a key achievement in terms of participation. In turn, the actions of this commission are enhanced by the approach from the municipalities and the regions. However, these processes can certainly be further improved, if we include such approaches that clearly provide other aspects of FNS from the perspective of civil society, beyond the productive vision that we might have today. An example of this is the positive contribution made by professional associations and academia in similar entities in other countries of the region.
Table 19. Key institutional and programmatic achievements in Peru

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions of governance for FNS (FAO, 2011)</th>
<th>Key institutional and programmatic achievements in Peru</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participation</strong></td>
<td>The Multisectoral Commission includes three national civil society organizations, including the fishing and agricultural sectors (both small and large). In addition, nine government entities and two national bodies representing territorial government entities participate. Rural municipalities and regional governments are also included.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transparency</strong></td>
<td>The Law of Transparency and Access to Public Information No. 27.806 (Ley N° 27806, 2003) has been in effect since 2003, which promotes transparency among government actors and regulates the right of access to public information. In turn, the Multisectoral Commission issues periodic reports, with two annual editions, reporting on its progress and agreements made. On the other hand, the presence of civil society organizations in the Commission confers a degree of transparency to its management and decision-making processes. The website of the Ministry of Agriculture (which acts as technical secretary of the Commission) does not make any direct reference to the actions carried out, instead delivering only sectoral information. Nevertheless, it is possible to find the financial information of the government instruments dedicated to the fight against food insecurity, on the respective websites of the related ministries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility</strong></td>
<td>The ministries that form part of the Commission have taken responsibility for their respective sectoral roles in the issue of FNS. It is still a challenge, however, to maintain a multisectoral approach in the design and implementation of the instruments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accountability</strong></td>
<td>The National FNS Plan 2015-2021 includes a logical framework matrix with clearly established indicators, along with a baseline and objectives to measure the progress made in terms of results. Peru also has an Observatory on Food and Nutrition Security[^59], which is run by a non-governmental organization known as the Peruvian Center for Social Studies (CEPES). The Observatory provides publicly available information for each dimension of FNS (Access, Availability, Utilization, Stability and Institutional Structure), disaggregated at the departmental level. Nevertheless, the government documents do not refer to the Observatory (FAO, 2016).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compliance with the FNS Law or Decree</strong></td>
<td>The Commission has complied with the mandates of the two decrees associated with its operation. The Interministerial Commission was established and given continuity, while the FNS Strategy and Plan were created; both of which are in effect until 2021.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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[^59]: This dimension has been adapted from the original Rule of Law for the purpose of this document.
• **Actors**

The composition of the Multisectoral Commission for FNS has strength with the presence of sectoral public institutions, which address various elements of food and nutrition security in the country. An innovation in the Peruvian model is the inclusion of representative bodies of the regional and municipal governments. This undoubtedly provides a component of an understanding of the reality of FNS-related actions, taking into account that the territorial government bodies play a crucial role in the coordination of policy initiatives.

*Figure 14.* - Background of the actors responsible for the public policy processes within the Multisectoral Commission for FNS

However, this structure could be improved upon in terms of the abundance of actors involved, and in fact, the new Food and Nutrition Security Law introduces improvements in the governance of the Commission. An example of this is that the Commission does not include civil society sectors linked to FNS, such as academia. As can be seen in Figure 4, the Commission has a clear tendency to convene government entities, leaving a smaller space for the private sector and civil society.

As defined in the FNS Strategy 2014-2021, various efforts have been made at the level of territorial governance to implement these coordinating bodies, especially at the regional level. In this context, FAO has supported the MINAGRI through technical assistance for implementation, with successive analyses of the structure and manner of establishing such bodies, as well as the processes, the actors involved and procedures to follow, in order to successfully coordinate the currently active policy instruments. However, this has not yet been implemented. FAO is currently supporting the development of pilot projects to coordinate the rural development entities in the provinces of Ayavaca and Yurimaguas.
• Processes

The Supreme Decree, through which the National Strategy was approved, establishes that each of the entities that comprise the Multisectoral Commission on Food and Nutrition Security shall adopt the necessary measures for its respective implementation, within the scope of its competencies. The National Plan for Food Security defines the route and establishes the specific actions that the various institutions must carry out, in order to achieve the general objective outlined in the National Strategy for Food and Nutrition Security 2015-2021.

