



Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations



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

DIAGNOSTIC TOOL



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## **DIAGNOSTIC TOOL**

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# List of acronyms and abbreviations

<b>AIHD</b>	African Institute for Health and Development
<b>APSP</b>	Africa Platform for Social Protection
<b>AU</b>	African Union
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<b>FGD</b>	focus group discussion
<b>HABP</b>	Household Asset Building Programme
<b>KII</b>	key informant interview
<b>MIS</b>	management information system
<b>NEPAD</b>	New Partnership for African Development
<b>NGO</b>	non-governmental organization
<b>PSNP</b>	Productive Safety Net Programme
<b>SWAP</b>	Sector-wide Approach
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children’s Fund
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme

Agriculture and social protection are fundamentally linked in the context of rural livelihoods in Africa. Poor and food-insecure families depend primarily on agriculture and partly on non-farm income and private transfers for their livelihoods, and are the main target of social protection interventions (FAO, 2015). When embedded within a broader rural development framework, stronger coherence between agriculture and social protection interventions can assist in improving the welfare of poor small family farms by facilitating productive inclusion, improving risk-management capacities, and increasing agricultural productivity – all of which enable rural-based families to gradually move out of poverty and hunger (Tirivayi *et al.*, 2013).

# Introduction

## THE PURPOSE OF THIS TOOL

An important step in strengthening coherence is to assess the existing state of coherence within a given country and identify potential entry points for strengthening it. In support of the assessment process, this Diagnostic Tool can assist in:

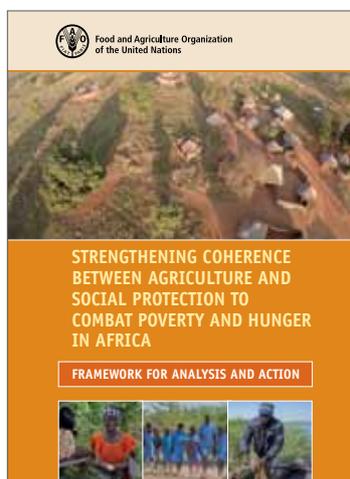
- identifying and mapping the scope and nature of linkages between agriculture and social protection interventions in a given country, including supportive and constraining factors; and
- understanding people's experiences and perceptions of linkages between agricultural and social protection programmes and how these linkages (or lack of them) affect their livelihoods.

This will provide a basis for identifying options for strengthening coherence, which will inevitably depend on specific country contexts.

## WHO SHOULD USE THE TOOL

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

- government officials working on policy and programming in agriculture and social protection at national and district levels;
- development partners supporting governments in designing and implementing agricultural and social protection policies and programmes; and
- civil society organizations and think tanks involved in policy advocacy and/or programme formulation and implementation.



This Diagnostic Tool is accompanied by a complementary document:

**“STRENGTHENING COHERENCE BETWEEN AGRICULTURE AND SOCIAL PROTECTION TO COMBAT POVERTY AND HUNGER IN AFRICA: FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS AND ACTION.”**

The Framework lays out the benefits of coherence between agriculture and social protection and presents key policy and programming options to be considered when strengthening coherence between these domains.

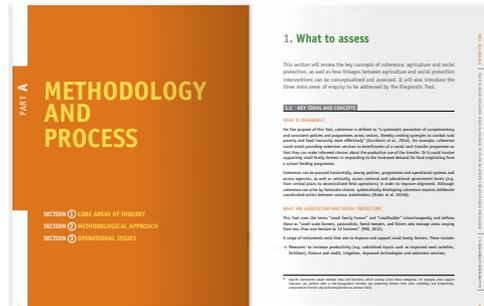
# HOW TO USE THE TOOL

The Diagnostic Tool provides a method for mapping and understanding the state of coherence between agriculture and social protection within a given context.

Specifically, the document is structured as follows:

## PART A / SECTION 1: CORE AREAS OF INQUIRY

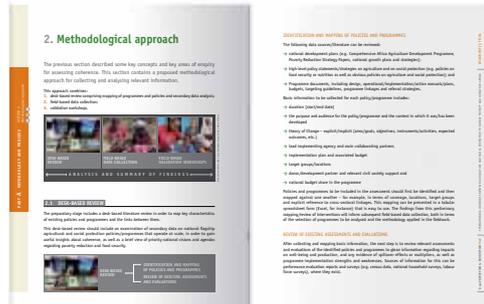
describes the objective and scope of the assessment, including an overview of the three main areas of enquiry, namely: policies and programmes; enabling environment; and programme performance and beneficiary experiences.



## PART A / SECTION 2: METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

proposes a methodology for conducting the assessment. This section describes a process for collecting and analysing information through:

- desk-based review;
- field-based data collection; and
- validation workshops.



## PART A / SECTION 3: OPERATIONAL ISSUES

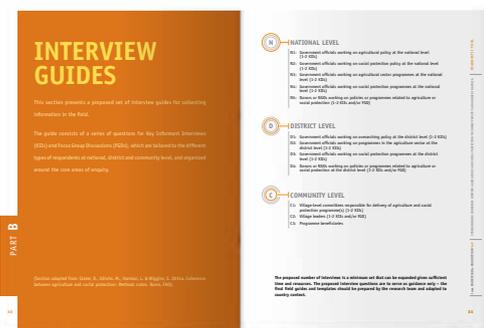
contains detailed guidance to implement the methodology, specifically:

- a roadmap for data collection and analysis in the field;
- a training agenda to train the team that will collect data in the field;
- a fieldwork protocol, setting general principles of fieldwork; and
- a guide for recording and analysing qualitative information.



## PART B: INTERVIEW GUIDES

provides a series of practical instruments that can be used to collect data in the field. Called "interview guides", they consist of a series of proposed interview questions, tailored to different types of respondents and organized around the three core areas of enquiry.



Several primary principles – further developed throughout the document – should be considered when using the Tool:

- **Be flexible:** Despite guiding principles, such as starting from the centre at national level, the Tool should be used flexibly and adapted according to country contexts and national visions (e.g. number of policies and programmes analysed; depth and scope of enquiry; decentralized locations/sites visits; prioritization of issues). Though designed to be applied in its totality, certain parts of the Tool can be applied as standalone instruments if desired, depending on the circumstance.
- **Be participatory:** The Tool should hinge on exploring, probing and listening, rather than on directive focused questioning. Providing feedback to respondents at various levels and points in the process is critical; this exchange provides valuable additional insights and suggestions, as well as rich contributions to overall results.
- **Be respectful:** All ethical protocols for conducting fieldwork should be respected.

## HOW THE TOOL WAS PREPARED

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The Diagnostic Tool was developed based on:

- a conceptual framework for strengthening coherence between agriculture and social protection (Gavrilovic *et al.*, 2016);
- field testing of the data collection instruments developed for assessing experiences in linking agriculture and social protection in Africa (Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi and Zambia), Asia (Bangladesh) and Latin America (Mexico and Peru) (Gavrilovic *et al.* 2015, draft; Gordillo *et al.*, 2016; Slater *et al.*, 2016a);
- field testing in eight countries (Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Rwanda, Zambia and Zimbabwe) of the qualitative field guide developed for assessing the impacts of cash transfer programmes (FAO, 2013); and
- advice and substantive inputs from experts.

# METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS

SECTION ① CORE AREAS OF INQUIRY

SECTION ② METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

SECTION ③ OPERATIONAL ISSUES

# 1. What to assess

This section will review the key concepts of coherence, agriculture and social protection, as well as how linkages between agriculture and social protection interventions can be conceptualized and assessed. It will also introduce the three main areas of enquiry to be addressed by the Diagnostic Tool.

## 1.1 KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

### WHAT IS COHERENCE?

For the purpose of this Tool, coherence is defined as “a systematic promotion of complementary and consistent policies and programmes across sectors, thereby creating synergies to combat rural poverty and food insecurity more effectively” (Gavrilovic *et al.*, 2016). For example, coherence could entail providing extension services to beneficiaries of a social cash transfer programme so that they can make informed choices about the productive use of the transfer. Or it could involve supporting small family farmers in responding to the increased demand for food originating from a school feeding programme.

Coherence can be pursued horizontally, among policies, programmes and operational systems and across agencies, as well as vertically, across national and subnational government levels (e.g. from central plans to decentralized field operations) in order to improve alignment. Although coherence can arise by fortunate chance, systematically developing coherence requires deliberate coordinated action between various stakeholders (Slater *et al.* 2016b).

### WHAT ARE AGRICULTURE AND SOCIAL PROTECTION?

This Tool uses the terms “small family farmer” and “smallholder” interchangeably and defines these as “small-scale farmers, pastoralists, forest-keepers, and fishers who manage areas varying from less than one hectare to 10 hectares” (FAO, 2012).

A range of instruments exist that aim to improve and support small family farmers. These include:

- Measures<sup>1</sup> to increase productivity (e.g. subsidized inputs such as improved seed varieties, fertilizer), finance and credit, irrigation, improved technologies and extension services;

<sup>1</sup> Specific instruments adopt multiple roles and functions, which overlap across these categories. For example, price support measures can perform both a risk-management function (by protecting farmers from price volatility) and productivity-enhancement function (by motivating farmers to produce food).

- Risk-management instruments (e.g. price support policies, plant breeding, crop/livestock insurance);
- Measures to protect access to, and management of, natural resources (e.g. tenure security policies for land, fisheries and forests, conservation agriculture); and
- Measures to improve market access (e.g. rural producer organizations, marketing, information technologies).

There are also a range of instruments that can be categorized as social protection. For purposes of this Tool, social protection is defined as “all initiatives, both public and private, that provide income or consumption transfers to the poor, protect the vulnerable against livelihood risks and enhance the social status and rights of the excluded and marginalized” (Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler, 2004). Under this definition, social protection instruments can be wide-ranging. However, this Tool focuses on social assistance measures such as cash transfers, public works and school feeding.

## 1.2 CORE AREAS OF ENQUIRY

The Tool is guided by three main thematic areas of enquiry:

POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE AND BENEFICIARY EXPERIENCES

Assessing these three thematic areas makes it possible to generate a comprehensive understanding of the state of coherence across agriculture and social protection policy and programmes in a country, encompassing policy, programming and impact levels. For this reason the three areas have been integrated into the interview guides presented in Part II. However, it is also an option to assess only one area, in order to examine it in more depth and/or to fill knowledge gaps, or to assess the areas sequentially, depending on specific demands and resources.

THEMATIC AREA:  
POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES



Assessing this area will make it possible to map existing and potential linkages between agricultural and social protection interventions, including policy instruments and programmes. More specifically, this assessment will:

- identify existing efforts to strengthen coherence through policies and programmes;
- identify linkages (e.g. sharing target groups, objectives, activities, implementation arrangements);
- indicate whether linkages emerge intentionally or through fortuitous coincidence; and
- indicate whether links are synergistic or conflicting in any way.

Box 1 illustrates the nature of those linkages.

