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Strengthening coherence between agriculture and social protection

Zambia country case study report

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Abbreviations

AFSC	Area Food Security Committee
CDA	Community Development Assistant
CEO	Camp Extension Officer
CWAC	Community Welfare Assistance Committee
DACO	District Agricultural Coordinator
DDCC	District Development Coordinating Committee
DFSC	District Food Security Committee
FGD	Focus group discussion
FISP	Farmer Input Support Programme
FRA	Food Reserve Agency
FSP	Food Security Pack
GDP	Gross domestic product
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
KII	Key informant interview
MAL	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
MCDMCH	Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health
NAP	National Agricultural Policy (draft)
NSPP	National Social Protection Policy
PPPT	Protect-Prevent-Promote-Transform Framework
R-SNDP	Revised Sixth National Development Plan
SAG	Sector Advisory Group
SCT	Social Cash Transfer
ZMW	Zambian kwacha

Preface

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

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

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

Executive Summary

This study took place in Zambia (Lusaka and Monze Districts) between the 11th and 22nd of May 2015. The study was led by Luke Harman of the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) with support from Dr Thomson Kalinda (University of Zambia) and Giulia Calcagnini of the From Protection to Production (PtoP) team in FAO-Rome.

The study focuses on two core questions:

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

The country study on Zambia initially set out to focus particularly on agricultural support for poorer rural households, including beneficiaries of the recently scaled-up Social Cash Transfer Programme, in the face of two major agricultural initiatives that take up a considerable proportion of the agricultural budget: the Farmer Input Support Programme (FISP) and the Food Reserve Agency (FRA). However, the study also aimed to allow for a focus on other programmes and issues as they arose, along with a focus on broader issues of coherence and coordination mechanisms at different levels.

Key findings of the study include the following:

- At the policy level, there are clear overlaps in the policy objectives for the two ministries responsible for agriculture and social protection, most notably around the objectives of food and nutrition security, employment and income generation and strengthening livelihoods. However the level of coherence achieved in practice appears to be minimal and put at risk by, in particular, various tensions within Zambia’s agricultural policy. At the heart of these tensions are the focus on achieving three elements which are not necessarily always complementary: food security (at national and household level); increased contribution of agriculture to GDP; and “equitable, inclusive and sustainable development” (MoAL, 2013).
- There is a sense that by looking at agricultural and social protection programmes in Zambia, there is some latent coherence in terms of the broad complementarities in target groups. Specifically, while the Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health (MCDMCH) – responsible for social protection – is focused more on the most vulnerable and “vulnerable but viable” farmers, the main interventions implemented through the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL) (according to their official design) tend to focus on farmers who are able to operate on a more independent basis, but are still in need of support before being able to operate as fully commercial farmers. In practice, however, the performance of the FISP and the FRA, which together take up the lion’s share of the agricultural budget, has been widely criticized even within the government for continually failing to deliver intended outcomes and, in the case of the FISP, for typically benefitting more powerful and better-off farmers. These two initiatives, as they currently stand, also conflict with the shared policy goals mentioned above by crowding-out funding for other essential agricultural investments, including research and extension, irrigation, livestock and veterinary services.

- Despite the overlapping policy goals and the formal existence of mechanisms for inter-sector planning and monitoring, there appears to be limited dialogue at the national level between the MAL and the MCDMCH. Part of the reason for this are limited institutional incentives and interest on the side of the MAL in particular, in terms of deeper engagement with social protection. This, in turn, is partly related to a lack of awareness of the overlaps and inter-dependencies but also a result of the highly politicized nature of the ministry's main programmes, and a sense of having limited scope for bringing about a more coherent approach. The recent involvement of the MAL in the development of the new National Social Protection Policy (NSPP) is a promising exception, though this engagement did not appear to venture into strengthening coordination or coherence.
- At the district and community levels, while there is greater evidence of inter-sector work and collaboration in the areas visited, there remain obvious gaps and the main example of programmatic coordination appeared to suffer from volatile programme funding.

Based on the findings of the study, the report makes the following recommendations:

- At the national level, to build upon the recent collaboration between the MAL and the MCDMCH in the development of the NSPP and make use of that document as a basis for coordinating measures across the ministries. In particular, focusing on the fact that agriculture is recognized as a core component for achieving goals of one of the NSPP's key pillars (Livelihood and Empowerment). Priority should therefore be given to the implementation of various promising features within the NSPP, such as the proposed National Social Protection Coordinating Unit at Cabinet level, with representation from MAL and others, and a single registry for the identification and recording of poor rural households benefitting from different programmes across the two ministries.
- Concerning programmes, priority should be given to first of all addressing the major implementation flaws (e.g. relating to targeting, timeliness of delivery and payment, leakage, and crowding-out of input suppliers and grain traders) and associated failures of achieving the intended outputs of the agricultural sector's two main areas of expenditure – the FISP and FRA. To this end, strong consideration should be given to the options for rationalizing and scaling down the programmes (e.g. through improved targeting) to increase benefit-cost ratios and free up much needed resources for essential agricultural investments and services. There is also a need to address various implementation failures seen in the Social Cash Transfer Programme and Food Security Pack (e.g. relating to late delivery of cash/locally in appropriate) agricultural inputs).
- Once there is a sufficiently effective implementation of individual programmes and initiatives on their own terms, stronger measures could then be put in place to facilitate sustainable exits from poverty through a greater emphasis on and support for layering and sequencing of support measures, spanning social protection and agriculture.

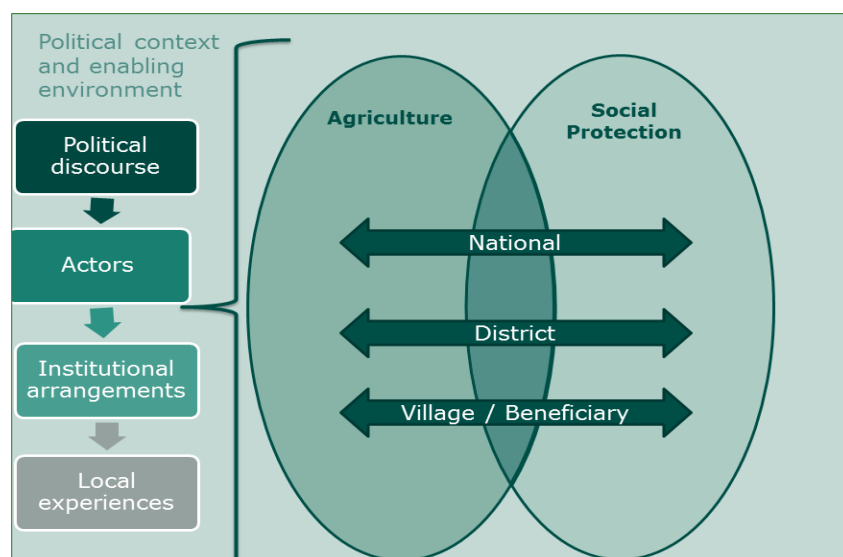
At the time of writing there are particular opportunities for advancing the dialogue and discussion on coherence between social protection and agriculture given the current consultations for the new National Development Plan being planned for 2016.

1. Introduction

This study forms part of seven country case studies carried out as part of the FAO's From Protection to Production (PtoP) programme. Zambia was selected as one of the countries given the substantial role played by agriculture there with regard to employment and the economy, and the growing portfolio of social protection measures which have been implemented against a backdrop of persistently high levels of poverty. Of particular interest was the implicit sequencing of programmes from cash transfers, to the Food Security Pack and finally, one of the main agricultural programmes over the past decade – the Farmer Input Support Programme.

The analysis in Zambia followed a common approach and framework set out as part of the country case studies. This involved looking at the context (including policies and programmes), coordination and outcomes. This was carried out through an initial desk-based review, which involved reviewing key documents covering development strategy, agricultural and social protection policy and research papers. This was followed by a two-week in-country data collection exercise involving a number of key informant interviews (KIIs) with ministry staff, cooperating partners and civil society and focus group discussions with local communities (FGDs). The study involved looking across both the agricultural and social protection spheres at the national and subnational levels (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 Framework to analyse interactions between knowledge, policy and power



The two main overarching questions underpinning the study were the following:

1. What are the current experiences in Zambia of achieving coherence between its agricultural and social protection policies and programmes?
2. What lessons and insights do these experiences hold for achieving more and better coordination between the two sectors?

To answer these questions, a range of topics were explored through both the desk-based review and the in-country study following a common investigative framework (see Appendix 2). In terms of the data collection tools for the in-country analysis, a register of questions developed for the country case studies formed the basis of the main lines of enquiry for all KIIs and FGDs, with the final questions being adapted for specific roles and depending on the emerging themes and issues. The main areas of investigation spanned policy and programme details, coordination, coherence and performance.

The analysis in Zambia involved identifying and interviewing key individuals at national and district levels within the two ministries with overall responsibility for Zambia's agricultural and social protection activities: the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL) and the Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health (MCDMCH). In addition to government staff, a number of cooperating partners were interviewed at the national level, including the UK Department for International Development and a number of United Nations Agencies (ILO, FAO, UNICEF and WFP), as well as a representative from the Zambian Platform for Social Protection (see Appendix 1).