Thus, the Commission is given a role in formulating, monitoring and evaluating these two important management tools, without hindering the implementation of policy actions. This remains the responsibility of the different sectoral government entities, as detailed within the Plan. In this context, an analysis of the institutional roles must be conducted in two areas: on the one hand, the formulation of multisectoral planning instruments, coordinating the actions in FNS (the Plan and Strategy) and, on the other hand, the sectoral policy instruments. In Figure 15, we can observe the path taken by both the Strategy and the Plan within the Commission, under discussion throughout the entire process in this entity. Only during the formulation phase does it fall within the sphere of the technical secretariat (MINAGRI).

Figure 15 - Proposal to create and implement the FNS Strategy and Plan, carried out based on the current legal framework

Proposal of the Decree for the design and implementation of the FNS Plan and Strategy

Throughout the preceding paragraphs, the objective of the Multisectoral Commission in Peru has been clear: to be a coordinating body shaped by public actors, which has served the purpose of constructing a joint strategic vision of the goals, and seeking the manner in which these can be achieved for Food and Nutrition Security in the country. In addition, it has been able to organize the government interventions of an operational nature; designing a plan that has shown strength in granting a measurable element to its actions, thus facilitating its evaluation and allowing for adjustments in a continuous improvement process.

However, as indicated above, the Commission can go beyond this scope, and shall do so with the creation of the national FNS system, which would come into force with the enactment of the Law. One aspect that will undoubtedly signify a shift is a more active involvement of civil society in the policy-making processes.
The multisectoral coordination demonstrated by the Commission is, without a doubt, a key result of increasing efficiency in the application of sectoral policy instruments (projects, plans and programmes) in the country. This has produced a tangible result, for example, in avoiding the duplication of instruments and in organizing the groups benefitting from such policies, plans and programmes.

The fact that there is a strategy and an operational plan in place has allowed for clearly defined priorities to be made known to all participating entities, thus improving their actions and enabling the measurement of results.
3. CASE ANALYSIS

3.7. Nicaragua

3.7.1. Background

The greatest achievement in Nicaragua in guaranteeing food and nutrition security and the fulfillment of the human right to adequate food is expressed in the Constitution, adopted in 1987, which establishes in its article 63 that “Nicaraguans have the right to be protected against hunger”. It also recognizes the key role of the state in supporting programmes that ensure the availability and distribution of food.

With this impetus from the Constitution, several programmes were implemented to eradicate hunger in the 1990s, which correspond to sectoral action. These initiatives carried out by public institutions demonstrated the need to coordinate efforts among the different ministries in order to achieve greater impact. In 1993 and 1994, at the Summit of Central American Presidents, Nicaragua hosted the regional food security initiative and promoted its implementation. These efforts, coupled with what occurred at the World Food Summit in 1996, were the key to promoting the formulation of a FNS policy by the state.

Efforts were doubled in the following decade. On the one hand, the Plan of Action for National Policy and FNS was established, which recognizes the importance of having an organizational management framework; promoting the formation of the National Commission on Food Security and the Technical Committee on Food Security, and establishing responsibilities to achieve the national FNS goals. The action strategy identified the need for coordination among the various ministries, local governments, the private sector and civil society representatives; all of whom should act under the leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture. One of the main challenges facing the country, as identified through this plan, was the multisectoral and inter-agency coordination to improve the policy interventions. Unfortunately, this plan was never implemented (MAGFOR, 2009).