## TYPOLOGY OF INTERACTIONS BETWEEN AGRICULTURE AND SOCIAL PROTECTION AND DESIGN MODALITIES FOR DEVELOPING COHERENT INTERVENTIONS

The ways in which linkages between agricultural and social protection policies and programmes play out and can be combined are context-specific, but they can be generally characterized as follows:

### TYPOLOGY OF INTERACTIONS:



**Reinforcing:** This occurs when agriculture and social protection together contribute to a common goal, with each serving its own function. For instance, a cash transfer can be used to lift a household's liquidity constraints and an agricultural intervention can provide the same household with access to an improved technology. Another example is when households invest part of a social protection transfer in their agricultural activities and this leads to increased agricultural production.



**Conflictual:** Conflicts may occur between different interventions, thereby undermining positive outcomes. For example, scheduling a public works programme during the planting season can divert beneficiaries from their own farm activities, thus jeopardizing agricultural production.

### DESIGN APPROACHES:



**Provide single interventions:** This is when "freestanding" programmes are designed to maximize synergies. For instance, an agricultural programme can prioritize crop varieties that are resistant to drought, pests and diseases and so reduce household vulnerability. Or a social protection programme can be designed to be coherent with the agricultural livelihoods of its beneficiaries. Kenya's Hunger Safety Net Programme, for example, allows beneficiaries to collect transfers when and where they like, which is coherent with their semi-nomadic pastoralist livelihoods.



**Combine multiple interventions:** Agricultural and social protection interventions can be combined into a single programme so that targeted households participate in both types of interventions. For instance, within its Food Security Programme, Ethiopia combines a public works component under the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) with the Household Asset Building Programme (HABP).



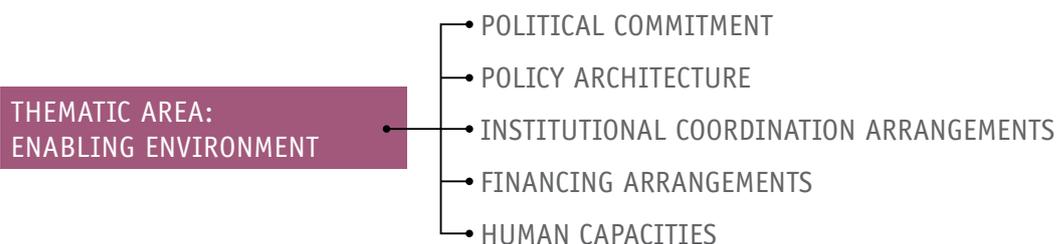
**Coordinate and align multiple programmes and policies:** Synergies between agriculture and social protection interventions can be established even when these interventions are not delivered in the same locations or do not target the same beneficiaries. Alignment can involve coordinating a continuum of agricultural and social protection interventions so as to expand coverage. In contexts where many individual programmes exist in the same location and are well-functioning, the challenge is to improve their harmonization and coverage. As not everyone in the community requires the same type of support, a well-coordinated continuum of agricultural and social protection interventions can be established to cater to distinct groups within poor populations. For example, while households with land and labour can be targeted with productive activities (e.g. input subsidy, agricultural extension), the poorest labour-constrained families can be linked to social protection programmes such as social cash transfers.

In locations where cash transfers are implemented, agricultural interventions can be delivered to small family farmers who are not targeted by the cash transfer programme in order to take advantage of the increase in local consumer demand. Examples include the ongoing efforts in several African countries to link school feeding and public procurement programmes

FOR MORE DETAILS PLEASE REFER TO THE FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS AND ACTION.

As coherence can be maximized through particular policy and programme design and delivery, this area of enquiry also includes the roles and the effects on coherence of design, implementation and operational features.

Finally, analysing this area also explores the scope for strengthening policy and programme linkages.



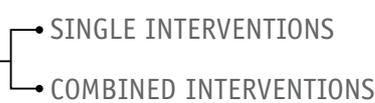
Coherence depends on well-coordinated and collaborative action by multiple actors (Gavrilovic *et al.*, 2016). High-level political, policy and institutional factors can facilitate or limit joint action among players in agriculture and social protection. This thematic area examines five components of the enabling environment that are critical for cross-sectoral coordination, including:

- **Political commitment:** This component explores the extent of political support for coherence and the motivations and incentives that exist to mobilize high-level support for coherence. It also examines the role that political economy factors (e.g. actors' interests, values and beliefs on core issues, allocation of resources) play in determining the scope for coherence.
- **Policy architecture:** This component explores the roles that overarching policy frameworks play in the coordination of agriculture and social protection interventions, determines whether coherence is on the policy agenda and considers existing/emerging policies or strategic processes and efforts to pursue coherence more systematically (e.g. defining a joint vision for coherence, common goals and sectoral priorities, designing a joint plan of action to coordinate interventions).
- **Institutional coordination arrangements:** This component explores whether and what types of coordinating mechanisms exist to promote coherence across national and subnational government levels, the functions they have and how they work. It also examines how decentralization (in terms of policy and programme prioritization and planning, resource allocation and programme delivery) affects the scope for coherence.
- **Financing arrangements:** This component investigates the sources, reliability and sustainability of financing agricultural and social protection policies and programmes, as well as the financing space for joint interventions. Furthermore, this aspect focuses on how financing arrangements mediate and impact coordination – for instance, if the main source of financing for social protection is through donors, while for agriculture it is through the government, what are the implications for coordination? Are long-term investment plans in the different sectors coordinated through Sector-wide Approaches (SWAPs) or other instruments? What are the opportunities for pulling sector funds into “basket funding” to facilitate joint programming? And in what ways can financial incentives (e.g. incremental and results-based budgeting) be used to encourage collaboration?

- **Human capacity:** In addition to institutional coordination arrangements, this component explores the technical and administrative capacity – existing and required – for supporting the development, coordination and monitoring of coherent policies and programmes. To drive the coherence agenda forward, three broad capacity areas can be assessed: (i) capacity to generate and exchange evidence to mobilize commitment and inform policy and programme design and implementation; (ii) capacity to facilitate cross-sectoral alliances and partnerships; and (iii) capacity to design, deliver and monitor and evaluate coherent policies and programmes. The human capacity component also reviews plans and ambitions for capacity development as well as mapping gaps in capacity.

For more details please refer to the Framework for Analysis and Action.

THEMATIC AREA:  
PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE  
AND BENEFICIARY EXPERIENCES



Assessing this area will indicate whether coherence leads to better programme performance and perceived outcomes or, at least, whether it has the potential to generate these results. In particular, this area examines: what single and joint programmes mean concretely for people and their livelihoods; what likely impacts are generated (or not) and how people experience and view these impacts; what factors mediate the nature and scale of the results; and how coherence can be strengthened to maximize positive outcomes for rural poverty reduction and food security.

Coherence can be assessed using two different strategies:

- **The performance of single interventions:** The aim of this approach is to deepen understanding of: (i) the objectives and goals pursued by single programmes and the implementation arrangements intended to achieve objectives of relevance to agricultural and/or social protection outcomes; (ii) the likely effects the intervention may have on household decision-making behaviour and livelihood practices; and (iii) possible spillover effects on other programmes in the target area. This approach tests, and is based on, the assumption that a single agricultural intervention may have impacts on social protection interventions and related outcomes and that social protection interventions may have impacts on agricultural programmes and outcomes;
- **The added value of combining multiple, multisectoral interventions:** This approach explores how synergies across different interventions affect the behaviours, practices, attitudes and norms of household members, and how these differ from households who access only one programme (or none). This approach also examines programme mechanisms (e.g. committees) at local levels and how they operate to facilitate or undermine coherence.

TABLE 1  
GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR THE THREE THEMATIC AREAS OF ENQUIRY\*

	DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION	ANALYTICAL INVESTIGATION**	DATA REQUIRED/ DATA SOURCE
<b>Policies and programmes</b>	<p>What are the main food security and nutrition and poverty challenges in the rural areas of the country and how have these changed over the years?</p> <p>What have been the main strategies to promote food security and agricultural and rural development?</p> <p>Are there any synergies/conflicts between agricultural and social protection policies and programmes?</p> <p>Are operational tools (e.g. single registries) available for supporting coherence?</p>	<p>Have public policies/ programmes been successful in meeting their objectives?</p> <p>What reflections and lessons learned can be shared about agricultural development and social protection strategies in the country?</p> <p>What brings about synergies/conflicts?</p> <p>What adjustments are required to improve linkages in terms of programme objectives, design and implementation?</p>	<p>Main rural poverty, food security and nutrition data</p> <p>Development policies and strategies and programme documentation</p> <p>Key informant interviews (KIIs)</p> <p>Focus group discussions (FGDs) with village leaders</p>
<b>Enabling environment</b>	<p>How much political support is there for coherence between agriculture and social protection?</p> <p>What mechanisms at national and subnational level bring together actors from agriculture and social protection for joint planning and implementation?</p> <p>What financing mechanisms are in place for agriculture, social protection, food security and rural development policies and programmes?</p> <p>Are adequate personnel available to support the design and implementation of coherent policies and programmes?</p> <p>Are operational tools (e.g. single/ coordinated registries) available for supporting coherence?</p>	<p>What existing key factors drive political support for coherence and how can political support for coherence be mobilized?</p> <p>How effective are existing coordination mechanisms at different levels in bringing together agriculture and social protection and how can these be improved?</p> <p>How do financing arrangements support/ undermine coordination between agriculture and social protection?</p> <p>How can human capacities be improved to strengthen and support coherence?</p>	<p>Reports/narratives on major programmes</p> <p>Programme implementation manuals</p> <p>Political statements regarding programmes</p> <p>KIIs</p> <p>Capacity assessments</p>
<b>Programme performance and beneficiary experiences</b>	<p>Does the programme deliver the outputs expected in the field?</p> <p>What has been the impact for beneficiaries of coherence (or lack thereof) between agriculture and social protection?</p>	<p>What accounts for any problems, delays or setbacks in programme performance?</p> <p>Could performance be improved by achieving greater coherence between programmes?</p>	<p>KIIs</p> <p>FGDs with village leaders and beneficiaries</p>

\* These represent areas that have been used as a basis for developing the specific interview questions presented in Part II.

\*\* Questions have been categorized as either descriptive or analytical but in some instances they may cut across both categories.



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## 2. Methodological approach

The previous section described some key concepts and key areas of enquiry for assessing coherence. This section contains a proposed methodological approach for collecting and analysing relevant information.

This approach combines:

1. desk-based review comprising mapping of programmes and policies and secondary data analysis;
2. field-based data collection;
3. validation workshops.

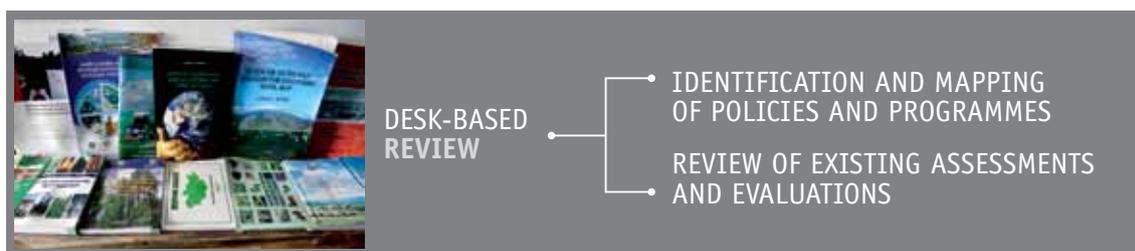


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### 2.1 DESK-BASED REVIEW

The preparatory stage includes a desk-based literature review in order to map key characteristics of existing policies and programmes and the links between them.