Due to limited time, the district level was chosen over the provincial level as it emerged during national level discussions to be the most important level of administration through which programme implementation ultimately takes place. The district of Monze was purposively selected on the basis of it being a district where the main agricultural and social protection programmes of interest were being implemented and also being geographically accessible within the time frame of the study. Monze is located in Zambia's Southern province with a population of 198 921 in 2014. It is recognized that Monze is just one of 104 districts in the country and no assumptions are made about findings being representative of other administrative areas.

At the community level two communities were selected within Monze district on the basis of which programmes were being implemented. The final selection covered one set of villages where the Food Security Pack was in operation and one where the Social Cash Transfer Programme was being run. Both FGDs were carried out in Tonga with the assistance of local interpreters and Dr Thomson Kalinda of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension Education, University of Zambia.

Following data collection a validation workshop was held in Lusaka involving key informants interviewed at the national level or representatives from their departments. At this workshop a presentation was given of the main emerging findings followed by a discussion to corroborate and further refine the main conclusions.

In writing up the report the transcribed interviews were entered into NVivo 10, from where they were coded by theme in order to consolidate and draw out key findings.

2. Policies and programmes

Zambia's agricultural sector is a major contributor to the country's gross domestic product (GDP) and plays an overwhelming role as the main provider of employment in the country. As of 2013 the sector contributed up to a fifth of the Zambia's GDP and provided livelihoods for over 70 percent of the population, being the main source of income and employment for rural households (MoAL, 2013). It is for this reason that it is recognized in the country's Revised Sixth National Development Plan (R-SNDP) as "a strategic area of focus in promoting economic growth, reducing poverty and creating employment" (MoF, 2013, p. 65).

However, despite spending an average of just over 9 percent of total government expenditure on the agricultural sector between 2000 and 2010, as of 2010, poverty levels remain extremely high at around 61 percent, with poverty primarily located in rural areas where the poverty level was around 78 percent. The depth of poverty is also very high, with extreme poverty at 42 percent in 2010 (MoF, 2013, p. 12). In addition to high poverty levels there has also been a worrying trend of increasing income-related inequality since the early 2000s, the country now having one of the highest levels of inequality in the world, with a Gini Index of 57.5 in 2013 (World Bank).

It is against this backdrop (and building on an earlier response to the negative impacts of structural adjustment on poor Zambian households) that there has been a growing interest in social protection measures in recent years (Holmes, 2007). In 2005 the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) put together its first draft Social Protection Strategy as a means of guiding and coordinating measures aimed at poor households. The following year, Social Protection was recognized with a chapter dedicated to it in the country's Fifth National Development Plan.

Although the number of social protection measures has continued to grow, leading to the development of a National Social Protection Policy (NSPP) in 2014, the link between this emerging area of activity and Zambia's agricultural policy and programmes has remained somewhat unclear. On the one hand, it appears that Zambia's agricultural policy has not managed to achieve its desired impact in terms of poverty reduction and job creation, raising questions over how coherent design and implementation of the policy has been in terms of the aims it shares with social protection. On the other hand, there are some limited examples on paper of attempts to coordinate and sequence social protection and agricultural programmes and to recognize the links between the two sectors. However, these are constrained by a range of factors from programme design to implementation, inadequate monitoring and a lack of a truly joined-up approach.

Given the urgent need to reduce poverty and inequality in Zambia along with the emerging social protection landscape and centrality of the agricultural sector in employment, this study investigates the experience of Zambia in terms of how coherent its approach is to its agricultural and social protection policies and programmes. By exploring this issue of coherence it aims to identify opportunities through which both sectors can better achieve their shared goals and contribute towards the country's vision of achieving equitable economic development as set out the R-SNDP.

2.1 Key challenges in Zambia

As mentioned in the introduction to this report, one of the main, conspicuous challenges facing Zambia is the persistently high levels of poverty and extreme poverty. The persistently high overall poverty levels seen in Zambia are predominantly (though by no means exclusively) driven by extremely low rural household incomes, with rural poverty just short of 80 percent in 2010, compared to an urban poverty level of 27.5 percent (CSO, 2012a, p. 181), and the rural population representing 60 percent of the total population (CSO, 2012b, p. 7).

A number of factors underpin the high poverty levels in Zambia. Firstly, it is important to note that the high poverty and extreme poverty levels have persisted despite consistently high levels of economic growth, averaging around 7 percent since the turn of the century (World Bank). This growth has even seen the country being reclassified as a lower-middle income country. This indicates that the real nature of economic growth experienced in Zambia in recent years has not been pro-poor. This is further evidenced by the very high level of income inequality mentioned earlier. The failure of economic growth to bring down poverty levels suggests a need for a much greater focus within government policy on effective measures to increase income levels among the poorest, especially in rural areas where agriculture is the predominant source of livelihood.

A wide range of factors constrain livelihood improvements in rural Zambia. These include the overwhelming emphasis on low-profit maize production, poor access to markets, low access to finance and modern farm inputs, poor infrastructure, underfunded research and extension and a high dependence on rain-fed agriculture (MoAL, 2013; MoF, 2013). These agriculture-related challenges are further compounded by a range of other social challenges facing the country, including high levels of HIV/AIDS, high morbidity and mortality rates, poor access to water and sanitation and weak educational outcomes (MoF, 2013).

2.2 National policies

This section looks at three key government policies or strategic national documents of particular relevance for the present discussion on coherence between agriculture and social protection. Discussion of the policy process is left to the section on coordination below, where it is shown that, while there are some indications of an awareness of inter-sector linkages between agriculture and social protection, these appear to be conceived narrowly. Also, while there is an acknowledgement of the important linkages to agriculture from the side of social protection, the same does not appear to be true in terms of the agricultural sector recognizing links to social protection. This raises the hypothesis of a more one way relationship which is explored further in subsequent sections.

Revised Sixth National Development Plan (2013-2016)

The R-SNDP is described as a medium-term investment plan for the country and sets out the priorities of the present GRZ as regards the country's overall economic and social development. It is a revision of the earlier Sixth National Development Plan, formulated under the Movement for Multiparty Democracy government, following the election of the current Patriotic Front government in September 2011. The strategic focus of the R-SNDP is

“to primarily focus on job creation, rural development and promote inclusive growth while investing in human development to take care of macro-economic fundamentals” (MoF, 2013, p. 1).

In addition to providing an overview of key issues relating to economic and social development, monitoring and evaluation, the core feature of the policy is to set out the key features (e.g. visions, objectives, programmes and budget plans) of the various ministries, organized under “economic” and “social” sectors. This is an important distinction in so far as agriculture falls under the former, while social protection comes under the latter, despite including some focus on income-generating and livelihood activities.

Within the sections on the various economic and social sectors, explicit recognition is given to “inter-sectoral linkages” through dedicated subsections. However, these sections are limited to summaries of overlapping implementation responsibilities with other ministries, cooperating partners, civil society groups and the private sector. For example, under agriculture, the MCDMCH is identified as having the role of “Implementation of the Food Security Pack targeted at vulnerable small scale farmers”. The section on social protection identifies the MAL as having the responsibility of “Extension services and training in appropriate farming methods”. Recognition of overlapping roles and responsibilities in the implementation of individual sector activities indicates some thinking at a policy level about the complementarities required for the achievement of sector policy objectives. However, the reduction of inter-sectoral linkages to the issue of overlapping implementation responsibilities raises the question over whether there is evidence elsewhere of more comprehensive thinking (and action) around the linkages between agriculture and social protection in Zambia. The specific responsibilities identified above for the MAL and MCDMCH also lead to the question of the actual performance of both ministries in these activities and the implications for coherence between the sectors.

National Social Protection Policy

Zambia’s NSPP was finalized in June 2014 and represents a commendable effort in bringing together, in a comprehensive and systematic way, the various social protection measures which have evolved in the country in recent years. It responds to earlier concerns that social protection in the country lacked a clear implementation framework, resulting in weak coherence and coordination mechanisms across sectors and a lack of comprehensive and robust monitoring and evaluation systems. The policy specifically acknowledges that the earlier lack of a policy framework “has meant that key interventions [were] designed in ways that [did] not permit operational synergies and complementarities” (MCDMCH, 2014a, p. 4).

The policy is based around a broad understanding of social protection, drawing on the Protect-Prevent-Promote-Transform (PPPT) framework proposed by Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler (Devereux & Sabates-Wheeler, 2004). This framework recognizes that social protection goes well beyond earlier impressions of it as being simply comprised of social welfare or safety net programmes, and is a key sector for sustainable poverty reduction as well as broader growth and development.