This failed attempt led to greater civil society participation, and with the support of several parliamentary members, two bills were drafted. The first one presented in 2006 did not advance in the congress, and the second was presented in 2007; which, after several discussions, modifications and technical consultations, was approved in 2009 (Asamblea Nacional de Nicaragua, 2013). With the current Law of Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security (LSSAN), the Food and Nutrition Security and Sovereignty Unit was created as the main lobbying mechanism for future approval of policies in this area, along with the Division of Citizen Participation and Food Security, as the body responsible for promoting the connection with civil society in FNS initiatives.
3.7.2. Current legal framework and operational instruments

- **Constitution of the Republic of Nicaragua**

In the Constitution of Nicaragua, approved in 1986 and subsequently amended, the human right to adequate food is explicitly recognized; pointing out in Article 63 that all Nicaraguans have the right to be protected against hunger, and that the state is chiefly responsible for promoting programmes which assure the availability of food and its adequate distribution. This gives the right to food the same importance as other social rights such as work, health, social security and housing.

In addition, Articles 49 and 50 in the Constitution recognize the right to establish organizations of agricultural producers, field and city workers, women, youth and technicians, among others; in order to express their interest and participate in the construction of Nicaraguan society. Furthermore, it establishes that all citizens have the right to participate in public affairs and in public administration at the national and local levels.

- **Law on Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security (LSSAN)**

Several draft laws on FNS were submitted to the National Assembly for approval. The proposal put forth in 2007 needed adjustments made in certain sensitive topics, for which the key governmental actors involved were summoned to discuss the issues and submit alternative proposals. Finally, in 2009, Law No. 693 of Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security was approved.

The main objective of the LSSAN is to guarantee the right of all Nicaraguans to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that is physically and economically accessible in a timely and permanent manner; ensuring its availability and stability through the development and governance of FNS public policies by the state. This law supports the structuring and organization of governmental actions to promote coordinated and comprehensive action at the different territorial levels.

In addition, it proposes the creation of the National System of Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security (SINASSAN) as the main mechanism for implementing the right to food. The abovementioned system must be comprised by a group of public and private institutions, along with non-governmental organizations with competency and impact in the area of FNS. The institutional framework of the SINASSAN proposes the formation of national, departmental and municipal bodies; in which both governmental and non-governmental actors coordinate for joint decision-making and actions.

- **Citizen Participation Law**

Recognizing the importance of the civil society participation in national planning, the Citizen Participation Law establishes the right to engage in decision-making for all of civil society. This legislation establishes several mechanisms, including Municipal and Departmental Development Councils. Furthermore, it specifies that citizens, in general, are able to participate in the formulation of national and sectoral public policies.

The Law promotes the creation of a development committee in each municipality, in order to cooperate with the local government in the management and planning of the economic and social development of the territory. These committees will be composed of governmental and non-governmental representatives to participate in the municipal committees of FNS. If these two bodies are not adequately coordinated, it could create conflict in the representation of the actors involved.

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60 In 1998, the first proposal of the Food Security Law was presented, which sought to fill the existing legal vacuum on the issue. Two years later, a new version of the bill was presented, incorporating proposals submitted by key sectors linked to FNS. Unfortunately, however, the discussion of this draft law was not prioritized in the National Assembly. In 2001, a new draft law was submitted, which incorporated adjustments with respect to the National FNS Policy and the groups involved with FNS. However, due to political priorities, the draft law was not addressed until 2005; after the respective parliamentary commissions analyzed and discussed it, and considered such draft successful, but requested an assessment for potential changes. Based on this, a proposal was put forth in 2007 and discussed for two years before its approval in 2009.
The PNDH is Nicaragua’s main tool for technical targeting, through which the national objectives and goals are determined; defining the actions of the governmental and non-governmental entities (Gobierno Nacional de Nicaragua, 2012). The Plan establishes 12 strategic guidelines, which include achieving economic growth to reduce the highest levels of poverty; strengthening the strong partnership between workers, producers and the government as a strategy for social cohesion for development; strengthening external cooperation to combat poverty; expanding policies which promote the common good and social equity; and continuing to support the productive sector, along with prioritizing household economy and food security.

The PNDH proposes strengthening the model of comprehensive assistance as a productive strategy for rural and urban micro- and small-scale production; thus developing social skills to overcome the issue of poverty, inequalities and weaknesses that continue to affect the economy. Its main lines of action include food and nutrition sovereignty and security, a strategy for agriculture and forestry, and the development of household economy, among others.