This desk-based review should include an examination of secondary data on national flagship agricultural and social protection policies/programmes that operate at scale, in order to gain useful insights about coherence, as well as a brief view of priority national visions and agendas regarding poverty reduction and food security.



## IDENTIFICATION AND MAPPING OF POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

The following data sources/literature can be reviewed:

- national development plans (e.g. Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, national growth plans and strategies);
- high-level policy statements/strategies on agriculture and on social protection (e.g. policies on food security or nutrition as well as obvious policies on agriculture and social protection); and
- Programme documents, including design, operational/implementation/action manuals/plans, budgets, targeting guidelines, programme linkages and referral strategies.

Basic information to be collected for each policy/programme includes:

- duration (start/end date)
- the purpose and audience for the policy/programme and the context in which it was/has been developed
- theory of Change – explicit/implicit (aims/goals, objectives, instruments/activities, expected outcomes, etc.)
- lead implementing agency and main collaborating partners
- implementation plan and associated budget
- target groups/locations
- donor/development partner and relevant civil society support and
- national budget share in the programme

Policies and programmes to be included in the assessment should first be identified and then mapped against one another – for example, in terms of coverage, locations, target groups and explicit reference to cross-sectoral linkages. This mapping can be presented in a tabular spreadsheet form (Excel, for instance) that is easy to use. The findings from this preliminary mapping/review of interventions will inform subsequent field-based data collection, both in terms of the selection of programmes to be analysed and the methodology applied in the fieldwork.

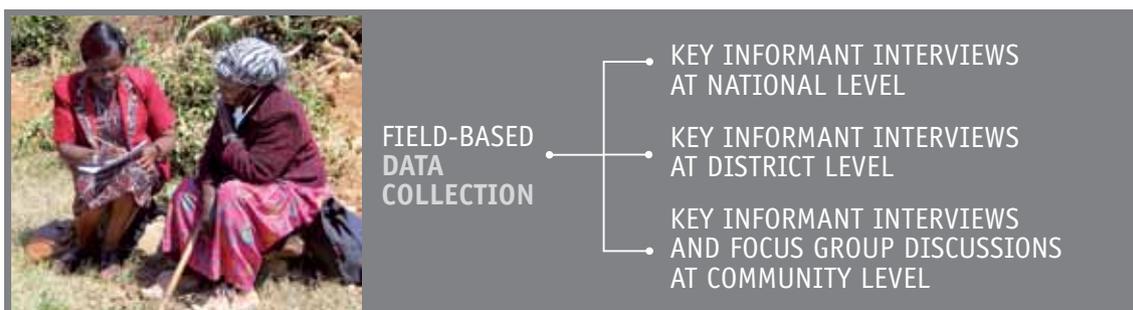
## REVIEW OF EXISTING ASSESSMENTS AND EVALUATIONS

After collecting and mapping basic information, the next step is to review relevant assessments and evaluations of the identified policies and programmes to glean information regarding impacts on well-being and production, and any evidence of spillover effects or multipliers, as well as programme implementation strengths and weaknesses. Sources of information for this can be performance evaluation reports and surveys (e.g. census data, national household surveys, labour force surveys), where they exist.

## 2.2 FIELD-BASED DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

This section outlines general steps for collecting data in the field, including sampling considerations and methodology. Based on the results of desk review and preliminary interviews with stakeholders, the steps proposed here should be adapted to suit country context.<sup>2</sup>

The field-based data collection and analysis phase might be best done by using a cascading method, whereby the analysis is informed by collecting information initially from the “centre” government and donor level, then at regional district and community levels. This makes it possible first to understand and frame the overall national vision and policy objectives and then to capture the range of views and experiences from a diverse group of stakeholders, as well as to observe the way policy and programmes play out at different levels.



### SAMPLING CONSIDERATIONS

Depending on the resources and time allocated to qualitative data collection and analysis, in addition to collecting data from national-level stakeholders (typically based in the country capital), two to four different regions/districts and communities should be selected by means of a defined purposive sampling approach for qualitative-based fieldwork. Two main priority criteria should be used:

- Selecting locations with a number of operational agriculture and social protection programmes;
- Representing various agro-ecological regions and agricultural livelihoods (e.g. farming, pastoralism, small-scale fishing or forestry) to best understand how multiprogramme linkages play out in different contexts.

Within regions/districts, one or two communities should then be selected to participate in focus group discussions.

See 3.1 on preliminary tips on how to select respondents.

The strategy and final proposed communities should be discussed and agreed upon with government, community leaders and relevant partners.

<sup>2</sup> Much of the field-based research design presented here is based on FAO. 2013. *Qualitative research on the economic impacts of cash transfer programmes in sub-Saharan Africa*. PtoP research guide. Rome, FAO

## TEAM COMPOSITION

It is recommended that the diagnostic process be overseen, and possibly conducted, by a team of specialists with experience in qualitative methods and policy analysis. The team should ideally be made up of a combination of national and international experts, led by an experienced team leader with wider regional/global experience. The team should undertake data collection and analysis, under the overall guidance and responsibility of the team leader.

Composition and size of the team will depend on the specific scope of data collection (e.g. number of assessment modules, nature of the programmes, number of KIIs/FGDs) and the time and financial resources available. To ensure data quality and robust analysis, it is advisable to prioritize selection of experts with qualitative research backgrounds and with agriculture and social protection expertise. In addition, a mix of expertise in policy and/or programme design and delivery will benefit the quality of analysis – and adequate gender balance is always recommended.

## TRAINING AND PILOTING FIELDWORK

Fieldwork training should be given sufficient time to allow members of the team to familiarize themselves with all aspects of the assessment. This process should include two to five days for training, including one day for a pilot and debriefing session. Training subjects could include: background and justification for conducting the analysis; ethical guidelines; overview of multiprogrammes; roadmap, methods and tools; sampling protocols; and other fieldwork activities including debriefing, analysis and report-writing. During the training a trial (pilot) of the methodology (field guide questions and tools) is strongly advised, to ensure appropriateness, understanding and competency in field methods.

[See 3.2 for details on training and piloting.](#)

## PROPOSED TOOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

A range of qualitative and participatory data collection instruments/tools are proposed for conducting the data collection and analysis. These include:

- key informant interviews (KIIs)
- focus group discussions (FGDs)
- in-depth household case studies (if time and resources permit)

## Key informant interviews (KIIs)

BOX 2

### WHAT ARE KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS (KIIs)?

KIIs are semi-structured discussions with individuals who have knowledge or expertise on topics that are relevant to the research study. For this particular study, identification of these individuals requires some prior knowledge of the operation and context of the agriculture and social protection sectors in each country, along with broad checklists of questions that can draw out specific insights from each individual. Although the topics covered by the KIIs will be similar to those in the FGDs, the key informants will offer additional and often more focused and rich insights. Also, key informants should be able to provide information at the community level rather than individual level. KIIs often take place with just one respondent, but if two or three topic experts are available, it is possible to have a KII with more than one person at a time.

KIIs should be conducted with key representatives at each level – including national (central) and subnational (district/regional) administrative levels, as well as staff from donor/development agencies and NGOs.<sup>3</sup> The overall aim of the KIIs is to:

- Assess and gain a deeper understanding of the type and nature of existing and potential linkages between policies and programmes being implemented, the degree of awareness and commitment towards coherence, opportunities and bottlenecks to effective coordination (with examples) and possible differences in approach between central and subnational government actors.
- Recommend actions to address these constraints and promote synergies.



At the **national level**, interviews should focus on assessing strategic policy priorities and programmes across the areas of agriculture and social protection, determining how coherence fits within them and identifying relevant coordination platforms.



At the **district level**, interviews should explore how decentralization – including the extent of autonomy in decision-making and the allocation of resources (human, time, financial) – affects opportunities for coherence, as well as how existing mechanisms affect the potential for greater coherence.



At the **community level**, interviews should focus on discussing the programmes that are in place in the communities, whether there are synergies and/or conflicts between these programmes and the experiences of beneficiaries participating in these programmes. The number of interviews to be conducted, and the selection of respondents, will be informed by the desk-based review, preparatory discussions with key stakeholders and time available.

<sup>3</sup> Depending on time and resources available for the research, individual KIIs are advised with stakeholders at the community level, including committees and extension/field officers and village leaders.

## Focus group discussions (FGDs)

BOX 3

### WHAT ARE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS?

A *focus group* typically consists of 6-10 people who engage in a facilitated discussion on specific topics. FGDs are extremely effective for exploring predetermined issues in depth with relevant groups of people and capturing broader information, expanding on that provided by informants during the KIIs. FGD participants are drawn from categories of people or households who are of interest to the study design. The purpose of discussing these issues with stratified groups is not to gather “collective” views or experiences but to stimulate debate and to explore differences in attitudes and perceptions within and between these groups.

Generally around one and a half hours (maximum two hours) should be allowed for an FGD to ensure that a full discussion occurs. This should be sufficient to explore all the relevant issues in depth, but if participants are unable to spare much time, we would suggest that the number of themes to be discussed in each FGD is limited to between five or six. If possible, it is highly useful to use participatory tools during FGDs to access information through a triangulation of methods.

**FGDs with local planning and implementing committees and village leaders:** Because they involve stakeholders closely involved with programme delivery and targeting, these FGDs should provide insight into how objectives (e.g. policy objectives and priorities, programme objectives, design and implementation) at the national and subnational levels translate into practice on the ground. Particular areas of enquiry could be perceptions of the identification and selection of potential beneficiaries, and the methods of targeting (to understand approaches and stakeholders’ views, particularly concerning “double dipping”<sup>4</sup>) as well as implementation arrangements and success in operating the programmes as they were envisaged.

**FGDs with households/beneficiaries:** The aim of these discussions is to generate specific insights and qualitative evidence about how coherence is perceived and experienced by households in concrete terms, through their attitudes, behaviour, livelihood strategies and socio-economic outcomes. This will shed light on the relevance of programme design and implementation with respect to coherence and can provide insight into possible recommendations. The objective is to stimulate discussion and explore commonalities and differences in attitudes, perceptions and experiences regarding the impacts of programme linkages and the features and processes creating these impacts, as well as the comparative experiences of beneficiaries participating in single programmes. Discussions should also inform the type and sequencing of complementary support required to improve livelihood strategies, alleviate poverty and increase food security. Based on the time available and the context of the country and programmes, simple participatory tools (see Interview Guide C3 for an example of a tool), such as community well-being analysis, institutional analysis, livelihoods analysis or problem trees can be used during FGDs to stimulate discussion and sharing.

<sup>4</sup> “Double-dipping” refers to targeting outcomes – planned or unplanned – whereby the same household receives transfers from more than one development programme.

Possible categories for stratification will depend on the specific country context and could include beneficiaries accessing multiple programmes (i.e. receiving a mix of agriculture and social protection support), those accessing only one programme (either agriculture or social protection) and those pursuing different types of agricultural livelihoods (e.g. crop-based or livestock-based). Focus groups should be gender-disaggregated, if possible, with consideration of different livelihood profiles and ages and socio-economic characteristics.