The PPPT framework is used in the NSPP to help classify and differentiate the various social protection measures currently being implemented within Zambia. This is done by identifying

the four pillars of social assistance, social security/social insurance, livelihoods and empowerment and protection. With the addition of disability, these also represent the policy's five policy objectives. Within these five objectives, there are a number of specific objectives, some of which overlap, in addition to a list of fairly general measures that the policy commits to. One of the cross-cutting objectives which emerges under both "social assistance" and "livelihood and empowerment" is the improvement of food and nutrition security which, as indicated below, is a goal also shared within Zambia's agricultural policy.

While the NSPP considers social protection as a universal right, its measures are particularly targeted towards those who are vulnerable with the overall objective of the policy being "To contribute to the well-being of all Zambians by ensuring that vulnerable people have sufficient income security to meet basic needs and protection from the worst impacts of risks and shocks" (MCDMCH, 2014a, p. 11).

One of the guiding principles of the NSPP is coordination, with the recognition that, as social protection is a cross-cutting issue, "there is a need for co-ordination of all programmes to avoid duplication and overlap of responsibilities" (MCDMCH, 2014a, p. 9). Consistent with the R-SNDP, the section describing the implementation framework notes that social protection programmes are implemented by several line ministries and civil society organizations and sets out the various responsibilities of each which, as is the case with the policy's own measures, are very general and appear to mostly reflect what each actor does already. This raises the question over how coherent, coordinated and integrated measures really are at the planning and implementation levels, and whether the recognition of general inter-sectoral linkages simply represents a bare minimum bureaucratic exercise of listing the overlapping roles across various ministries. More is said on this in the sections on programmes and coordination.

Regarding the MAL, the NSPP identifies the following responsibilities (MCDMCH, 2014a, p. 17):

- a. Provide farming inputs, and agricultural extension services to vulnerable farming households;
- b. provide ready and accessible markets for goods produced by vulnerable farming households; and
- c. ensure food security and diversification for enhanced nutrition of the vulnerable households.

As pointed out above, these responsibilities are very broad and general, and as shown below, largely replicate the MAL's own stated policy aims. The main difference is that, while in the NSPP the expectation is for the MAL to focus on "vulnerable farming households", the ministry's own focus is somewhat more ambiguous, as discussed below.

The main area of overlap with agriculture in the social protection programming framework lies in the livelihood and empowerment pillar, where key objectives include enhancing access among the poor and vulnerable to productive resources and skills, promoting employment opportunities and income-generating activities for the unemployed and other vulnerable groups and increasing livelihood potential among vulnerable populations to meet food and nutrition security requirements all year round (MCDMCH, 2014a, p. 12). Interestingly, one of

the flagship programmes of the MAL – the Farmer Input Support Programme – is explicitly mentioned under the pillar and even referred to as “one of the largest social protection programmes in Zambia...” (MCDMCH, 2014a, p. 6). According to a number of national level key informants, there have even been discussions of it being moved under the MCDMCH.

As mentioned above, there is also a clear overlap under the social assistance pillar, where enhancing food and nutrition security for vulnerable populations is one of the pillar’s three objectives.

Finally, the NSPP presents a National Implementation Plan on Social Protection setting out more explicitly each of the measures and the activities to achieve them, output indicators, resources and the actors responsible. It is here that one can gain a clearer sense of the planned inter-sector collaboration with the MAL under specific activities. For example, both ministries are expected to partner in the expansion of the Home Grown School Feeding Programme under the social assistance pillar. As expected, it is under the livelihood and empowerment pillar where the highest number of overlapping responsibilities exist, with the MAL being anticipated to play a lead role in the provision of agricultural inputs and extension services, creation of markets and carrying out a production capacity needs assessment of vulnerable populations. Beyond this the nature of the collaboration is, however, not set out in the policy document and under other activities specific partner ministries have not always been identified.

National Agricultural Policy

Zambia is currently in the transition between its previous National Agricultural Policy (NAP), covering 2004–2015, and a new policy that at the time of writing was being finalized for adoption by the Cabinet. As it was not possible to obtain the latest draft, the discussion here focuses on content from a draft National Agricultural Policy (NAP) from December 2013, obtained from the MAL website (MoAL, 2013).

The 2004—2015 policy was revised after the new Patriotic Front government came to power and following concerns over the failure of the policy to increase rural incomes and reduce poverty or to achieve inclusive growth, as shown in the figures above (MoAL, 2013, p. 1). One of the failings in this regard appears to be that, while there has been an overall increase in crop production from 2004 to 2013 across a wide range of crops including Zambia’s staple crop, maize, the gains appear to have been limited to large and medium-scale farmers with far less visible impact on poorer, small-scale farmers who make up the bulk of all farmers by population and “obtain limited value from their production” (MoAL, 2013, p. 4).

Despite recognizing this earlier failing of Zambia’s NAP, the choice of wording in the foreword of the revised draft policy does not suggest significant change, stating that the document “provides great scope for attaining sustainable food and nutrition security particularly at the national level and contributing significantly to profitability of agricultural enterprises, increased income generation, poverty reduction, job creation, as well as increased contribution of the agricultural sector to Gross Domestic Product (GDP)” (MoAL, 2013, p. ii). The emphasis on national level food security, profitability of agricultural enterprises and the contribution of agriculture to GDP indicates a policy more in line with the earlier perceived failings than one presenting a greater focus on inclusive growth involving small-

scale farmers. The lack of clarity over who the intended clients of the MAL's policy are, and the absence of clear profiling of different types of farmer along with their different needs, were issues noted by a number of national level stakeholders as a weakness of the ministry's current approach.

Looking at the core of the NAP, there are 12 policy objectives and associated measures through which to achieve them. Among those objectives demonstrating the most immediate overlap with social protection are the following:

- to increase agricultural production and productivity;
- to improve food and nutrition security;
- to strengthen agricultural extension service delivery;
- to improve the efficiency of agricultural input and product markets; and
- to mainstream environment and climate change in the agricultural sector

It should be recognized therefore, that food and nutrition security is one area of clear overlap with the policy goals within the NSPP, along with the issues of poverty reduction, employment and income generation and strengthening livelihoods which are indicated in the NAP's vision. Despite these overlaps, throughout the NAP, there is no explicit reference to social protection.

Despite highlighting the importance of using agriculture to create employment, reduce poverty and improve food and nutrition security, it is hard not to conclude when reading the NAP that, in its substance, there remains a continued focus on larger, more commercial farmers, with insufficient attention given to the bulk of farmers who remain far more vulnerable. At the very least, any intended emphasis on smaller, more vulnerable farmers appears to be lost in the wording of the document and there seem to be a number of obvious internal tensions within what the policy seeks to achieve. For example, there is limited attention given to how national food security or household food security will be prioritized, or how far "profit maximization" and "contribution to GDP" should take precedence over a focus on "inclusive agricultural growth".

Following a review of the above documents, three broad conclusions emerge about the nature of coherence between agriculture and social protection in Zambia at the policy level. Firstly, there appears to be a clear overlap and scope for complementarities in terms of broad policy objectives between the two sectors, specifically around the goal of food and nutrition security. Secondly, the recent NSPP seems to offer a particularly helpful framework through which to address the issue of coherence and coordination between agriculture and social protection. The policy explicitly recognizes the role of agriculture in delivering its core policy objectives, particularly around the livelihood and empowerment pillar. Thirdly, one key challenge associated with strengthening cross-sector coherence appears to lie in the current formulation of the NAP. Not only does the document not make reference to social protection, but there appears to be a lack of clear profiling of clients or end beneficiaries of agricultural interventions and services, as well as a notable tension between the wide range of potentially competing objectives. In order to comment further on the issue of coherence, the report now looks at the specific programmes within each sector, before turning to the issue of coordination and performance.

2.3 Programmes

In terms of the main programmes being implemented by the MAL and MCDMCH, there implicitly appears to be, by design, some level of coherence in that a range of measures exist which target different types of household, from the incapacitated to those who have scope to develop into commercial farmers. There even exists some limited evidence of planned sequencing. However, despite the spread of measures, a key constraint on achieving greater coherence between the two sectors in terms of attaining food and nutrition security appears to be the substantial imbalance of resources going to two agricultural measures in particular: the FISP and the FRA. Further constraints on achieving improved coherence lie in the programme implementation, where the absence of a single registry of rural households leads to overlapping targeting.

A large number of different programmes and activities operate under the MAL and MCDMCH and interviews were conducted in a way that allowed for discussion of all programmes. However, given that only a small number of programmes and activities take up a large proportion of resources and/or show greatest coverage in each ministry, the focus tended to end up on these. This report therefore focuses in particular on those programmes set out in Table 1.

The budget line within the ministry taking up by far the greatest proportion of the total allocated agricultural budget in 2013 and 2014 was for “Poverty Reduction Programmes”, accounting for around half of the sector’s total budget (Kuteya, 2013). FISP took up around 58 percent of this line in 2013, with 35 percent dedicated to the other largest item of expenditure – the Strategic Food Reserves through the FRA. In 2014, allocated expenditure on the FRA overtook the FISP by accounting for 64 percent of the Poverty Reduction Programme’s budget line (over ZMW 1 billion), with FISP accounting for 32 percent (ZMW 500 million) (Kuteya, 2013).