The Plan establishes as a top priority of the state the guarantee that families, especially the poorest, have access to adequate, nutritious and safe food. In order to fulfill this responsibility and make the LSSAN operational, the Strategy and Policy of Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security has been proposed; formed by national programmes, such as the Food Production Programme, the School Feeding Programme, the Agro-industry Support Programme, and the Seed and Urea Programme, among others. The main guidelines of this strategy include promoting the development of household economy; developing the production of household and domestic consumption; supporting food education programmes; improving nutritional practices via the school curriculum and family education; and organizing and strengthening the Food Sovereignty and Safety Committees at the national, sectoral, departmental and municipal levels; among others.

Policy on Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security

Approved in 2009, this national policy has places emphasis on guaranteeing the right to adequate food for all Nicaraguan citizens. It proposes strategic guidelines to promote greater availability of food, improve access to food, encourage responsible consumption, and ensure the biological utilization of available food. Furthermore, it identifies various cross-cutting themes such as gender equity, the rights of children and youth, institutional development and multisectoral harmonization as an element of institutional development, knowledge and information management, education, training and outreach, along with a territorial approach.

The target populations of this policy are micro, small and medium-sized agricultural and forestry producers, indigenous and ethnic communities, capitalized producers linked to agricultural and agro-industrial activities, large producers who underutilize their land and who will receive incentives for greater productivity, and the urban and rural population at risk of food and nutrition insecurity.

Through this policy, interventions should be coordinated between the Ministries of Agriculture, Health, Education, Natural Resources, and Labour, as well as local governments and other governmental actors. It also proposes coordinating with civil society, universities, producer organizations, non-governmental organizations, business sector cooperation, the achievement of common objectives, as well as creating partnerships to implement joint and complementary efforts.
### Table 21 - Legal and operational framework of governance of food sovereignty in Nicaragua

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Year approved</th>
<th>Reference to FNS governance</th>
<th>Emphasis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constitution of the Republic of Nicaragua</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Art.49; Art.50; Art.63</td>
<td>It recognizes the right for all to be protected against hunger. To this end, the state will support programmes that ensure adequate food availability and an equitable distribution of food. The right to food is given the same importance as the social rights of health, education, work and housing. The Constitution guarantees the right to establish social, political, productive or other organizations, in order to participate without discrimination in the processes of social construction and political decision-making at the national and local levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law on Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Art.1-Art.43</td>
<td>Identifies the National System of Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security as the main instrument to ensure compliance with the human right to adequate food. The Law supports sectoral and territorial organization at the national, regional, departmental and municipal levels, by creating and strengthening coordinating bodies, articulation and consensus-building; aiming to guarantee food and nutrition sovereignty and security. The principles of this law are: availability, equity and gender, consumption, biological utilization, participation, efficiency, non-discrimination, solidarity, transparency, protection, equity, inclusiveness, sustainability, decentralization and citizen participation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizen Participation Law</td>
<td></td>
<td>Art.7; Art.38; Art. 50; Art.68</td>
<td>It establishes the principle that civic participation should possess an institutional structure, as a right demanded by citizens and an obligation of the state. Furthermore, it specifies that citizens, in general, are able to participate in the formulation of national and sectoral public policies. All of civil society has the right to participate and be heard in the decision-making processes adopted by local authorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Human Development Plan 2012-2016</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Strategic Guidelines 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9 and 10</td>
<td>It establishes a specific strategic guideline for FNS, giving continuity to those policies identified in the PNDH 2007-2011, which support the agricultural sector. Proposes the Food Strategy and Policy for Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security as the main tool to guarantee access to food for vulnerable populations. Within this strategy, the main lines of action are related to the strengthening of production for household and domestic consumption, school feeding programmes and the strengthening of the Food Sovereignty and Security Committees at the national, sectoral, departmental and municipal levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy on Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td></td>
<td>Under the leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture, it proposes that the coordination with sectoral ministries such as those of Health, Education, Natural Resources, and Labour, as well as local governments, universities, NGOs, partners and civil society in general in order to meet the shared goal of eradicating hunger. In addition, it proposes strategic lines such as promoting greater availability, access, responsible consumption and utilization of food, among others.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: prepared by author.
3.7.3. Bodies of multisectoral coordination linked to FNS