See 3.1 and 3.3 for further details on how to conduct KIIs and FGDs effectively and ethically.

If deemed useful, the FGDs can be complemented with in-depth household case studies, whereby a small number of households (i.e. 2-4) are selected for in-depth interviews about their experiences with multiprogramme linkages. The aim of these case studies is to gain greater knowledge and understanding through actual examples of how households do (or do not) use and combine programme benefits, how these decisions are made, and how (and to what degree) they have changed and affected the socio-economic conditions and well-being of households – including behaviours, perspectives, practices, plans, level of confidence and outlook on the future.

### 2.3 NATIONAL AND SUBNATIONAL STAKEHOLDER VALIDATION WORKSHOPS

National and subnational multistakeholder meetings and/or validation workshops involving people interviewed through the data collection processes are advised.

The objective of these workshops is to bring together stakeholders to validate findings and discuss opportunities and barriers to achieving coherence.

A workshop should last two to three hours and focus on presenting the purpose of the diagnostic exercise, methodology followed and emerging findings. Such a workshop should be used to corroborate and triangulate findings from both desk-based and field-based work.



FIELD-BASED  
VALIDATION  
WORKSHOP

FEEDBACK SESSIONS AT NATIONAL, DISTRICT AND COMMUNITY LEVELS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF GOVERNMENT, DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

## 2.4 ANALYSING AND WRITING UP THE INFORMATION COLLECTED

All notes (and transcripts of any audio recordings) of interviews should be labelled and filed logically with identifying “tags”. This will be invaluable for ensuring quotations are correctly and anonymously referenced in the reports.

See 3.4 for details on recording and analysing information.

Once the data have been compiled there are various methods for analysing and writing up the information.

Table 1 (on page 10) and the Framework for Analysis and Action are useful references for analysing and interpreting findings.



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## 3. Operational issues

The previous section described some key concepts and key areas of enquiry for assessing coherence. This section contains a proposed methodological approach for collecting and analysing relevant information.

This approach combines:

1. a roadmap for data collection and analysis in the field;
2. a training agenda for training the team that will collect data in the field;
3. a fieldwork protocol setting out the general principles of fieldwork; and
4. a guide for recording and analysing qualitative information.

### 3.1 ROADMAP

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This section describes step-by-step details of the field data collection phases. The data collection phase can be conducted over a total of about 15 days.

#### STEP 1

#### KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS AT NATIONAL LEVEL

(5 DAYS)

The team will introduce the assessment and conduct a few preliminary meetings with key stakeholders before starting the KIIs with government officials at the national level. The preliminary interviews may be useful to obtain relevant data (e.g. poverty, food security, agricultural trends, social protection system) and advice on the sampling strategy and to start to identify specific people with whom to conduct KIIs. After these initial meetings, the team will proceed to conduct the KIIs. It is suggested that no fewer than five days should be allocated to the national KIIs. Debriefing sessions should be conducted on daily basis.

#### STEP 2

#### KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS AT DISTRICT LEVEL

(2 DAYS)

The team will introduce the assessment at district level and conduct a few preliminary interviews before reaching the community. Preliminary interviews at this level may include district officials (e.g. district commissioner), members of programme suboffices and officials involved in programme implementation. These interviews may be useful to obtain district-level data, up-to-date information on programmes implemented at district level and advice on the community sampling. The team will then proceed to conduct KIIs with relevant district government officials and development partners of relevance to the study.

### STEP 3 KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS AT COMMUNITY LEVEL (9 DAYS)

#### Introduction of assessment and team with village head/influential community members and KIIs:

At this stage, the team should split into two subteams (each consisting of two persons), enabling coverage of two communities simultaneously. In each community, the first contact will be with the village head. After explaining who the team is working for and the purpose of the assessment, the team leader will request permission to conduct the assessment in the community. After this initial meeting with the village head, the team will proceed to meet the relevant programme committee members, together with other community leaders. This will provide an opportunity to find out more about the social context of the community and to start to identify specific groups of people with which to conduct FGDs and KIIs.

#### Focus group discussions:

When selecting programme beneficiaries for the focus groups, the beneficiary lists of people/households participating in the agricultural and social protection programmes of interest will be obtained from programme officials, and focus group participants will be randomly drawn from these lists. In the absence of such lists, the team will select participants as randomly as possible by using local key informants to identify a total population – for example, “beneficiaries” of the agricultural programme – and then randomly selecting from that population – for example, from different neighbourhoods. The team should remain open to identifying new groups or people that need to be included in the data collection process. For instance, in discussions with one focus group, another important group of people may be identified.

Discussions will be conducted separately with men and women, whenever possible, and focus groups will be composed of six to ten participants. With larger groups it becomes difficult to ensure that all participants can contribute freely and meaningfully. With fewer than six people, on the other hand, one or two individuals may tend to dominate. Triangulating the findings from one focus group with discussions held with different participants from the same interest group will increase the trustworthiness of those findings.

### ACROSS STEPS 1 TO 3: DAILY ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

#### Interview data check:

After a set of KIIs (for example, all the interviews with national level respondents) or an FGD is finished, each of the two subteams should take time to make sure they have an accurate picture or record of the discussion, or – in the case of the FGDs with programme beneficiaries – any visual outputs produced through participatory exercises. They should also check to ensure that any important quotes and examples are accurately documented. Team members should confer with each other regarding the highlights for each core area of enquiry and the major points and issues that were raised during the FGDs. Such discussion will form the basis of the daily team debriefing sessions.

### Daily debriefs:

At the end of each day it is essential that the team debrief. This is a key stage of data reporting and analysis and will be used to develop the feedback sessions to the community and the final report at the end of the assessment. It will also reveal gaps which should be addressed in the next day of fieldwork. Trends, patterns and emerging findings should be identified and built upon towards development of the key findings, conclusions and recommendations. The team needs to consider how each KII and FGD (using examples, cases, quotes) adds to overall understanding. Are some pieces of information still not clear or are some groups still missing from the discussion? Are trends emerging? Thinking this through will assist in planning the next KII and FGD in terms of issues on which team members would like to concentrate and other issues about which they feel they already have a good idea.

For the daily debriefs the team should have around 30 minutes to prepare and organize data from the day's fieldwork around the three core areas of enquiry. This makes it easier to draw main conclusions and reduces the risk of losing or misplacing critical information. It is vital that all team members contribute actively and probe one another to sharpen findings. The team leader leads the discussion and documents all information during debriefs, using a template organized by question area, while noting details, such as type of informant providing the information.

In each daily debrief, team members will also take some time to ask each other the following questions:

- What went well, and why?
- What didn't work so well, and why?
- What information needs further probing/exploring – and how best to do that? With whom and with which tools?
- What can we do differently tomorrow?
- How can we adapt the tools and plans to best capture important issues?

The daily debriefs will feed directly into a full team brainstorming synthesis session after fieldwork in each region/district to consolidate and synthesize all the findings from the previous days of fieldwork, ultimately serving as the core skeleton of the final report.

### STEP 4 COMMUNITY, DISTRICT AND NATIONAL-LEVEL FEEDBACK SESSIONS

As part of an ethical approach to data collection, and to validate findings and preliminary conclusions, it is recommended to conduct a feedback session with government members, civil society stakeholders and community members at national and decentralized levels at the end of the data collection period. This should be based on the findings and preliminary analysis and synthesis of data and should be designed to stimulate discussion. This not only reduces the "extractive" nature of the data collection by ensuring that respondents are informed of the initial analysis but also enables them to comment on and validate or correct the analysis. This is a key step in data collection and should not be compromised.

## 3.2 TRAINING AND PILOTING

This section proposes a training agenda for the team that will collect data in the field. The final training agenda should be adapted to individual country contexts, the scope of the analysis, and the experience and skill of the team.

### INTRODUCTION TO STUDY OBJECTIVES AND DESIGN

Before the fieldwork, the team will undergo a 3-5 day training workshop (inclusive of the pilot) to prepare for the fieldwork. The training should focus on the assessment objectives (e.g. key concepts underpinning the study, core areas of enquiry and questions), the principles of qualitative data collection, the methodological approach and tools, the roadmap and a simulation through pilot and debriefing.

The team will be briefed about the overall context and background of the country where fieldwork is taking place. The briefing should address issues such as food security and rural poverty and vulnerability dynamics, national development and sectoral policies and strategies, and key agriculture and social protection programmes in operation, as well as emerging sectoral issues of relevance. Guest speakers from the most relevant programmes are strongly encouraged.

The team will then be introduced to the objectives of the analysis, to key terms and concepts related to coherence and synergies between agriculture and social protection and to the three core areas of enquiry: understanding policies and programmes; enabling environment for coherence; and programme performance and beneficiary experience. An overview of the key sectoral policies and programmes being assessed will be presented, including progress to date, any challenges and constraints faced in implementation, and results. It is important that the team be familiar with the methodology and core questions and tools to reduce the risk of relying excessively on the question guides.

### INTRODUCTION TO METHODS AND PARTICIPATORY TOOLS

The team will then be introduced to the two main qualitative methods to be used – the KIIs and the FGDs – with brief discussions held around how these methods complement each other. Team members should also be introduced to the participatory tools in cases where these are used during the FGDs, as well as in-depth interviews with programme beneficiaries. The training of the team on the tools will build on team members' previous experiences of using these tools.

### INTRODUCTION TO FIELDWORK ROADMAP

The team should be presented with the roadmap for fieldwork. This will outline the sequence of the entire data collection process, starting at national level and in the selected communities, as well as the daily team debriefing activities, in which the team collectively reflects on and discusses emerging findings and analysis from the day's fieldwork. Preliminary fieldwork roadmap elements are presented in section 3.1.

In addition to the above, a discussion will be held with the team about the procedure for negotiating community entry, obtaining consent, eliciting beneficiary lists, respect and confidentiality, and the importance of stressing the research team's independence. The fieldwork protocol guidelines are outlined in section 3.3.

## PILOTING AND RE-ADJUSTMENT OF THE METHODOLOGY AND QUESTION GUIDE

The training workshop allows the research team to pilot and further fine-tune the methodology and research tools before the analysis is conducted. A pilot provides the opportunity to practice and further reflect on the research process, analytical framework and methodology, including KIIs and FGDs and facilitation. The pilot will also give the team first-hand experience of some of the logistical challenges to be expected in the field. It is vital that the debriefing session be simulated during this pilot. The pilot should be conducted in similar conditions to the actual roadmap: two subteams should work simultaneously to cover the sections of the guide relevant to the level of analysis during the pilot (for example, the community level).

The pilot day will then be reviewed and discussed. The team leader will work with other team members to address any outstanding issues and elicit suggestions to improve the research guides and the overall field implementation process. At the end of the training, the question guide will be adapted to reflect country and policy and programme context, with insights from local researchers during the training and following the pilot day.

### 3.3 FIELDWORK PROTOCOL

This section sets out some general principles of fieldwork. Much of this is obvious, but it is very important to ensure that research conducted is both ethical and accurate.