While not a programme as such, the FRA clearly takes up a major proportion of the MAL’s budget, which explains why it and the FISP were both named at the national level as the main activities being implemented through the ministry. The FRA is intended to play a key role in poverty reduction and national food security by providing a market for maize at above market rates (typically purchasing 500 000 metric tonnes for use as strategic reserves).¹ However, in practice it was widely recognized to be beset by a range of design and implementation problems, such that it remains an inefficient and poorly targeted measure. For example, although by design it is intended to benefit small- to medium-scale farmers (with farmers allowed to sell between just 10 and 153 bags of maize), in practice key informants highlighted how even more commercial farmers are able to benefit as it is possible to sell more than once or use others who can sell for you. The benefits to smaller farmers also appear to be severely undermined given that actual payments have been received several months after harvest. It is also well known that Zambia has sold large amounts of maize to neighbouring countries. While this may be required in years where it is left with a surplus, in order to minimize losses and ensure storage space for the next season’s crop, it does raise the question over whether the FRA may at times have crept beyond its core role as a strategic food reserve for the avoidance of national shortages.

¹ Whether the rates are indeed above market has been disputed by the Zambian National Farmers Union, as the pan-territorial pricing does not always fully compensate farmers, e.g. in the Western province.

As can be seen by looking at the target beneficiaries in Table 1, at a broad level there appears to be some degree of coherence in terms of joint sector coverage which spans a fairly wide breadth of vulnerable rural Zambian households. That is, from very poor households without any labour or with a high dependency ratio (Social Cash Transfer programme), to vulnerable but viable farming households cultivating limited land (Food Security Pack), and slightly better-off farming households that may not be able to afford commercial fertilizer but can afford membership of a cooperative or other farmers' organizations as well as the top-up payment for the subsidized input package (the Farmer Input Support Programme).

However a closer look at the spread of resources allocated to each of the programmes (including the FRA), as well as the level of coverage, highlights a clear bias towards those households which are already relatively less vulnerable. Looking at actual implementation and evidence of targeting outcomes in the FISP, the bias appears to be even more strongly weighted in favour of wealthier households. KIIs with a number of individuals at national and district level highlighted how a large proportion of the FISP is captured by wealthier farmers and these observations are supported by independent evaluations of the programme (Mason, Jayne & Mofya-Mukuka, 2013). The problem is even worse than indicated given evidence that the design has led to major leakages (Mason & Jayne, 2013) and recent analysis shows that, in its current form, on average the FISP leads to no statistically significant effect on poverty incidence among smallholder farm households (Mason & Tembo, 2015).

What implication does this have for coherence between agriculture and social protection? Firstly, it was recognized by a number of key informants at national level that the overwhelming resources currently being channelled into the FISP and FRA are diverting resources away from more efficient interventions that have a proven track record of addressing household food and nutrition security. This is not to say that there is no role for a modified and scaled-down FISP or FRA, but rather that the current imbalance in the policy mix between the two sectors conflicts with the shared goals of reducing poverty and improving food and nutrition security. Underpinning this imbalance, the FISP and FRA were both noted to have become highly politicized interventions that subsequent governments have been reluctant to reform, at best over concerns about the risk of what impact reforms may have, and at worst because of entrenched vested interests that could benefit in various ways from both programmes.

A further problem identified in KIIs is that, as a result of the current configuration, there is a considerable swathe of households that do not receive the SCT programme, the FISP or any other government support (a "missing middle"). Most of these households, however, remain highly vulnerable to a wide range of shocks, a lack of liquidity and suffer from profitability challenges due to high input prices, generally poor access to markets other than government purchases of maize through the FRA and low producer prices.

Table 1 Key programmes across agriculture and social protection

Programme (lead ministry)	Key activities	Core objectives	Target group	Coverage & budget
Social Cash Transfer programme (MCDMCH)	A bi-monthly unconditional cash transfer of ZMW 140 (US\$ 19), ² paid manually at selected pay points in the community. Beneficiary households with a disabled member receive double the amount.	To reduce extreme poverty and inter-generational transfer of poverty by enabling poor families to invest in better food, necessary health care and basic education.	Incapacitated households with no fit-for-work members or a dependency ratio of three or more, which are also below a pre-determined welfare level based on a proxy means test using observable household characteristics.	136 000 households across 50 districts (2015). ZMW 150 mn in 2015.
Food Security Pack (MCDMCH)	Crop diversification and conservation farming (including receipt of a free pack of inputs attached to a repayment in-kind schedule); market entrepreneurship, seed and cereal bank development; and alternative livelihoods interventions (e.g. small livestock).	Increasing household food and nutrition security; increasing agricultural output and productivity; conservation of environmental resources; and increasing household income through sale of agricultural produce and services. Input packs intended to enable beneficiaries to cultivate 1 ha of cereals, 0.5 ha of legumes and 0.5 ha of cassava or sweet potatoes.	“Vulnerable but viable” farm households cultivating less than 1 ha with adequate labour but not in gainful employment. Household must also meet one indicator of vulnerability (e.g. female-headed household or household keeping orphans).	14 400 households ZMW 15 mn (2011).
Farmer Input Support Programme (MAL)	Provision of a subsidized input pack consisting of different combinations of fertilizer and seed to allow for the cultivation of 0.5 ha of maize or sorghum; e.g. a “maize pack” consisting of 4 x 50 kg bags of fertilizer and 1 x 10 kg bag of maize seed costs 400 ZMW (US\$ 56). Additional commercial packs for rice and groundnuts are also available for selected farmers.	Improve supply of agricultural inputs to small-scale farmers through sustainable private sector participation at affordable cost, to increase household food security and incomes.	Farmers who are members of a registered farmer’s organization, cultivating up to a maximum of 5 ha of land, able to pay the subsidized price of the input pack, and not a beneficiary of the FSP programme.	1 000 000 households (2014/15). ZMW 500 mn in 2013 (23% of agricultural sector spend).

Sources: (Mason & Jayne, 2013; Mason, Jayne, & Mofya-Mukuka, 2013; MCDMCH, 2014, 2015; MoAL, 2014; MoF, 2014; Tesliuc, Smith, & Sunkutu, 2013). Note: details of the SCT programme refer to the government’s recent scaling up of the “10% inclusive model” and not to the other three models which have been piloted since 2003. For more information on the latter refer to Beazley and Carraro (2013).

² ZMW = Zambian kwacha. Exchange rate used throughout the report is ZMW 1 = US\$ 0.139.

Moving away from the coverage of programmes across the two sectors, and looking at the design of programmes there is some positive, but limited, evidence of attempts at designing a “sequencing” of support across the two sectors. Specifically, within the design of the FSP (which is managed by the MCDMCH) it states that there will be a strict graduation process every two years whereby farmers will be “weaned off” and linked to the FISP (MCDMCH, 2015). In the areas visited at the local level this appeared to be supported by the Community Development Assistants (CDAs) providing information to FSP beneficiaries on how to become eligible for the FISP and encouraging them to create or join a cooperative. However a closer look at design and implementation reveals that there are key concerns which are likely to undermine graduation taking place in practice. These include: inadequate funding through the FSP itself (enough just for the inputs themselves), limited agricultural extension services for FSP beneficiaries other than training in conservation farming, severe delays in payments through the FRA opening households up to taking on debt and no shared registry, making it difficult to see who actually graduates from the FSP or not and why.

There is currently no systematic information on who has graduated from the FSP. According to one Camp Extension Officer (CEO), it was believed that around one-third of FSP beneficiaries in that area do not graduate, either because of rainfall patterns, failure to follow procedures, old age or a household’s circumstances (e.g. household shocks). However, that figure is historically substantially higher according to an ILO report from 2008, which estimated that only around 10 percent of beneficiaries graduated in the sense of becoming self-sufficient in food production and able to gain independent access to commercial agricultural services (ILO, 2008).

The view of one CDA was that, as long as they can join a cooperative they will be able to graduate as this is what is required for them to access subsidized inputs under the FISP. However this can require significant financial resources as noted in one FGD where it was mentioned how, in addition to paying membership fees of ZMW 50 (US\$ 6.95), households in that area had to buy 10 shares in the cooperative at ZMW 100 per share, which could be paid in instalments of two shares per year. Then they would have to pay the additional ZMW 400 (US\$ 56) required for the subsidized inputs. Locally, however, some households have worked out ways around this by clubbing together, even with non-members, in order to access the inputs. This nevertheless obviously dilutes the package received, limiting the production response and potential economic benefits.

The limited linkages with complementary services on the ground for beneficiaries of the FSP along with SCT beneficiaries appears to highlight a key constraint in these households graduating, either in an inter-generational sense (i.e. younger members of the households not growing up in poverty) or in terms of them achieving sustainable graduation in their own lifetime. For example, it was noted among beneficiaries of the SCT that, despite managing to use some of the money to invest in small livestock, they could not access necessary livestock services or training as there is no such support available. If such services are required communities must pay for the fuel costs and costs of any veterinary inputs. Lack of such linkages not only holds back households from making more sustained exits from poverty, but it also means that they are then more likely to continue to require support through the SCT programme.