The LSSAN has put forth the most ambitious proposal in the region, in terms of an institutional framework to coordinate actions for FNS. The bodies which will form the SINASSAN differ in scope within the national, regional, departmental and municipal levels; while nationally, they are divided into national and sectoral bodies of coordination and technical support. This structure promotes coordination among government entities and civil society, opening up spaces of participation for actors in the private sector.

This initiative undoubtedly demonstrates the technical and political importance given to the fight against hunger in this country; however, its implementation has suffered delays, and in some cases, has stalled. In order to create an institutional structure and make it operational, such as the one proposed in Nicaragua, it requires continuous commitment from the actors involved, along with multisectoral coordination to avoid potential duplication of other coordinating bodies. It must also have the ability to adjust the institutional structure according to the existing capacities and social needs.

National Council on Food and Nutrition Security and Sovereignty (CONASSAN)

CONASSAN is the high-level body for intergovernmental and inter-agency coordination at the national level. It is chaired by the President of the Republic and is comprised of officials from six sectoral ministries and the representative of the National System for Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Control, along with regional councils, municipal government representatives, non-governmental organizations, private enterprises, indigenous peoples and the Technical Secretariat of Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security. The development of this structure was supported by Presidential Decree No. 26-2010.

The main responsibilities to be undertaken by the CONASSAN include evaluating and providing suggestions to the President of the Republic for the approval of the National Policy of Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security, as well as adopting strategies, plans, programmes and projects of FNS, and supporting the design and operations of the different bodies of the SINASSAN.

Despite having had support after the adoption of the law - at least in rhetoric - this body failed to establish itself. Among the factors which impeded its implementation was the overlapping with already existing multisectoral bodies.

Technical Secretariat for Food and Nutrition Security and Sovereignty (SESSAN)

The SESSAN was conceived as a technical body to support the CONASSAN. Upon its formation, an Executive Secretariat was taken into consideration, along with a planning unit and a monitoring and evaluation unit. Among its key functions are: formulate and evaluate the National Policy of Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security; create and evaluate strategies, plans and programmes around the issue; assess the regional, district and municipal bodies of FNS; and facilitate the coordination of the different bodies of Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security.

The SESSAN remained operational for approximately 2 years, during which time it coordinated activities of data surveys and planning, in cooperation with the Ministries of Agriculture, of Economy, of Health, and of Education, along with the Nicaraguan Institute of Agricultural Technology. In addition, its activities fell within the context of local capacity-development, for which partnerships were formed with government entities and international cooperation organizations. Unfortunately, a change in political priorities lessened the body’s importance, and it eventually ceased to function.
Technical-Sectoral Councils for Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security (COTESSAN)

These Councils are the sectoral coordinating bodies for FNS-related activities, led by the sectoral ministry and composed of government entities, representatives of non-governmental organizations, national associations, private enterprises, indigenous peoples and universities involved in the work of the sector. Their responsibilities include developing sectoral policies that contribute to fulfilling FNS and sovereignty, supporting the SESSAN in the coordination of regional, departmental and municipal bodies of FNS, and participating in the evaluation of actions carried out by the SINASSAN.

Regional, District and Municipal Commissions on Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security

These are governmental and non-governmental coordinating bodies, composed of the respective local governments and sectoral ministry representatives present in these territories, which are part of the CONASSAN. Civil society organizations that carry out projects in these territories are invited to participate. Its functions are to coordinate the public and private initiatives, in order to develop, implement and evaluate policies, programmes and projects of FNS and sovereignty.

Some research has been carried out on these multi-themed coordinating bodies, revealing that while the organization could be greater, those which were successfully established have become technical and political platforms for joint efforts; which then allocate the economic and technical resources of the governmental and non-governmental actors involved in the territories.