#### GENERAL CONDUCT AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Key practical and ethical considerations in carrying out research with communities include the following:

- Community members and research participants must not feel offended or demeaned by anything researchers do, say or ask, or by their behaviour in the community.
- Expectations of community members and research participants must not be raised by anything researchers do or say during the fieldwork.
- Potential respondents must also feel under no explicit or implicit pressure to participate, either from the research team or from those researchers asked to help them gather participants (such as village heads, community elders or leaders). The research will be more accurate if participants see no reason or pressure to adjust their responses in a particular way and if they feel comfortable during the interview.
- Recognize that participants are possibly vulnerable and ensure that the exercise is carried out with full respect – power differentials will exist between community members and researchers and these need to be purposefully mitigated in planning and implementation.
- Ensure the safety and protection of participants – this means ensuring that the environment is physically safe, that there are at least two facilitators present at all times and, if possible, that a local stakeholder group is involved in monitoring activities. Facilitators should also be supervised.

- Ensure that people understand what is happening at all times. Is appropriate communication being used (language, dialect, community terminology, etc.)? This needs to be carefully planned.
- Ensure the right to privacy – this includes ensuring anonymity and confidentiality in record-keeping and report-writing and making sure participants understand that what they do and say in the group session will remain anonymous. In addition, respondents should be made to feel at ease and encouraged to ask questions of the researchers.

### MAIN THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN CONDUCTING FGDs WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND BENEFICIARIES

- Begin by introducing yourself and explaining carefully and clearly the subject and objectives of the discussion. Check that the participants understand and feel comfortable with what is going to be discussed (see Box 4).
- Ensure that permission is sought for the focus groups to go ahead, through initial consultation with the local community and village leaders.
- Make respondents aware that the research team is independent, with no direct associations with implementing agents and village elites.
- Set and communicate clear parameters for the research methods (e.g. FGDs, in-depth interviews) – this means clearly stating the purpose, the limits and what the follow-up will entail. It also means ensuring that demands on participants' time are not excessive (maximum 1.5-2 hours, for instance) and that they are aware of their right to not participate or to withdraw at any time.
- Set up FGDs and interviews at times and in places which are convenient for respondents (e.g. after labours hours).

#### BOX 4

##### STANDARD INTRODUCTION AND INFORMED CONSENT

- Introduce the team.
- Provide overview of the specific aims of the work in that country and how it includes wishing to speak with the interviewee, among others.
- Explain that if participants wish to remain anonymous for whatever reason, they can inform the team at any stage during the interview and the team will ensure that no reference is made to information that could be used to identify them, such as their name or specific position, and that an alternative way of identifying them in any future reports can be found.
- Explain that before all interviews you will confirm that participants are willing to take part in the research.
- Ask the participants to introduce themselves.
- Ask if they have any questions before the interview starts.

## GENERAL TIPS ON CONDUCTING FGDs

- **Use the question guides supplied to provide an overall direction for the discussion:** These guides provide the topics and issues that should be covered at some time in the discussion with each particular focus group but they are not tightly structured and do not suggest potential responses. Although each topic needs to be covered during the fieldwork, the guides are not like a survey instrument that is strictly followed in order. Follow the question sequence, but also reflect on items that need to be answered, and try to proceed logically from topic to topic. If another topic comes up in the discussion, you may decide to explore it then and not later, or ask the participants if you can talk about it later.
- **Questions should be open-ended (as much as possible), short and clear; avoid leading questions:** When possible, it is sensible to include the most important questions earlier in the discussion. Give the participants enough time and opportunity to talk about their opinions and experiences. Probing is essential – probe for additional information and accuracy where necessary. Probe for cases – examples are critical for collecting data; actual stories constitute findings. Questioning should be used in conjunction with tools to help probe into issues and triangulate when useful and appropriate.
- **Try to keep the discussion focused on the subject, but allow the participants to lead the discussion in new directions if they arise and are relevant to the subject:** This may highlight new information that can be incorporated into question guides for future focus groups. When the discussion comes to a natural end, ask whether there is anything else that the participants wish to discuss or if they have questions for the team. Check again that the participants know what the information will be used for. Thank them for their time and effort.
- **Review the guide after the discussion and make any changes to content or order that will improve it:** Any changes proposed by researchers should be discussed with the wider team during debriefing sessions.

### 3.4 RECORDING AND ANALYSING QUALITATIVE INFORMATION

This section offers you some tips on how to record and analyse data and document findings.

#### RECORDING DATA – DEBRIEFINGS FROM FGDs AND KIIs

All KIIs and FGDs should be documented by taking comprehensive notes and accurately recording the diagrams produced by participants, using digital photographs if appropriate. Outputs from the FGDs for use in analysis will include specific products from group activities (maps, drawings, etc.) as well as notes of the discussions.

The comprehensive debriefing sessions in this proposed methodology serve as the data collection repository and transcript. This explains the importance of the debriefing sessions – their main purpose being to bring out the principal findings of the day, review stories and information and identify trends. It is essential that all team members participate actively in the debriefing sessions and probe one another for accuracy, clarification, examples, etc. As an alternative, an MP3 recorder may be used to record the actual discussions, but the participants must give prior

consent for it to be used. This can provide a back-up to the written notes, which are the main record of discussions and interviews. In both cases, the note-taker should note down discussion among the participants as they speak, using the words they use and noting occasions when participants disagree or when one participant's opinion is particularly strong. When possible, the notes should include any thoughts on why differences are emerging (often a reflection of the personal experiences, aspirations and world views of the different participants). The notes should record the discussions taking place within the group and why the group came to a decision, answer or agreement.

Direct quotations and examples should be recorded where they illustrate or clearly express an important point. Researchers should always probe for examples where necessary.

Some standard information needs to be collected and recorded at each discussion or interview. This information should be recorded for all discussions and interviews, all maps, timelines or diagrams that are produced and all notes taken during discussions and interviews, using the notation forms provided. The standard information that must be recorded includes:

- location – e.g. region, district, community/village
- date
- type of method (FGD or KII)
- time started/time finished
- if used, micro-recorder file number/code (on paper notes only)
- type or main characteristics of FGD members or informants in terms of profile/status (e.g. male beneficiaries, elders, community leaders)
- respondent(s) information, depending on type of respondent (e.g. name, position or livelihood, age, gender, female- or male-headed household, education level)
- any other important general observations

## ANALYSING THE DATA COLLECTED

Once the data have all been compiled, there are various possible methods for analysing and writing up the information. Two options are presented below, one based largely on debriefings and another based more on reviewing transcripts and field notes. These two options are not mutually exclusive and can even be combined.

- **Building the story through debriefs:** In this method, daily debriefs serve as the first step for “building the story” and analysis (also see 3.1). These should then feed directly into a full-day brainstorming session attended by all research team members after completing fieldwork to systematically analyse, consolidate and synthesize the findings from the previous days of fieldwork. Based on field notes and this synthesis, the team leader can begin to compile the document. By means of a prepared template listing each main hypothesis/area of enquiry and each question area, the team leader structures findings from all KIIs and FGDs, as reported by the research team during the

debriefs and synthesis day, into group findings, evidence (e.g. examples, stories) and quotes around each investigation area to identify trends, patterns and contradictions. By the end of the fieldwork, a preliminary conclusion or “take-home point” for each question area should be reached, backed by clear and concrete evidence from the KIIs and FGDs. In this manner, the structure and conclusions of the report are shaped, and the remaining writing is essentially filling in data. For this approach, transcripts as such are not provided by the research team, as all information has been shared and documented during the intensive daily debriefs and synthesis exercise. However, if in addition, the team leader prefers to collect the field notebooks of the team members, this can be easily accommodated.

- **Building the story by reviewing transcripts and field notes:** In this method, transcripts are used as the basis of report writing. All transcripts should be labelled and filed logically with identifying “tags”. Ideally the team that has conducted the interview should also be the one that transcribes and provides a coding and overview of the data. One method is to: i) read through the transcripts relatively quickly, making a list of key themes, divergences in opinions that emerge (for instance, across administrative levels, regions or between men and women); ii) collectively decide on a list of key themes; and iii) go back through the transcripts, this time using a system (either sticky notes or colour-coded themes) that can highlight relevant text and pertinent quotations. An alternative route is to use a qualitative software package, such as NVIVO, that enables the third stage of this process to be electronically coded using the same code list emerging from the initial review. The software permits systematic data analysis across different strata and categories through the construction of different kinds of searches. If software is used then the users will need to be trained for at least one day as part of this exercise. The data, whether manually or electronically coded, will then be used as the basis for reporting.

After coding the qualitative data collected in field, the whole team (led by an experienced team leader) will work on the analysis and identification of lessons learned.

The following are some guidelines for analysing data:

- Look for and report general trends in the data. However, where there are significant divergences from the generally held view, report them as such.
- Try to report the information as neutrally as possible, letting the data speak for itself and using as many specific examples and direct, relevant quotations as possible.
- Look for divergent trends and opinions between population groups (e.g. male/female, regions, levels of administration, beneficiaries, programme implementers) and report on these where they are substantial. If exceptional, yet pertinent, views are voiced, indicate what percent of respondents gave this view.

In both scenarios above, an external reviewer should be brought in to review the report.



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# INTERVIEW GUIDES

This section presents a proposed set of interview guides for collecting information in the field.

The guide consists of a series of questions for Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), which are tailored to the different types of respondents at national, district and community level, and organized around the core areas of enquiry.

(Section adapted from: Slater, R., Ulrichs, M., Harman, L. & Wiggins, S. 2016a. Coherence between agriculture and social protection: Methods notes. Rome, FAO).



## NATIONAL LEVEL

- N1: Government officials working on agricultural policy at the national level (1-2 KIIs)
- N2: Government officials working on social protection policy at the national level (1-2 KIIs)
- N3: Government officials working on agricultural sector programmes at the national level (1-2 KIIs)
- N4: Government officials working on social protection programmes at the national level (1-2 KIIs)
- N5: Donors or NGOs working on policies or programmes related to agriculture or social protection (1-2 KIIs and/or FGD)



## DISTRICT LEVEL

- D1: Government officials working on overarching policy at the district level (1-2 KIIs)
- D2: Government officials working on programmes in the agriculture sector at the district level (1-2 KIIs)
- D3: Government officials working on social protection programmes at the district level (1-2 KIIs)
- D4: Donors or NGOs working on policies or programmes related to agriculture or social protection at the district level (1-2 KIIs and/or FGD)



## COMMUNITY LEVEL

- C1: Village-level committees responsible for delivery of agriculture and social protection programme(s) (1-2 KIIs)
- C2: Village leaders (1-2 KIIs and/or FGD)
- C3: Programme beneficiaries

**The proposed number of interviews is a minimum set that can be expanded given sufficient time and resources. The proposed interview questions are to serve as guidance only – the final field guides and templates should be prepared by the research team and adapted to country context.**



## GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WORKING ON AGRICULTURAL POLICY AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

### *Notes to interviewer*

*When discussing policies and programmes, ask the interviewee to prioritize two or three main relevant ones for purposes of this study and focus the questions on these. Priority should be given to agricultural or agriculture-related policies that are relevant to smallholders and that have: i) the highest profile (in terms of the agricultural sector); and/or ii) the highest reach/coverage.*

#### THEMATIC AREA: UNDERSTANDING THE PROGRAMMES

1. In your view, what are the key challenges in rural areas of [name of country]? For example, what are the dimensions of poverty and food insecurity and how have they been changing? (how much, where, for whom?)
2. Can you provide an overview of the two or three main government policies that support agricultural and rural development to reduce rural poverty and food insecurity and malnutrition? What are the main aims and objectives of policies in the agriculture sector? What is the intended pathway for change; how will objectives be reached? What types of agricultural households are targeted by these different policies? What is the rationale behind this targeting approach?
3. Has social protection been incorporated in or had any effect on the policies you have described? If so, how (probe: explicitly/informally, in what way programmatically, etc.)?
4. How well do you think agricultural policies are coordinated or linked with social protection policies in [name of country]?
5. Do you think agricultural and social protection policies should be more coherent? If yes, why and how? If no, why not?
6. Can you identify any ways in which key agricultural and social protection policies are linked (i.e. joint, coordinated or aligned)? If so:
  - What are the characteristics of these links (e.g. synergistic/complementary)?
  - How are they concretely linked (e.g. do policies share objectives, goals, activities, actors, procedures, target groups)?
  - Are there potential/existing conflicts between policies? If so, please explain. How can these be addressed?
7. Is there an opportunity to further strengthen links between policies? For what purpose/objectives would this be done – and between which policies? How can this be achieved in practice? What are the constraints and challenges to pursuing this opportunity?