Leading on from the final point, one of the major constraints currently holding back greater coordination between programmes in the two sectors is the lack of a single harmonized registry of beneficiaries. At the district and local level, it was noted how the MAL and the

social welfare and community development offices all carry out their own registration of farmers and must manually cross-check to ensure that, for example, those benefitting from the FSP do not also benefit from the FISP, although it was recognized that it can be extremely difficult to detect if there are different beneficiaries within the same households as they rely on the cross-checking of names. The only other opportunity for checking for overlaps is at the local level, where community structures such as Community Welfare Assistance Committees (CWACs, responsible for identifying SCT beneficiaries), Area Food Security Committees (AFSCs, responsible for identifying FSP beneficiaries) and Camp Agricultural Committees (participating in FISP beneficiary identification) may notice that some households are benefitting from multiple interventions.

There was clear evidence of overlaps occurring, as recognized by a range of key informants and also through the FGDs. While these overlaps may be important for some households in improving their livelihoods, they currently occur by accident rather than design and are likely to therefore represent considerable inefficiencies as compared to a system where “layering” of support or linkages between interventions are planned.

3. Coordination

This section looks at the issue of coordination and institutional mechanisms. Key findings under this theme are the following. First, overall there are limited institutional mechanisms at the national level for meaningful and effective dialogue and collaboration between agriculture and social protection, although plans within the NSPP for a National Social Protection Coordination Unit at Cabinet level offer great promise. Second, greater interest in engagement appears to be held back in particular by a lack of incentives, especially on the side of the MAL, for engaging with activities that are considered to be somewhat outside the ministry's remit, which is more concerned with what has been referred to as "economic activities". This clearly represents a misunderstanding of the nature of social protection and the (sometimes unintended) positive economic and productive impacts that social protection measures can have (e.g. Tirivayi *et al.*, 2013). Third, it is at the district level and below where there is evidence of greater coordination and collaboration taking place in the implementation of programmes, though more effective coordination is hampered by limited resources, absent shared information systems and a need for greater direction from above.

3.1 National coordination

At the national level one can consider coordination in policy and programme planning by design and in practice. As far as design is concerned, although all policies drafted by ministries are supposed to be circulated to every other ministry via the Cabinet office, there appear to be limited mechanisms for joint policy planning specifically between agriculture and social protection. When it came to policy planning for the NSPP, it was noted how requests were sent to the MAL for representatives to sit on a "National Working Group on Social Protection". This body was apparently established around 2011 but KIIs provided conflicting accounts of whether it had subsequently been dissolved after the policy had been finalized. Interviews with those from the MAL certainly seemed to indicate they were unaware of its continued existence. Furthermore no clear evidence was found of the MCDMCH being involved in the development of the draft NAP. Instead it seems that the main input was provided from within the many departments of the MAL itself, through a Technical Working Committee, with some more limited involvement of other stakeholders as part of a consultative process (MoAL, 2013).

The main institutional arrangement for ongoing cross-sector discussion on agriculture and social protection policy and programming appear to be the Sector Advisory Groups (SAGs) for agriculture and social protection. It was noted by one key informant that the quarterly convening of the social protection SAG was one example of quite positive coordination in so far as it helped to increase the interest of other stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Finance, in the concept of social protection and as a means of communicating its scope and objectives. However, according to another key informant, the focus has tended to be largely on the issue of cash transfers. Others have mentioned how more recently the social protection SAG has been lacking momentum.

However, in terms of the actual level of involvement from agriculture in the SAG, a number of stakeholders appeared to feel that it was lacking, leaving the SAG to appear to function as more of a formal committee rather than an arena in which genuine issues of coordination and coherence could be discussed and agreed. Underpinning this appears to be a persistent institutional conflict in terms of the perceived role and mandate of the agricultural sector. Specifically, it was noted by some key informants that, while there is some focus on

vulnerable households within the agricultural sector, it should be first and foremost an economic and productive sector. It seems that the rationale or incentives for greater coordination were therefore absent due to a lack of awareness of the overlaps, links and interdependencies that exist with activities that come under the remit of social protection. Greater engagement on the part of the MAL could be stimulated if it could be demonstrated how specific coordination efforts or linkages between programmes and activities across sectors would bring tangible benefits to the achievement of the MAL's policy goals. However there may well be limits to what can be achieved given the heavily politicized nature of agricultural policy in Zambia, which makes issues such as timing and finding the right audience all the more important.

It was noted by some stakeholders that one of the obstacles to greater engagement can be the fact that SAGs are horizontal and therefore depend upon existing incentives and the interest of counterparts across the sectors. According to key informants from the MAL, coordination really needs to be carried out at the Cabinet Office level and crucially also requires buy-in from ministers. In this vein, the proposal in the recent NSPP of establishing a National Social Protection Coordinating Unit at Cabinet level appears to offer great promise for a more substantive institutional mechanism through which both sectors may engage more fully together. While this was supposed to be established in 2015, discussions with key informants highlighted how there has been relatively little progress so far because of the considerable attention and resources being directed towards the upcoming general election in 2016. However cooperating partners involved mentioned that gradual progress is being made, with terms of reference currently being discussed and agreed.

3.2 Coordination at district level and below

At the district level there are a number of fora through which government staff working in agriculture and social protection can interact and coordinate. The overarching mechanism through which all ministries come together at a district level to look at development issues is the District Development Coordinating Committee (DDCC). The DDCC sits quarterly with representation from all heads of departments and parastatals. One of its aims is to minimize duplication and ensure programmes at the district level are coordinated and working effectively.

There are a number of sub-committees under the DDCC, including ones on infrastructure, HIV/AIDS, agriculture and a District Food Security Committee (DFSC), chaired by the District Agricultural Coordinator (DACO), with representation from both the departments of social welfare and community development (both under the MCDMCH).

One area where there is supposed to be close coordination and collaboration is on the planning and implementation of the FSP. The mechanism for this at the district level is supposed to be the DFSC. It is through the DFSC that discussions take place regarding area targeting and even overlap of individual beneficiaries. For example, the DACO is able to suggest areas where the FSP should or should not be implemented so as to ensure the inputs will be put to effective use and to avoid overlaps. At the same time, the District Social Welfare Officer (responsible for the SCT) is able to draw on its own list of beneficiaries for the SCT programme and advise against selecting beneficiaries who are already in receipt of the SCT benefits.

However it was noted that over the past two years that the level of collaboration between the MAL and Department of Community Development on the FSP had gone down, seemingly due to the arrangement of fewer meetings and budget constraints that left funds only available for purchase of the inputs themselves. Ordinarily, the DACO noted how he would work closely with the Department of Community Development to help in planning, monitoring and assisting in identification of beneficiary areas.

One of the major constraints at this level appears to be the rudimentary management and information systems available to effectively coordinate and avoid overlaps. In terms of registration of households it was noted at the district level how, in addition to the MAL collecting very detailed annual data on its households through a farmer registry, the departments of Social Welfare and Community Development also have their own separate registries. In addition, it was noted how a Ministry of Chiefs has also recently been created which intends to register all people living in each village. It is hard not to conclude from this that there are substantial cost and efficiency savings which could be achieved through the use of a more streamlined approach towards household registration, making use of one database.

Indeed, to address this very issue there are current plans in the pipeline, supported by the World Bank, to establish a single national household registry. This is still in its planning stages, however, and there appears to be some concern among development partners and the MCDMCH over developing a registry of all poor households (rather than a “beneficiary register”), given capacity limitations in government and the creation of expectations.

A further limitation in terms of district coordination seems to be that, aside from the general meetings at the DDCC (which do not seem to provide an appropriate forum for exchanges specifically between social protection and agriculture), coordination is currently largely arranged around specific projects (e.g. the dual involvement that is supposed to be played by the MAL and Department of Community Development in the implementation of the FSP). It is for that reason that there seemed to be a non-existent relationship between the MAL and the Department of Social Welfare, which is responsible for the SCT programme. However it was recognized that greater collaboration was required for greater exchange of information and to avoid overlaps in targeting. When asked, key informants acknowledged that greater guidance from the national level would be helpful in setting out the nature of specific coordination mechanisms and duties while, as noted above, this must not be undermined by unpredictable and inadequate funding.

The benefits of avoiding overlaps were recognized with a district key informant stating that “at the end of the day, if we do a good job, we can increase the number of beneficiaries if we avoid the overlaps – it will mean there is more to go around”.

Finally, at the subdistrict level, there appears to be some level of coordination and collaboration between staff working for the MAL and those under the MCDMCH. For example, the Camp Extension Officer for one area mentioned how they worked with the department of Community Development to train clubs in different enterprises, such as goat and poultry rearing and conservation agriculture, but that it operates on a demand-driven basis. It was also mentioned how the CEOs can be involved in distributing inputs for the FSP programme as well.