Inter-university Council on Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security (CIUSSAN)

The CIUSSAN is a technical and consultative body which provides support to the National System of Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security of Nicaragua, through the development of human capital, research and transfer, in order to contribute to the implementation of public policies. The CIUSSAN brings together 16 universities, which have incorporated FNS as a cross-cutting theme in their academic curricula for students’ education. Human capital has been strengthened on a national scale through postgraduate degrees and diplomas in the area of FNS.

Among its most relevant actions, a few worth mentioning include the coordination of its actions with ministries, local governments and social organizations in order to train local technicians in the development of sectoral and municipal plans; providing technical support to municipalities in implementing the law; forums for discussion and debate on the Law of Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security; and promoting studies and activities which analyze and evaluate FNS initiatives (FAO, 2014).

3.7.4. Key elements of the process of FNS governance

The efforts carried out in Nicaragua reveal that there are several limitations to implementing such a complex institutional framework. At the national level, the bodies of FNS and sovereignty have been limited by the changes in political commitment, the duplication of coordinating bodies, and the overlapping of responsibilities. The experience gained through the process of creating local bodies demonstrates that local governments should be primarily responsible for managing the
Dimensions of FNS governance (FAO, 2011) | Key institutional and programmatic achievements in Nicaragua
---|---
Participation | - Within the institutional framework proposed in the LSSAN, only certain municipalities have managed to form their municipal committees of Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security. These multisectoral bodies of coordination include representatives of the sectoral government ministries, along with non-governmental organizations, academia, producers’ organizations, and the Gabinetes de la Familia, la Comunidad y la Vida (Departments of Family, Community and Life) as key civil society representatives.

Transparency | - Despite the absence of the coordinating bodies of Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security, in 2009 the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAGFOR) presented the Policy of Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security, with the main strategic guidelines to ensure FNS.

| - The lack of specific instruments of FNS and sovereignty that guide the government’s actions was corrected through the National Human Development Plan. In this regard, the sectoral ministries are carrying out initiatives which support the implementation of the LSSAN.

Responsibility* | - The Technical Secretariat of Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security was operational for two years. Unfortunately, the lack of political commitment limited its continuity.

| - In certain districts, the FNS Committees were not able to become consolidated, as the actors from various municipalities either did not see these bodies as operational, or because the municipalities from the same district featured contrasting characteristics, thus making it difficult to establish common lines of action.

| - In some municipalities, the Committees on FNS and Sovereignty were strengthened, going on to become multisectoral bodies of coordination that support the work being carried out in FNS, and which compensate for the technical and economic weaknesses of the local governments.

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* Analyzed according to the responsibilities undertaken by the actors linked to the food sovereignty system.
** This dimension has been adapted from the original Rule of Law for the purpose of this document.

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61 The Departments of Family, Community and Life are citizen groups responsible for the welfare of their communities. They were created by the Family Code, with the principal objective of strengthening the government’s social strategy. Through these spaces, they seek capacity-building and community organizing as the main pillars for achieving the goals established in the National Human Development Plan.
• Actors

The National System of Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security (SINASSAN) encourages actors in the public and private sectors, along with civil society, to jointly coordinate the policies and programmes of food and nutrition sovereignty and security. This institutional proposal seeks to encompass the national, regional, departmental and municipal levels in each territory; thus creating a space for coordination of FNS and sovereignty. With regard to the actors involved, the SINASSAN includes representatives from private enterprises, governmental organizations and civil society within the National Council of Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security. In this respect, it differs from other institutional proposals in the region, as it marks the first time that non-governmental actors have been included in the governing body for FNS.

At the national level, and taking into account the governmental actors, the SISSAN aims to bring together the Ministries of Agriculture and Forestry (MAGFOR); of Health (MINSAL); of Education (MINED); of Environment and Natural Resources (MARENA); of Finance and Public Credit; and of Development, Industry and Commerce; together with six of the twenty sectoral ministries. In recent years, these have been joined by the recently created Ministry of Family, Community, Cooperative and Associative Economy (MEFCCA). Also included is the representative of the National System for Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Control. In regard to the local governments, the president of the Association of Municipalities of Nicaragua and the representative of the regional governments have joined forces in this space, and have become the main representatives of the territorial bodies of FNS and sovereignty.