#### THEMATIC AREA: ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

8. Can you identify any policy champions driving the “coherence agenda” (i.e. stronger synergies between agriculture and social protection) (probe with regard to: government, development partners, civil society, poor households/this interest group)?
9. How much political support exists for stronger synergies between agriculture and social protection? In your opinion, what factors drive this support (probe on: political/financial incentives, capacity, external leverage or “pressure”)? Are there any obstacles? How can they best be overcome?
10. What kind of analysis/evidence would be useful to build commitment and momentum for coherence (probe on: impact evaluations of the added value of integrating agriculture and social protection instruments, practical knowledge about “what works” and how to pursue complementarities in practice)? What would be useful for policy formulation and design?
11. Is there a platform that brings stakeholders together to plan and formulate joint policies and programmes (i.e. ensuring they are aligned, synergistic and not contradictory)? Are development partners and donors part of this process? (Or are there attempts to establish an integrated policy planning process?)
12. What are the main sources of financing for agricultural sector programmes? Has the share of budget to agriculture been increasing/remaining the same/decreasing over time? How do you explain this trend? What are the impacts?
13. Can you describe any medium to long-term investment plans that exist in this sector? Are these plans coordinated through SWAPs or other instruments? Is this sector financed independently from other sectors, or are there pooled funding arrangements that cross sectors? Please explain this.
14. Do financing arrangements affect coordination – for instance, if the main source of financing for social protection is provided by donors, yet financial support for agriculture is provided by the government, what are the implications for coordination?
15. Do you think you have adequate personnel to cope with demands to implement the agricultural policies and vision? Please explain why or why not. If you feel you do not have enough capacity, explain what more is needed. What do you think is the level of understanding and general view of personnel towards coherence between agricultural policies and those of social protection?

#### THEMATIC AREA: PROGRAMME EFFICIENCY AND BENEFICIARY EXPERIENCE

16. In your opinion, how well is [name of programme] performing? Is it achieving the expected outcomes? Please explain in detail. Repeat this question for the two or three main programmes identified.
17. In your view, how can outcomes be improved (probe with regard to stronger linkages/coordination with social protection)?
18. Do you have any evaluations or other documents that you might be able to share that summarize the performance of policies?



## GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WORKING ON SOCIAL PROTECTION POLICY AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

### *Notes to interviewer*

*When discussing policies and programmes, ask the interviewee to prioritize two or three main relevant ones for purposes of this study and focus the questions on these. Priority should be given to social protection policies that have either: i) the highest profile (in terms of the social protection sector); and/or ii) the highest reach/coverage.*

#### THEMATIC AREA: UNDERSTANDING THE PROGRAMMES

1. In your view, what are the main poverty and development challenges in rural areas of [name of country]? For example, tell us about the dimensions of poverty and how these are changing.
2. What are the main government policies to reduce rural poverty and hunger? Where does social protection fit into these broader policies?
3. What is the overarching strategy for social protection in [name of country]? What are the main objectives and activities/schemes for social protection? What is the logic behind them? What types of groups are targeted by these schemes (e.g. extremely or moderately poor, labour-constrained or able-bodied, having social/lifecycle/spatial/environmental vulnerabilities, etc.)?
4. How much political support does social protection have? (Please provide examples). Is there strong support for the goals of social protection (and ways of achieving them) or are they disputed? Is there significant competition between policies or sectors for resources?
5. How is social protection supported? Which agency delivers it? Is it sitting in the best place? Is this disputed?
6. How much can those implementing social protection on the ground adapt policy? Is the policy implemented uniformly across the whole country or is it adapted to different contexts?
7. In your view, is smallholder agricultural development part of the social protection policy agenda in any way? Please explain.
8. Can you identify any ways in which key agriculture and social protection policies are linked (i.e. joint/coordinated/aligned) and what brought this about? If so:
  - What are the characteristics of these links (e.g. synergistic/complementary)?
  - How are they concretely linked (e.g. do policies share objectives, goals, activities, actors, procedures, target groups)?
  - Are there potential/existing conflicts between policies? If so, please explain. How can these be addressed?
9. Is there an opportunity to further strengthen links between policies? For what purpose or objectives would this be done –and between which policies? How can this be achieved in practice?
10. What are the challenges to intersectoral policy coordination?

## THEMATIC AREA: ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

11. Can you identify any policy champions driving the “coherence agenda” (probe with regard to: government, development partners, civil society, poor households, smallholder interest groups)?
12. How much political support exists for stronger linkages between agriculture and social protection? In your opinion, what factors drive or limit this support (probe on: political/ financial incentives, capacity, external leverage or pressure)?
13. What kind of analysis/evidence would be useful to build commitment and momentum for coherence (probe on: impact evaluations on the added value of integrating agriculture and social protection instruments, practical knowledge about “what works” and how to pursue complementarities in practice)? What would be useful for policy formulation and design?
14. Is there a platform that brings stakeholders together to plan and formulate joint policies and programmes (i.e ensuring they are aligned, synergistic and not contradictory)? Are development partners and donors part of this process? If it does not exist, are there attempts to establish an integrated policy planning process?
15. What are the main sources of financing for social protection sector programmes? Has the share of budget for social protection been increasing/staying the same/decreasing over time? How do you explain this trend? What are the impacts?
16. Can you describe any medium to long-term investment plans that exist in this sector? Are these plans coordinated through SWAPs or other instruments? Is this sector financed independently from other sectors, or are there pooled funding arrangements that cross sectors? Please explain this.
17. Do financing arrangements affect coordination – for instance, if the main source of financing for social protection is provided by donors, yet financial support for agriculture is provided by the government, what are the implications for coordination?
18. What incentives are in place to foster coordination between agriculture and social protection?
19. Do you think you have adequate personnel to cope with demands to implement the agricultural policies and vision? Please explain why or why not. If you feel you do not have enough capacity, explain what more is needed. What do you think is the level of understanding and general view of personnel towards coherence between agricultural policies and those of social protection?

## THEMATIC AREA: PROGRAMME EFFICIENCY AND BENEFICIARY EXPERIENCE

20. In your opinion, how well is [name of policy/programme] performing? Is it achieving the expected outcomes? Please explain in detail.
21. In your view, how can outcomes be improved (probe with regard to stronger linkages/ coordination with social protection)?
22. Do you have any evaluations or other documents that you might be able to share that summarize the performance of policies?



## GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WORKING ON AGRICULTURAL SECTOR PROGRAMMES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

### *Notes to interviewer*

*When discussing programmes, ask the interviewee to prioritize one or two main ones of relevance for this study and focus the questions on these. Priority should be given to agricultural, or agriculture-related, programmes that are relevant to smallholders and that have: i) the highest profile (in terms of the agricultural sector); and/or ii) the highest reach/coverage.*

#### THEMATIC AREA: UNDERSTANDING THE PROGRAMMES

1. Can you tell us about the main one or two programmes that you are managing?  
Probe with regard to:
  - name
  - duration (start/end date)
  - aims and objectives
  - key activities
  - target groups and location
  - implementing department/agency
  - budget
  - coverage
2. Is [name of programme] in any way connected with other concurrent agriculture/social protection interventions? Which ones?
3. How is [name of programme] connected/linked to [name of programme] (probe first practically: do programmes share objectives, goals, activities, actors, procedures, target groups)?
4. To your knowledge, how are linkages concretely promoted (probe: intentionally through design/delivery or implicitly)? At what level (national or decentralized) is this being promoted? Which actors are promoting linkages? What challenges are faced in linking programmes (e.g. timing, reliability, capacity, lack of commitment)?
5. If programmes are directly/explicitly linked, how is this implemented (e.g. are programmes bundled together in any way? Are they sequenced?) For what reasons/objectives are synergies promoted? Please explain.
6. How do specific design features of [name of programme] affect synergies between agriculture and social protection in any way (positively or negatively)? Please explain your response. Probe on:
  - types of benefits
  - size of benefits
  - seasonality and timing of benefits/services
  - particular way of bundling interventions/programmes
  - targeting
  - messaging

#### THEMATIC AREA: ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

7. Is there a platform that brings stakeholders together to plan a more synergistic approach to programming (i.e. ensuring they are aligned, synergistic and not contradictory)? Explain. Are development partners and donors part of this process? If it does not exist, are there attempts to establish an integrated planning process?
8. During the programme design stage of [name of programme], what scope or incentives were there (if any) for the relevant stakeholders to consider explicitly the issue of coherence with other potentially overlapping programmes from different sectors? (If they weren't present for this stage, probe regarding their views in general.)
9. Do you think you have adequate personnel to cope with the demands to implement this programme? Please explain why or why not. If you feel you do not have enough capacity, explain what more is needed.
10. What other human capacity gaps do you think exist in your sector/programme, and how would you suggest that these gaps be filled?
11. For the staff you currently have available, is appropriate training and support provided regularly? What types of training have been provided in the last two years? What types of training and support are lacking and how would provision of this training enable better delivery of the programme, and in particular, programming linked between social protection and agriculture? What do you think is the level of understanding and general view of your staff towards coherence between agricultural programmes and those of social protection?

#### THEMATIC AREA: PROGRAMME EFFICIENCY AND BENEFICIARY EXPERIENCE

12. To what extent is [name of programme] achieving its intended objectives? What are the main outcomes? Are beneficiaries receiving the expected benefits/services? What are the main challenges in achieving outcomes? How can these be addressed?
13. Are the outputs of the programme contributing to the intended programme goals? If not, why not?
14. What aspects of the [name of policy/programme] performance result from (or are dependent upon) coordination or linkages with other programmes? What about those in social protection specifically?



## GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WORKING ON SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

### *Notes to interviewer*

*When discussing programmes, ask the interviewee to prioritize one or two main ones of relevance for this study and focus the questions on these. Priority should be given to social protection programmes that have either: i) the highest profile (in terms of the social protection sector); and/or ii) the highest reach/coverage.*

### THEMATIC AREA: UNDERSTANDING THE PROGRAMMES

1. Can you tell us about the programme that you are managing? Probe with regard to:
  - name
  - duration (start/end date)
  - aims and objectives
  - key activities
  - target groups and location
  - implementing department/agency
  - budget
  - coverage
2. Is [name of programme] in any way connected with other concurrent agriculture/social protection interventions? Which ones?
3. How is [name of programme] connected/linked to [name of programme] (probe first practically: do programmes share objectives, goals, activities, actors, procedures, target groups)?
4. To your knowledge, how are linkages concretely promoted (probe: intentionally through design/delivery or implicitly)? At what level (national or decentralized) is this being promoted? Which actors are promoting linkages? What challenges are faced in linking programmes (e.g. timing, reliability, capacity, lack of commitment)?
5. If they are directly/explicitly linked, how is this implemented (e.g. are programmes bundled together in any way? Are they sequenced?) For what reasons/objectives are synergies promoted? Please explain.
6. How do specific design features of [name of programme] affect the social protection outcomes (positively or negatively)? Do they affect synergies between social protection and smallholder agricultural productivity in any way? Please explain your response. Probe on:
  - types of benefits
  - size of benefits
  - seasonality and timing of benefits/services
  - particular way of bundling interventions/programmes
  - targeting
  - messaging

7. Are you aware of any potential or actual conflicts/inconsistencies between [name of programme], with which you are involved, and concurrent agriculture/social protection interventions (probe on: objectives, activities, outcomes, etc.)? If so, how do they manifest? What are the impacts of this? What can be done to avoid/mediate such conflicts?

#### THEMATIC AREA: ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

8. Is there a platform that brings stakeholders together to plan a more synergistic approach to programming (i.e. ensuring they are aligned, synergistic and not contradictory)? Are development partners and donors part of this process? If it does not exist, are there attempts to establish an integrated planning process?
9. During the programme design stage of [name of programme], what scope or incentives were there (if any) for the relevant stakeholders to explicitly consider the issue of coherence with other potentially overlapping programmes from different sectors? (If they weren't present for that stage, probe regarding their views in general.)
10. What are the challenges to intersectoral programme coordination?
11. Do you think you have adequate personnel to cope with the demand to implement this programme? Please explain why or why not. If you feel you do not have enough capacity, explain what more is needed.
12. For the staff you currently have available, is appropriate training and support provided regularly? What types of training have been provided in the last two years? What types of training and support are lacking and how would provision of this training enable better delivery of the programme, and in particular, programming linked between social protection and agriculture? What do you think is the level of understanding and general view of your staff towards coherence between agricultural programmes and those of social protection?
13. What other human capacity gaps do you think exist in your sector/programme, and how would you suggest that these gaps be filled?

#### THEMATIC AREA: PROGRAMME EFFICIENCY AND BENEFICIARY EXPERIENCE

14. To what extent is [name of programme] achieving its intended objectives? What are the main outcomes? Are beneficiaries receiving the expected benefits/services? What are the main challenges in achieving outcomes? How can these be addressed?
15. What aspects of the [name of programme] performance result from (or are dependent upon) coordination or linkages with other programmes? What about those in agriculture specifically?



## DONORS OR NGOs WORKING ON POLICIES OR PROGRAMMES RELATED TO AGRICULTURE OR SOCIAL PROTECTION

### Notes to interviewer

When discussing programmes, ask the interviewee to prioritize one or two main ones of relevance for this study and focus the questions on these. Priority should be given to agricultural or social protection policies/programmes that are most relevant to smallholders and that have: i) the highest profile (in terms of the agricultural or social protection sectors); and/or ii) the highest reach/coverage.

#### THEMATIC AREA: UNDERSTANDING THE PROGRAMMES

1. What have been the main state/government strategies and initiatives to promote agricultural and rural development and to reduce rural poverty? How about from a social protection perspective in particular?
2. Can you identify any particular initiative that has taken place to bring about greater coherence between sectors, thinking at the national level, regional level, and district or community level?
  - What brought it about?
  - Who were the key players?
  - Were there any stumbling blocks? If so, what were they?

#### THEMATIC AREA: ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

3. During the programme design stage of [name of programme], what scope or incentives were there (if any) for the relevant stakeholders to explicitly consider the issue of coherence with other potentially overlapping programmes from different sectors? (If they weren't present for this stage, probe regarding their views in general.)
4. Thinking specifically about agriculture and social protection sectors, do you personally feel there is much interconnectedness between the aims of each sector here in [name of country] and what they are trying to achieve? If so, can you tell me a little more about that (e.g. are there any interdependencies between sectors in achieving particular outcomes? What about conflicts?)
5. What institutional arrangements exist at national level to foster collaboration and coordination across development partners in relation to agricultural and social protection policies and programmes? Do you think these are effective? How could they be made more effective at encouraging coherence across sectors?
6. What is your personal view in terms of how important it is to achieve coherence between activities across different sectors?
7. What view do you think different development partners take in terms of the goal of "achieving coherence" or "improving coordination" between sectors? What drives that view?

8. How do you feel greater coherence and coordination could be achieved in practice?
9. What are the main sources of financing for agricultural sector programmes? Has the share of budget to agriculture been increasing/staying the same/decreasing over time? How do you explain this trend? What have been the impacts of this? Is there any information of note in this respect regarding social protection?
10. Can you describe any medium to long-term investment plans that exist in the agricultural and/or social protection sectors? Are these plans coordinated through SWAPs or other instruments? Is this sector financed independently from other sectors, or are there pooled funding arrangements that cross sectors? Please explain this.
11. What do you perceive to be the main human capital capacity constraints facing the agriculture and social protection sectors, and in achieving coherence more specifically? How do you think these weaknesses can be addressed?

#### THEMATIC AREA: PROGRAMME EFFICIENCY AND BENEFICIARY EXPERIENCE

12. To what extent has [name of programme] been achieving its expected outputs in the field? Are beneficiaries receiving the expected services? What problems have arisen?
13. What aspects of the programme's performance result from (or are dependent upon) coordination or linkages with other programmes? How about those in social protection specifically?



## GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WORKING ON OVERARCHING POLICY AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL

#### THEMATIC AREA: UNDERSTANDING THE PROGRAMMES

1. What are the main challenges in [name of district]? Are they similar to other parts of the country? Are they particularly different?
2. What are the main strategies/policies/programmes for agriculture and social protection in the district? What are they trying to achieve? Who are they targeting? Describe their levels of performance (e.g. are they operating adequately, meeting their targets, creating impacts?)
3. How far are these policies (and the programmes through which they are implemented) decided/designed at national level and how much can leaders and staff at district level influence design or decision-making (e.g. varying activities to suit local circumstances)? Which ministries, departments or offices implement/disseminate information on policies at district level? What is the content and profile of their technical staff?
4. How much political support do you see for agriculture programmes – nationally and at district level?

5. How much political support do you see for social protection – nationally and at district level?
6. Are any of the policies contested or not supported? Explain.
7. In your view, is smallholder agricultural development part of the social protection policy agenda in any way (and vice versa)? Please explain.
8. Can you identify ways in which key agriculture and social protection policies are linked (probe with regard to conceptual and practical linkages (e.g. joint/coordinated/aligned)? If so:
  - What are the characteristics of these links (synergistic/complementary)?
  - Are there potential/existing conflicts between policies? If so, please explain. How can these be addressed?
9. How well do you think social protection policies are coordinated/linked with agricultural policies/programmes in [name of country]?
10. Is there an opportunity to further strengthen links between policies? For what purpose or objectives would this be done – and between which policies? How can this be achieved in practice?

#### THEMATIC AREA: ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

11. How much political support exists for stronger linkages between agriculture and social protection at district level? In your opinion, what factors drive/limit this support (probe: degree of decentralized decision-making power, political/financial incentives, capacity, external leverage or pressure)?
12. Is there an intersectoral platform that brings different district departments together to plan the coordination of policies and programmes (i.e. ensuring they are aligned, synergistic and not contradictory)? Are development partners, donors and NGOs part of this process? What about local community actors (e.g. village leaders)? If such a platform does not exist, are there attempts to establish an integrated policy and programme planning process?
13. Are there any incentives in place to foster coordination between agriculture and social protection? Describe these. What is missing?
14. What are the challenges to achieving intersectoral policy coordination?
15. What types of analysis/evidence would be useful to build commitment and momentum for coherence (probe on: impact evaluations on the added value of integrating agriculture and social protection instruments, practical knowledge about “what works” and how to pursue complementarities in practice, policy formulation/design)?

#### THEMATIC AREA: PROGRAMME EFFICIENCY AND BENEFICIARY EXPERIENCE

16. How well do the programmes perform – those operating independently and those that are more coordinated? Why?
17. Do the policies and programmes (e.g. activities) in agriculture and in social protection complement, align or conflict with one another? Or are they largely separate from one another? Explain (give examples). What are your views of this situation and how might it be improved?



## GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WORKING ON PROGRAMMES IN THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL

### THEMATIC AREA: UNDERSTANDING THE PROGRAMMES

1. What are the main challenges in [name of district]? Are they similar to other parts of the country? Are they particularly different?
2. What are the main strategies/policies/programmes for agriculture and social protection in the district? What are their objectives? Who are they targeting?
3. Can you tell us about the two or three main programmes that you are managing? Probe with regard to:

Programme	Who (clients/targeting)	Where (geographical area foci)	What (activities, services delivered, transfers provided)	How and by whom (what agencies are involved, main implementation features)

4. Is [name of programme] in any way connected with other concurrent social protection interventions? Which ones?
5. How is [name of programme] connected/linked to social protection programmes (probe first practically: do programmes share goals, objectives, activities, actors, procedures, target groups)?
6. To your knowledge, how are linkages concretely promoted (probe: intentionally through design/delivery or implicitly)? At what level (i.e. national or decentralized) is this being promoted? Which actors are promoting linkages? What challenges are faced in linking programmes (e.g. timing, reliability, capacity, lack of commitment)?
7. Are you aware of any potential or actual conflicts/inconsistencies between [name of programme] and social protection programmes (probe on: objectives, activities, outcomes, etc.)? If yes, how are these manifested? What are the impacts? What can be done to avoid/mediate such conflicts?
8. Are there clearly defined targeting criteria to identify and select beneficiaries? Probe on:
  - what targeting criteria are used
  - who defines the criteria
  - who implements them
  - whether targeting in practice reflects design
9. Are [name of programme] beneficiaries participating in any other programme or entitled to receive other benefits? If so, which ones (probe with regard to relevant agriculture/social protection interventions)? If not, why is that the case?

10. Should these programmes target the same groups/populations or different ones, and why? Should they target the same households simultaneously or sequentially? Do targeting approaches need to be adjusted to ensure greater coherence and complementarities between programmes? If yes, what would this entail?
11. Broadly, how are these programmes implemented? Probe with regard to:
  - timing
  - predictability and regularity
  - coordination
  - implementing actors across government tiers
  - formal/informal implementation processes
  - budget mechanisms, planning and delivery (e.g. existing mechanisms and scope for alignment)
  - grievance mechanisms
12. Are there discrepancies between design and the way activities are actually implemented in reality? Why?
13. To what degree can leaders and staff at regional and district level adapt programme activities to suit local circumstances? If it is possible, how is it done?