Other types of coordination appear to operate largely by chance. For example, it was noted by a key informant from the MAL at the national level how it came to their attention through

local mechanisms (Camp Agricultural Committees) that some FISP beneficiaries were also benefitting from the FSP. This occurred seemingly by accident, as some members of the Camp Agricultural Committees (which has a role in FISP beneficiary selection) were also on the committees selecting FSP beneficiaries and it was realized that some of the same names appeared on the lists for both FISP and FSP. As a result, this was communicated upwards to district level and identified through “reconciliation exercises” which take place at the end of each season to determine which farmers benefitted.

The extent of coordination at sub district level is greatly limited by how stretched government staff are. In the district visited, there were around 60 000 farm households in the latest update of registered farming households and these were served by 31 Camp Extension Officers. Relative to the local level human resource capacity of the departments of Community Development and Social Welfare, these numbers are quite favourable, with just 12 Community Development Assistants (who double up as local staff for Community Development and Social Welfare) for the whole district. Furthermore, CDAs in the area currently do not have access to a means of transport beyond a bicycle, with obvious implications for their ability to coordinate and engage with their counterparts under the MAL.

One example of a positive local adaptation of the top-down programme planning was the finding, in one of the areas visited, that the Area Food Security Committee (responsible for selecting FSP beneficiaries) was the same as the CWAC committee (responsible for selection of the SCT beneficiaries). According to the local Community Development Assistant responsible for the area, this was decided on the basis that it was better to use the same structure rather than duplicate it as they did not want to have to select an entirely new committee. However it also seems to have the benefit that the same people are then aware of which households benefit from programmes implemented through the district department of Social Welfare and the district department of Community Development. While this is an example of greater intrasector coordination taking place organically at a local level, it helps to highlight the logic behind streamlining community-level structures to improve coordination across programmes that touch upon both social protection and agriculture.

4. Performance

A number of points have been raised above relating to performance. This section focuses on providing a brief summary of whether expected outputs of some of the main agricultural and social protection programmes in Zambia are being achieved on the ground, the reasons behind any key problems and whether performance could be improved by more or better coordination with other programmes. One of the main messages is that there appears to be considerable potential in some of Zambia's social protection programmes if given the resources required. Yet this potential is also being held back through limited linkages to agricultural support, which in part must be recognized as related to the overwhelming attention and resources channelled to the FISP and FRA. Programmes are categorized under agriculture and social protection according to the lead ministry responsible.

4.1 Agriculture

Farmer Input Support Programme

As noted earlier, a body of independent evaluations exists which highlights the various failings of the FISP in terms of achieving its core intended outputs of improving household food security. Aside from the issues mentioned above of the FISP disproportionately benefitting wealthier farmers, evidence of considerable leakage and no evidence of a statistically significant impact on reducing poverty incidence, a number of other key problems are known. For example, late delivery of inputs has been a major problem, which can have implications for yields and therefore farmer income (Kuteya, 2013; MoF, 2013).

A further point made during KIIs was that due to its very design, the FISP appears unable to achieve its stated aims in and of itself as “nobody can exit poverty by growing 0.5 ha of maize”. Of course, dependent upon a wide range of factors, including adequate rainfall, the FISP can contribute to household and national food security, though its cost-effectiveness remains a major concern, with a study by Jayne *et al.* (2013) demonstrating that the incremental value of maize output is in most years considerably less than costs. The implication is that, although it is formally credited as a programme for increasing household food security and reducing poverty, in practice it is viewed by many as a social transfer and there is also wide recognition of it being a highly politicized programme with considerable scope for patronage from the national to local level (Mason, Jayne, and van de Walle, 2013). One concern which is explicit within the 2014/15 Implementation Manual is that local chiefs are to be automatically allocated with four input packs (400 kg fertilizer plus 2 x 10 kg bags of maize and another pack of any other crop type) as part of an endeavour to “empower traditional leadership” (MoAL, 2014, pp. 10-11).³ In line with the above features, although the original plan of the FISP was for beneficiaries to graduate after three years following an incremental reduction in the level of subsidy, in practice this was never achieved and instead subsidy levels were maintained and even increased.

A related concern expressed by key informants in the MAL was that the FISP may be creating “negative incentives” among some to remain small-scale producers of maize, given that to be eligible a household must cultivate a small area.

Even if beneficiaries were able to graduate a further reason why they do not is that the current targeting design and implementation, mixed with local power politics, does not allow for or

³ The subsidized cost of the inputs must still be borne by the traditional leaders.

encourage it. During interviews at district and national levels, it was suggested that it was common for those with the means and local power to influence local structures (e.g. Camp Agricultural Committees) which have the power to decide who benefits from the FISP. As a result it was mentioned how some individuals are able to continue benefitting year in, year out and that the intended beneficiaries can often rarely benefit.

Among the further problems which explain the limited evidence of the FISP leading to reduced rural poverty levels is that it has not led to a systematic improvement in maize yields, which fluctuated from 1.93 tonnes per ha in 2004 to a maximum of 2.25 tonnes in 2010 and back to 1.93 tonnes in 2013. These are compared to a potential yield of up 7-8 tonnes per hectare (Masole & Gumbo, 1994).⁴ Underpinning this has been very high dependence on rain-fed agriculture, and weak extension services and transfer of technologies (MoAL, 2013, p. 4).

Food Reserve Agency

Many of the problems with the FISP result from its own design and how it is implemented, rather than a lack of coordination with other programmes. However the one area where the benefits of the FISP are clearly held back (as with other interventions involving crop production) is in the marketing of the crops through the FRA. Specifically, it was noted by a number of stakeholders, and has been identified elsewhere, e.g. (Kuteya, 2013), how FRA payments can be severely delayed, with substantial implications for the livelihoods of farmers. There are also concerns over the FRA crowding out private sector vendors and even supporting the current tendency towards maize mono-cropping (Kuteya, 2013). According to one CEO, the maize mono-culture exists “because [the farmers] know the market for maize is available, whereas for legumes it is not there. They will only grow if they know there is a ready market. This year they also grew beans and cowpeas because they knew the World Food Programme will buy.”

4.2 Social protection

Social Cash Transfer programme

The SCT programme has been subject to a rigorous randomized control trial evaluation, although this was under a previous targeting model which is now gradually being phased out (the Child Grant model) and is no longer part of the official policy of scaling-up SCTs under the MCDMCH (AIR, 2014). Nevertheless, the evaluation indicates that, overall, cash transfers have been effective in increasing food security, reducing the poverty gap, improving living conditions and even having somewhat unexpected positive improvements in productive agricultural production and asset ownership.

One problem identified during FGDs and KIIs at district level was that payments in 2015 have been substantially delayed. Although transfers are supposed to be made bi-monthly, the January and February payments (which should have been paid in March) were not paid until May. The implications of this for beneficiaries appeared to be substantial and wide-ranging, including having children “chased from school”, having to resort to distress selling of assets which had previously been accumulated, borrowing money, being unable to access essential health care and reducing the amount of food consumed.

⁴ A potential yield of 8 tonnes per hectare using the same FISP inputs was also confirmed by the FAO Zambia office.

Although the beneficiaries of the SCT who took part in the FGDs were either old, disabled or had a high dependency ratio (e.g. looking after orphans), nearly all explained how they still depended upon agriculture for their livelihoods. Those who were unable to work their land were either assisted by a relative or sometimes had to pay for local labour. However, due to the small level of transfers received, most simply produced enough for their own consumption, with a few producing a small surplus. A few also invested in small livestock such as goats and chickens. However one area where it seemed there was a gap holding back beneficiaries from moving beyond simply persisting at a subsistence level was in terms of complementary services to support the agricultural activities in which they are mostly engaged. For example, it was noted by one female beneficiary that although she preferred cash, it was not enough, and so in order to have something when the money runs out she saved and invested in a few small livestock. However she noted how in order for her to maintain her livestock and draw a reliable livelihood from them, she also required drugs and chemicals for dipping, which she could not access as the Veterinary Assistant for the area had not come by for a very long time and does not live nearby as there is no accommodation available. Even then, farmers are expected to pay for fuel and for the required livestock drugs which can put services out of reach among poorer households.

The only agricultural services that were provided in the two areas visited appeared to be basic extension services on practising conversation agriculture, including its principles, how to apply fertilizer, and how to carry out weed-killing. In one area this was done through a lead farmer approach, where selected community members are trained and then enrol others. In the other it was provided through farmer groups. When asked why services were provided to groups, it was suggested by the CEO that it was an easy way to disseminate to those who have an interest and that those not in groups were considered to be uninterested in agriculture or community development. This does raise some concerns over the extent to which beneficiaries of the SCT in some areas are also receiving agricultural support as such beneficiaries are likely to be those who are less likely to be in a group. Indeed, findings from a recent FAO study looking at links between cash transfers and adequate rural employment in Zambia suggest that those receiving cash transfers did not also generally receive extension training, as compared to those in farmer groups.⁵

Food Security Pack

For the FSP there appears to be far less evidence of any comprehensive evaluations. The limited evidence that exists suggests that, in the past, “the FSP has led to some significant gains in food production at both household and national level”, yet at the same time it seems that, historically, graduation rates may have been very low as indicated earlier (ILO, 2008, p. 107). When asked about how much graduation has been seen recently, KIIs with MCDMCH staff suggested that there have been no evaluations.