In terms of civil society, representatives of non-governmental organizations, production associations and indigenous people’s organizations that have implemented actions for FNS and sovereignty are coordinated at the national level. In addition, the participation of a private sector representative is chosen by the Chambers of Private Entrepreneurs at the national level.

At the decentralized level, the bodies for FNS and sovereignty are composed of local authorities, representatives of the ministries present in the territories, academia and social organizations.

*Figure 16 - Background of the actors responsible for implementing the National Food and Nutrition Security System in Nicaragua*
Nicaragua has shown the difficulties that traditional governmental structures face, upon implementing a coordinated institutional framework that is complex on a territorial and multisectoral level. Moreover, the changes in political commitment have been crucial factors when consolidating the national bodies of FNS and sovereignty. Another key factor has been the creation of new governmental entities, such as the Ministry of Family, Community, Cooperative and Associative Economy (MEFCCA), which have undertaken the responsibilities of coordination in areas related to food security and sovereignty.

The coordinating bodies of FNS at the national level have lost their influence, due to the duplication of efforts for inter-agency cooperation. This has diminished the participation and commitment of certain actors, and has generated cases of institutional overlapping, making it difficult to strengthen these spaces. Faced with these difficulties, certain ministries have undertaken the strategy of initiating construction of the FNS and sovereignty framework, starting locally in the territories, until arriving at the national level (Godek, 2013).

Regarding the decentralized FNS bodies, there was a lack of interest among the municipal representatives in certain districts where district-level commissions had begun to take shape; as they held the view that they did not experience the same difficulties as other municipalities in the same district, making it difficult to reach an agreement on their priorities. This became more evident in the districts located in the dry corridor region.

The dynamic proposed by the LSSAN in public policy-making (Figure 17) shows that decentralization is promoted at various levels, with a broad presence of government actors throughout the process. Unfortunately, this dynamic did not come to fruition. The interventions for FNS and sovereignty in Nicaragua continue to operate with a traditional sectoral framework, where in most cases, the ministries carry out their decision-making and initiatives individually. The decentralization processes have suffered from the lack of coordination between the conferring of responsibilities and the funding from the corresponding budgets to undertake such activities.

Figure 17- Proposal by LSSAN for public policy-making
Despite the aforementioned situation, the experiences that have been consolidated have paved the way for future initiatives of coordination in FNS and sovereignty. These include certain municipalities which have managed to form their respective committees, in order to tackle the issues related to food security. These cases are evidence that the enactment of the LSSAN has allowed the institutional coordination at these territorial levels to be strengthened, and awareness has been raised among governmental and non-governmental actors on the importance of jointly promoting food security (FAO, 2012).

In certain municipalities, this mode of coordination has become popular in a positive way; on the one hand allowing for the strengthening of the local organizational structure, which in most cases corresponded to the sectoral work of certain social initiatives, and has transformed this into a multisectoral vision, involving various ministries and NGOs. In addition, this new manner of organizing actions within the committees on FNS and sovereignty has allowed for the improved targeting of resources, avoiding the duplication of efforts and expanding coverage to vulnerable populations in remote areas. Through these actions, the technical weaknesses and - to a certain extent - the economic constraints of the local government have been overcome.

Local governments that managed to consolidate their FNS committees have had to adapt in order to establish such bodies. In certain municipalities there were economic development committees already in place, where actors in the productive sector coordinated the activities. These spaces were joined by actors from the sectors of health, education and environment; so that these existing bodies took on the responsibilities established by the LSSAN at the decentralized level.

An element that stands out among these processes are the Departments of Family, Community and Life, which are grassroots social organizations representing communities or neighborhoods; where the principal social needs are agreed upon and submitted to government policymakers. In most of the municipal committees of FNS and sovereignty or development, the representatives of these cabinets have become key civil society representatives.

Table 23- Summary of key points of governance of FNS in Nicaragua

- The experience in Nicaragua indicates that while traditional government structures are more open to change, there is a better chance that the proposals put forth will be accepted, if based on FNS laws. At the local level, certain municipalities have used the existing coordinating bodies and have incorporated other sectoral actors, so that within these spaces, they assume the responsibilities as established in the Law of Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security.

- Within the local governments, technical and budgetary deficiencies have been resolved with the creation of FNS commissions, which have allowed for improving local capacities and expanding the scope of action of the sectoral programmes.

- The Departments of Family, Community and Life have joined the framework of FNS and sovereignty as the main civil society representatives. Through these spaces, they have gained influence in decision-making processes, and certain technical ministries are working directly with the aforementioned cabinets in order to adjust the programmatic offer of the government.

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62 Decisions are made by the municipal committees on FNS and sovereignty on the priority areas in which to work, and on which actors will cover these territories. In the event that a new non-governmental entity wants to initiate activities in the municipality, it is the Committee that establishes its area of work.
4. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The progress made in the region in terms of the implementation of the legal and institutional frameworks of FNS is clear evidence that the ability to meet social needs depends not only on governmental actors, but also on the constant interaction between a broad, diverse group of actors from different backgrounds. These groups comprising the multisectoral bodies of FNS include certain government institutions, but now the leading role is also shared with other actors who, in some cases, have traditionally been excluded from these processes. This has improved the dialogue in decision-making processes. Therefore, the current and future frameworks of FNS should seek suitable mechanisms to guarantee a greater diversity in their composition, as well as adequate representation to ensure that they have the necessary support from all social and political sectors involved. In addition, these spaces should have a tangible impact on the political processes at the national and local levels. This is a recognition that complex social issues, such as hunger, can only be managed through cooperation and coordination among all actors, at all territorial levels and with the inclusion of interest groups.

An appropriate combination of actors from different backgrounds in the cross-cutting bodies of coordination and in the implementation of actions for FNS will promote greater continuity of these spaces, in the face of political and economic shifts. Moreover, civic participation in general can become the main tool against partisanship in the FNS bodies. Political actors should set aside special interests and allow for the incorporation of actors from across the political spectrum; thus supporting the development of such multisectoral spaces as political forums, where all participants have the same assurances in decision-making.

As was previously mentioned, the institutional framework of FNS at the national and local levels, which has managed to establish itself and is supported in other countries throughout the region, should become the main platform from which all technical and political conditions are defined, so that civil society can participate in the FNS policies. Primarily, allowing them to fulfill the role of social oversight and supervision is key. In addition, such multisectoral FNS structures must serve as the principal tools to create greater institutional and collective awareness of the importance of food and nutrition security; especially among government entities, so that it becomes a cross-cutting theme for action in Latin America.

The advances in the region demonstrate the need to give greater political importance to the coordinating bodies of FNS, in order to generate reports and recommendations that are binding in nature; thus allowing for adjustments within the FNS framework, along with defining or redirecting responsibilities in the institutions involved, and ensuring the adequate inclusion of actors in the institutional structure.

The FNS framework tends to decentralize functions in favor of local governments in some countries, and despite complications in the creation of the national coordinating bodies, it has facilitated the formation of multisectoral local bodies. Taking this into account, it is necessary to consider two key factors. On the one hand, is essential to develop and strengthen local capacities, so that the actors located in the territories the can serve as the key dynamic forces for FNS initiatives; while on the other hand, the local governments should be seen as having a greater role within the territorial processes of FNS. This demonstrates the need for powerful technical teams to establish targeted actions in their respective territories, so that external actors are able to contribute to achieving local objectives. Furthermore, the local governments, upon forming a greater connection to their citizens, must be the key promoters of social participation within the territorial development processes.

In terms of the governance processes carried out, it is necessary to implement mechanisms for transparency and accountability which encourage social oversight of the FNS initiatives, and which create favourable conditions for greater confidence among the entities involved. This will be a major impetus to strengthen the networks of national and local actors.
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