One of the major constraints holding back improved performance of the FSP, noted in both previous reviews as well as in discussions with district staff, is poor and erratic funding (ILO, 2008). This has in turn impacted upon the timely delivery of inputs as well as underperformance of the various other key components of the programme which were intended to achieve a greater overall livelihood and rural development impact (e.g. livelihood diversification, entrepreneurship and seed and cereal bank development).

⁵ Interview with researcher involved in the recent FAO study *Qualitative research on the impacts of social protection programmes on decent rural employment*: <http://bit.ly/1LyA9Fd> .

Limited funding is partly associated with lack of political support. It was noted in an interview with one key informant from the MCDMCH how one of the potential reasons for the more limited political support for the FSP, as compared to cash transfers, was that with the FSP the results are more prone to failure due to a wide range of intervening factors, most notably climate and rainfall patterns. By contrast, cash transfers offer more immediate results.

A further problem identified in the FGDs and also at district level was that, as a result of central procurement of inputs, not only did this result in late delivery of inputs but also it meant that in some cases the inputs provided (particularly seeds) were not even appropriate to the local area. There were also reports in one FGD among FSP beneficiaries of some groundnut and cowpea seeds being rotten and hence did not germinate well. It was also mentioned how some cowpeas required pesticides.

One of the areas where there does seem to be scope for improved performance through greater coordination is for FSP beneficiaries to receive the full package of interventions as per the official programme design, e.g. including alternative livelihoods interventions, facilitating access to markets, developing seed and cereal banks. Alternative livelihood interventions are particularly crucial given the highly risk-prone nature of crop-based agriculture, so that the benefits of being an FSP beneficiary may be sustained for longer through support and training in complementary income-generating activities from which households may obtain an income on a more regular and reliable basis than from crop production alone. Access to markets (except for maize) in the area visited (including ability to gain a higher price through joint sales) was also mentioned as a major constraint for farming households, with poor access limiting the potential of any supply-side initiatives to promote diversification. It is not entirely clear why these complementary activities are now implemented as planned, although it was noted at the district level how funding constraints meant that in the last planting season there were only funds for inputs. Broader discussion highlighted that there has been generally less government support for FSP which, compared to the FISP, has tended to focus more on poorer farmers.

Performance relating to coherence and coordination

At present, given the limited evidence of programmatic linkages or layering, there are few examples from Zambia of how greater coherence or coordination impacts on programme performance and outcomes. However there are a number of emerging cases in which layering of support is being trialled and where findings will be useful for informing future programme and policy development.

Through its Department of Social Welfare, the MCDMCH is currently attempting to trial linking the SCT with the FSP and the SCT with support for those affected by HIV/AIDS. Linkages between the SCT programme and HIV/AIDS support and nutrition interventions were also areas of particular interest for some of the cooperating partners. However, these trials appear to be in their early stages.

One example of coordinating that is more advanced emerged following qualitative monitoring of the SCT programme by the Zambia National Platform for Social Protection (ZNPSP). The ZNPSP identified that SCT beneficiaries were unable to graduate after three years as per the original programme design and, based on these findings, made recommendations for providing complementary support to SCT beneficiary households. From 2010, it began trialling this approach through a partnership with Care International via the project

“Strengthening Cash Transfers for Access to finance, Livelihoods and Entrepreneurship” (SCALE). The project targets 10 000 SCT households in Kaputa, Katete, Kalomo and Kazungula districts with village savings and loan schemes and training in planning and management. The idea of the project is to use its findings to inform future development of the SCT programme.

A second area where useful findings are expected to emerge regarding the performance of more coordinated and integrated approaches between agriculture and social protection is the Expanded Food Security Pack being supported by the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Zambia. Through this programme, implemented through the MCDMCH, up to 27 000 households in three districts received the standard FSP pack of inputs, but in addition also received training in conservation agriculture and a small cash transfer during critical periods (e.g. just before planting) when many poorer households struggle to find the cash to meet basic needs. The aim is for the beneficiary households to achieve a level of economic independence without the need for support after two years.

Aside from these ongoing examples, there is limited information on the effects of linking social protection and agricultural programmes with complementary interventions in a coherent and coordinated way.

5. Conclusions

Having considered key policies and programmes and issues of coordination and performance, this section concludes by asking to what extent are Zambia’s agricultural and social protection policies and programmes coherent, and where lie the key obstacles and opportunities for further strengthening?

Overall, while there is clear evidence of common ground and even some complementarities between public agricultural and social protection agendas and interventions in Zambia, there remains very limited inter-sector engagement at the national level and to a large extent the MAL and MCDMCH continue to operate in silos. There also exist a number of conflicts, in terms of the spread of resources benefitting different types of household, unintended overlapping targeting and missed opportunities for complementary linkages between activities or effective sequencing of government support. These points are clarified below under four key headings.

Some clear common ground in policy objectives, yet limited engagement in joint policy planning.

As noted earlier, although the MAL and MCDMCH have their own policy agendas – including some areas where one can expect almost no overlap – there is a strong area of common ground in their respective policy objectives. This exists most explicitly around the objective of food and nutrition security, but there are also overlaps in terms of poverty reduction and strengthening rural livelihoods.

Despite these overlaps there appears to have been limited inter-sector engagement in policy planning, with a number of key informants highlighting that both ministries largely operate in their own silos. One of the reasons underpinning this is the distinction that is made between the MAL considering itself (and being referred to) as an “economic” ministry, while the MCDMCH is considered a “social” ministry. An exception to this is the recent engagement by the MCDMCH of the MAL in the development of the NSPP, a document which offers considerable potential as a basis for improved inter-sector coordination and collaboration.

The main challenge here is to now build upon that initial engagement by institutionalizing an ongoing dialogue between the sectors. This is most likely to be effective through the proposed National Social Protection Coordinating Unit providing it is located as proposed at the Cabinet level. To ensure that engagement is fruitful and lasting there is also a clear need for further outreach efforts on the part of the MCDMCH for and endeavours to communicate the specific interdependencies and opportunities for achieving synergies through a more coordinated approach with the MAL. As noted by one key informant, “social protection is still a new area and people are just waking up”. Interviews with national level stakeholders from the MAL highlight how there has been confusion about social protection and what it means, even for some in the MCDMCH, where social protection had apparently been largely associated with social assistance or social welfare.

Complementary target groups on paper, but with a disproportionate weighting of resources benefitting better-off households and focusing on national food security rather than household food security.

A further indication of latent coherence lies in the broad complementarities in targeting through key programmes. Specifically, whereas the MCDMCH is focused more on the most

vulnerable and those who are vulnerable but viable, the main interventions implemented through the MAL focus by design and in practice on farmers who are able to engage more productively in agriculture, but still require some support before operating as fully independent commercial farmers.

On the one hand this division of targeting may be seen as positive in the sense that it should ensure a spread of coverage in support to different households with different needs. However in practice the two interventions that take up the lion's share of resources within the MAL do not appear to have had the intended impacts on reducing poverty and instead have focused more on national food security. All this, however, to the primary benefit of wealthier producers and neighbouring maize importers, rather than bringing down maize prices for poor domestic consumers.

The division of targeting also has its problems in so far as the overwhelming resources provided to the FISP and FRA effectively crowd out funding to other crucial services that are of key importance to increasing and strengthening household food security, such as research and extension, livestock and veterinary services and irrigation.

Based on discussions with a range of key informants, it is anticipated that even with the best efforts of senior staff within the ministries, it will be essential to have the political cooperation and buy-in from the respective Ministers of the day, and the GRZ more broadly, so that any necessary programmatic reforms receive support and are ultimately implemented, particularly given the highly political nature of agricultural policy in Zambia.

Evidence of unintended overlapping targeting that however lacks intentional inter-sector linkages or layering of support, limiting the benefits of individual interventions.

One obstacle to greater inter- and intra-sector coherence lies in the existence of what is referred to pejoratively in Zambia as “double dipping”. Broadly seen as a vice from national to local level, this refers to instances where beneficiaries knowingly benefit from more than one programme when they should not. While some households may ultimately need more support, in its present form, the overlaps are unintended and represent more of a form of inefficiency than a pre-designed complementarity, removing resources that should be available for other deserving beneficiaries.

At the same time there is a recognition from national to local level, particularly among those most closely involved with social protection programmes such as the SCT and the FSP, that there is a crucial need for the design and implementation of effective layering of support or linking with complementary services in order to achieve effective and sustained graduation from government support.

A key obstacle preventing the layering appears to be limited resources, although this could partly be addressed through a better-targeted allocation of resources currently going through the FISP and FRA. Layering also simply requires greater coordination between ministries. However, this would also likely require significant improvements in the monitoring and information systems, including the development of a beneficiary register available to both ministries.

Some evidence of sequencing by design, though unclear how well it operates in practice, and opportunities for further sequencing across the full life cycle.

One of the key examples of latent coherence between agriculture and social protection lies in the design of a sequencing approach from households receiving Food Security Packs to becoming FISP beneficiaries. This is explicit in official programme documentation (MCDMCH, 2015). This design feature at a general level is something to be welcomed as it demonstrates an awareness that, in order for investments in households to be truly cost effective and for households to continue to move through a “life cycle” out of poverty, there is a need for complementarities between programmes and support so that once support from one intervention ends there is an appropriate measure in place available to those same households to ensure they can exit from poverty on a sustainable basis (Bonilla García and Gruat, 2003).

However, despite the good intentions of this sequencing approach, the study revealed how the measures in place to monitor and facilitate effective graduation from the FSP to FISP are inadequate and there is currently very little evidence of who graduates or not, how and why.

The movement from FSP to FISP is also just one of a number of opportunities for sequencing that should be further developed in order to ensure a more coherent and efficient approach towards achieving the common goals shared across the agricultural and social protection sectors. Another example is the SCT programme. Given the targeting criteria of this programme, not all beneficiaries may be expected to graduate away from it. However FGDs and independent research show how – providing transfers are received regularly – they do enable many households to engage in productive ventures and, if additional layering or linking of complementary services were put in place, some beneficiaries could reasonably graduate away from SCTs onto another form of government support, freeing up resources for other households for which cash transfers are more appropriate.

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Appendix 1: List of key informants

Name	Position	Department, ministry or affiliation
National level		
Given Simalumba	FISP Coordinator	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL)
Dingiswayo Banda	Head of Statistics Unit	Policy and Planning, MAL
Nicholas Mwale	Senior Planner / Statistician, Statistics Unit	Policy and Planning, MAL
Young Vibetti	Senior Researcher	Department of Livestock Production, MAL
Stanfield Michelo	Director of Social Welfare	Department of Social Welfare, Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health (MCDMCH)
Vandros Luwya	Social Cash Transfer Manager / Principal	MCDMCH
Steven Phiri	Director of Community Development	Department of Community Development, MCDMCH
Dorothy Sikazwe	Chief Nutritionist	Department of Mother and Child Health, MCDMCH
Mutale Wakunuma	Country Director	Zambia Platform for Social Protection
Simon Cammelbeeck	Country Director	World Food Programme
Aurore Rusiga	Purchase for Progress Coordinator	World Food Programme
Evin Joyce	Programme Officer	World Food Programme
Emily Heneghan Kasoma	Consultant	World Food Programme
Paul Quarles Van Ufford	Chief of Social Policy	UNICEF
Kelley Toole	Team leader, Human and Social Development	DFID
Nuno Meira Simoes da Cunha	Technical Advisor on Social Security	International Labour Organization
Mtendere Mphatso	Conservation Agriculture Scaling-up Coordinator	FAO Zambia

District and community level		
Felistus Mubukwanu	District Community Development Officer, Monze	MCDMCH
Trustina Chikoli	Assistant District Community Development Officer, Monze	MCDMCH
Gift Mwaanga	District Welfare Officer, Monze	MCDMCH
Justine Ngosa	District Agricultural Coordinator, Monze	MAL
Sophia Tatila	Block Supervisor (assisting as Camp Extension Officer), Lweenta Agricultural Camp, Monze	MAL
Ivan Kasangula	Community Development Assistant, Chona Sub-centre, Monze	MCDMCH
Lloyd Junza	Chair, Community Welfare Assistance Committee, Chona	MCDMCH
Eugene Chilundu	Vice-Chair, Community Welfare Assistance Committee, Chona	MCDMCH

Appendix 2: Investigative framework

	Descriptive data	Normative interpretation	Data required/data source
Background and history	<p>What are the main challenges in the rural areas of the country? What are the levels of poverty, how have they changed over the last 20 years, and what is known about the trends seen?</p> <p>What have been the main public strategies to promote agricultural and rural development and to reduce rural poverty?</p>	<p>How adequate and sufficient have public programmes been compared with the size of the challenge faced?</p> <p>What has been learned about agricultural development and social protection in the country in the last 20 or so years?</p>	<p>Rural poverty, food security and nutrition data/- longitudinal/trends</p> <p>Annotated timeline of public strategies</p> <p>Literature/poverty data</p> <p>Development policy/strategy/plans/statements</p> <p>Key informant interviews (national level)</p>
What is the strategy for agricultural development and social protection?	<p>For policies and programmes: what are their aims, intermediate outcomes and activities?</p> <p>[Set out the theory of change or narrative summary of the logical framework, together with the key assumptions that link up the levels.]</p>	<p>Is the theory of change coherent? Do the means seem adequate to realize the ends envisaged?</p> <p>Are assumptions made reasonable? Do they assume that other programmes are successful? Do they involve high levels of risk or uncertainty?</p>	<p>National poverty reduction strategies/development plans</p> <p>Logframes</p> <p>Key informant interviews (national level)</p>
What are the political and administrative conditions that apply to the policies and programmes?	<p>How much political support does the programme have? Are there groups opposed to the programme?</p> <p>To what extent are goals and the means to achieve them agreed?</p> <p>What is the implementing agency? How broad are its functions? What technical staff does it have?</p> <p>How decentralized is the agency?</p> <p>To what extent can leaders and staff at regional and district level vary programme activities to suit local circumstances?</p>	<p>Does the programme have political backing commensurate with its mission?</p> <p>Does the implementing agency have the capacity to deliver the activities planned?</p>	<p>Discourse narratives on major programmes</p> <p>Programme implementation manuals</p> <p>Capacity needs assessment</p> <p>Perceptions survey data</p> <p>Political/election statements regarding programmes</p> <p>Newspaper articles</p> <p>Discussion fora</p> <p>Key informant interviews</p>

<p>What is the nature of the task set? Simple, straightforward or complex and innovative?</p>	<p>What are the specific features of the programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who: clients, targeting • Where: geographical area • What: delivery of services/inputs/payments/knowledge, etc? • How: which agency or agencies are involved? What active collaborations form part of the programme? 	<p>Does the programme deliver tried and tested interventions or are there innovative and novel elements? How complex or simple is the programme? Can it be standardized, or does it require tailoring to local circumstances? How much scope do managers and field staff have to adapt the programme to local circumstances and to emerging insights? How is the programme monitored? Any scope for re-planning? [Are mistakes accepted?]</p>	<p>Coverage data, output (e.g. payments) data Organogram Monitoring and evaluation reports, including rosters and outputs. Programme implementation manuals Coverage maps Logframes Key informant interviews</p>
<p>What is the human and physical environment of the programme?</p>	<p>What key factors in the physical and human environment affect implementation and results? To what extent do programme managers have any influence over these factors? How does the programme deal with changes in the environment?</p>	<p>To what extent does the programme depend on elements in the environment not under control of the agency? How stable are key elements in the environment? What key risks arise from the environment? Do managers and field staff have sufficient scope to react to changes in the environment?</p>	<p>Key informant interviews Logframes (risks/assumptions), risk assessments, risk management documentation Programme monitoring</p>
<p>What co-ordination is seen within and between programmes?</p>	<p>What mechanisms are used to co-ordinate programmes? Where does co-ordination occur? At central, regional, district or village level? How much co-ordination takes place? Through sharing of goals, exchange of information, joint planning, or close collaboration among field staff? What incentives to co-ordinate do staff of different agencies have at different levels?</p>	<p>How well do the forms of co-ordination work? Are they effective?</p>	<p>Key informant interviews Key informant interviews (at all levels), FGDs Key informant interviews Key informant interviews (at all levels)</p>

		Do the benefits of coordination outweigh the costs? Or vice versa? Are there procedures that produce little, yet cost time and money? Are there cost-effective ways in the programmes that could be better co-ordinated?	Key informant interviews (at all levels)
In what ways are the programmes coherent?	Do the programmes share a similar theory of change or set of beliefs about to promote development? Do they share goals?	Are there potential synergies that are not being achieved? If there are conflicts, how might programmes change to eliminate them?	Key informant interviews (at all levels)
	Do the activities carried out complement or conflict with one another? Or are they largely independent of each other?		Key informant interviews (at all levels) FGDs
	Do the outcomes of one programme affect the other, either positively in creating synergies, or negatively by diminishing the results of the other programme? Or are the outcomes largely independent of one another?		Key informant interviews (at all levels) FGDs
	Does the programme deliver the outputs expected in the field? Are clients receiving the expected services, benefits, etc. from the programme? What problems have arisen in implementation?	What accounts for any problems, delays, setbacks?	Key informant interviews (at all levels) FGDs
	Are programme outputs contributing to programme goals?	If not, then why?	Key informant interviews Programme and impact evaluations
		What does the programme consider successful?	FGDs
	What aspects of performance result from coordination with other programmes?	Could performance be improved through more coordination with other programmes?	Key informant interviews FGDs

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