#### THEMATIC AREA: ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

14. Is there a platform that brings stakeholders together to plan a more synergistic approach to programming (i.e. ensuring they are aligned, synergistic and not contradictory)? Are development partners and donors part of this process? If it does not exist, are there attempts to establish an integrated planning process?
15. During the programme design stage of [name of programme], what scope or incentives exist for the relevant stakeholders to explicitly consider the issue of coherence with other programmes from different sectors? If there are none, what are their views in general?
16. In your view, how important is it to coordinate agriculture with other policies? Explain.
17. How much coordination activity actually takes place? For example, is there sharing of goals, exchange of information, joint planning, joint work or collaborative work at district level? What are the challenges to intersectoral programme coordination?
18. Are there operational tools (e.g. single registry, management information system (MIS)) in place to foster collaboration and coordination between programmes and build synergies?
19. Do you think you have adequate personnel to cope with the demand to implement the agricultural programmes in this district? Please explain why or why not. If you feel you do not have enough capacity, explain what more is needed.
20. Is appropriate training and support provided regularly to available staff? What types of training have been provided in the last two years? What types of training and support are lacking and how would provision of this training enable better delivery of programmes and, in particular, linked programming between social protection and agriculture? What do you think is the level of understanding and general view of your staff towards coherence between agricultural policies and programmes and those of social protection?
21. What other human capacity gaps do you think exist in your sector, and how would you suggest that these gaps be filled?

22. How well do the agriculture programmes in this district perform in terms of supporting rural livelihoods and ensuring higher agricultural production?
23. Do the programmes (and activities) in agriculture and in social protection complement or conflict with one another? Or are they largely separate from one another? (Please give examples.)



### GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WORKING ON SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL

1. What are the main challenges in [name of district]? Are they similar to other parts of the country? Are they particularly different?
2. What are the main strategies/policies/programmes for agriculture and social protection in the district? What are their objectives? Who are they targeting?
3. Can you tell us about the two or three main programmes that you are managing? Probe with regard to:

Programme	Who (clients/targeting)	Where (geographical area foci)	What (activities, services delivered, transfers provided)	How and by whom (what agencies are involved, main implementation features)

4. Is [name of programme] in any way connected with other concurrent social protection interventions? Which ones?
5. How is [name of programme] connected/linked to agricultural programmes (probe first practically: do programmes share goals, objectives, activities, actors, procedures, target groups)?

6. To your knowledge, how are linkages concretely promoted (probe: intentionally through design/delivery or implicitly)? At what level (i.e. national or decentralized) is this being promoted? Which actors are promoting linkages? What challenges are faced in linking programmes (e.g. timing, reliability, capacity, lack of commitment)?
7. How much coordination activity actually takes place? For example, is there sharing of goals, exchange of information, joint planning, joint work or collaborative work at district level? What are the challenges to intersectoral programme coordination?
8. Are you aware of any potential or actual conflicts or inconsistencies between [name of programme] and agricultural programmes (probe on: objectives, activities, outcomes etc.)? If yes, how do they manifest? What are the impacts? What can be done to avoid/mediate such conflicts?
9. Are there clearly defined targeting criteria to identify and select beneficiaries? Probe on:
  - what targeting criteria are used
  - who defines the criteria
  - who implements them
  - whether targeting in practice reflects design
10. Are [name of programme] beneficiaries participating in any other programme/entitled to receive other benefits? If so, which ones (probe with regard to relevant agriculture/social protection interventions)? If not, why is that the case?
11. Should these programmes target the same groups/populations, and why? Should they target the same households simultaneously or sequentially? Do targeting approaches need to be adjusted to ensure greater coherence and complementarities between programmes? If yes, what would this entail?
12. Broadly speaking, how are these policies/programmes implemented? Probe with regard to:
  - timing
  - predictability and regularity
  - coordination
  - implementing actors across government tiers
  - formal/informal implementation processes
  - budget mechanisms, planning and delivery (e.g. existing mechanisms and scope for alignment)
  - grievance mechanisms
13. Are there discrepancies between design and the way activities are actually implemented in reality? Why?
14. To what degree can leaders and staff at regional and district level adapt programme activities to suit local circumstances? If it is possible, how is this done?

#### THEMATIC AREA: ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

15. Is there a platform that brings stakeholders together to plan a more synergistic approach to programming (i.e. ensuring they are aligned, synergistic and not contradictory)? Are development partners and donors part of this process? If it does not exist, are there attempts to establish an integrated planning process?
16. During the programme design stage of [name of programme], what scope or incentives were there for the relevant stakeholders to explicitly consider the issue of coherence with other potentially overlapping programmes from different sectors? If there were none, what are their views in general?
17. In your view, how important is it to coordinate social protection with other policies? Explain.
18. Are there operational tools (e.g. single registry, MIS) in place to foster collaboration and coordination between programmes and build synergies?
19. Do you think you have adequate personnel to cope with the demand to implement the agricultural programmes in this district? Please explain why or why not. If you feel you do not have enough capacity, explain what more is needed.
20. Is appropriate training and support provided regularly to available staff? What types of training have been provided in the last two years? What types of training and support are lacking and how would provision of this training enable better delivery of programme, and in particular, linked programming between social protection and agriculture? What do you think is the level of understanding and general view of your staff towards coherence between agricultural policies and those of social protection?
21. What other human capacity gaps do you think exist in your sector, and how would you suggest that these gaps be filled?

#### THEMATIC AREA: PROGRAMME EFFICIENCY AND BENEFICIARY EXPERIENCE

22. How well do the social protection programmes in this district perform in terms of protecting the poor against food deficits and also building their livelihoods?
23. Do the programmes (and activities) in agriculture and in social protection complement or conflict with one another? Or are they largely separate from one another? (Please give examples.)



## DONORS OR NGOs WORKING ON POLICIES OR PROGRAMMES RELATED TO AGRICULTURE OR SOCIAL PROTECTION AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL

### THEMATIC AREA: UNDERSTANDING THE PROGRAMMES

1. What are the main challenges in regard to agriculture and rural poverty in [name of district]? Are they similar to other parts of the country? Are they particularly different?
2. What are the main strategies/policies/programmes for agriculture and social protection in the district? What are they trying to achieve? Who are they targeting?
3. Can you tell us about the two or three main programme(s) that you are managing or supporting? Probe with regard to:

Programme	Who (clients/targeting)	Where (geographical area foci)	What (activities, services delivered, transfers provided)	How and by whom (what agencies are involved, main implementation features)

4. Are agricultural programmes in any way connected with other concurrent social protection interventions? Which ones?
5. How are agricultural programmes connected/linked to social protection programmes (probe first practically: do programmes share goals, objectives, activities, actors, procedures, target groups)?
6. To your knowledge, how are linkages concretely promoted (probe: intentionally through design/delivery or implicitly)? At what level (i.e. national or decentralized) is this being promoted? Which actors are promoting linkages? What challenges are faced in linking programmes (e.g. timing, reliability, capacity, lack of commitment)?
7. Are you aware of any potential or actual conflicts/inconsistencies between agricultural and social protection (probe on: objectives, activities, outcomes etc.)? If so, how do they manifest? What are the impacts? What can be done to avoid/mediate such conflicts?
8. Are there clearly defined targeting criteria to identify and select beneficiaries? Probe on:
  - what targeting criteria are used
  - who defines the criteria
  - who implements them
  - whether targeting in practice reflects design
9. Are [name of programme] beneficiaries participating in any other programme/entitled to receive other benefits? If so, which ones (probe with regard to relevant agriculture/social protection interventions)? If not, why is that the case?

10. Should these programmes target the same groups/populations, and why? Should they target the same households simultaneously or sequentially? Do targeting approaches need to be adjusted to ensure greater coherence and complementarities between programmes? If so, what would this entail?
11. Broadly speaking, how are these policies/programmes implemented? Probe with regard to:
  - timing
  - predictability and regularity
  - coordination
  - implementing actors across government tiers
  - formal/informal implementation processes
  - budget mechanisms, planning and delivery (e.g. existing mechanisms and scope for alignment)
  - grievance mechanisms
12. Are there operational tools (e.g. single registry, MIS,) in place to foster collaboration and coordination between programmes and build synergies?
13. Are there discrepancies between design and the way activities are actually implemented in reality? Why?
14. To what degree can leaders and staff at regional and district level adapt programme activities to suit local circumstances? If this is possible, how is this done?

#### THEMATIC AREA: ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

15. Is there a platform that brings stakeholders together to plan a more synergistic approach to programming (i.e. ensuring they are aligned, synergistic and not contradictory)? Are development partners and donors part of this process? If such a platform does not exist, are there attempts to establish an integrated planning process?
16. During the programme design stage of [name of programme], what scope or incentives were there for the relevant stakeholders to explicitly consider the issue of coherence with other potentially overlapping programmes from different sectors? (If there were no such incentives, what are their views in general?)
17. In your view, how important is it to coordinate social protection and agricultural policies? Explain.
18. How much coordination activity actually takes place? For example, is there sharing of goals, exchange of information, joint planning, joint work or collaborative work at district level? What are the challenges to intersectoral programme coordination?
19. What institutional arrangements exist at the district level to foster collaboration and coordination across development partners in relation to agricultural and social protection programmes? Do you think these are effective? How could they be made more effective at encouraging coherence across sectors?
20. What do you perceive to be the main human capital capacity constraints facing the agriculture and social protection sector? How do you think these problems can be addressed? What do you think is the level of understanding and general view of staff in development partner agencies towards coherence between agricultural policies and those of social protection?

## THEMATIC AREA: PROGRAMME EFFICIENCY AND BENEFICIARY EXPERIENCE

21. How well do the agricultural and social protection programmes in this district perform?
22. Do the programmes (and activities) in agriculture and in social protection complement or conflict with one another? Or are they largely separate from one another? (Please give examples.)



### VILLAGE-LEVEL COMMITTEES RESPONSIBLE FOR DELIVERY OF AGRICULTURE AND SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMME(S)

#### THEMATIC AREA: UNDERSTANDING THE PROGRAMMES

1. What are the main challenges for households in [name of village/community] in terms of earning/accessing enough income to support their livelihoods?
2. What are the two main agricultural and social protection programmes being implemented in this village/community?
  - target groups
  - type of benefits
  - size of benefits
  - number and regularity of transfers
  - timing of transfers, including issues of seasonality
  - messaging (nature and delivery of communication channels)
  - layering vs sequencing of benefits/programmes
  - existence of referral systems across programmes
  - graduation and exit strategies
3. Describe your main roles and tasks. Does this work include any issues/activities involving coordination or harmonization among programmes? If so, explain: how? to what extent? Are there multiple committees – one for each separate programme – or only one? What is the impact of this situation? What is your view on this?
4. Who is in charge of the programmes at district level? How do they support you in fulfilling your roles and implementing your main tasks?
5. To what degree are the programmes you are involved in decided by national level or district leaders and how much can you adapt or change them to work more effectively in your village?
6. Are the programmes contested or not supported? Explain.
7. Are you aware of any potential or actual conflicts/inconsistencies between [name of programme] and [name of programme] (probe on: objectives, activities, outcomes, etc.)? If so, how are they manifested? What are the impacts of this? What can be done to avoid/mediate such conflicts?

8. Do you as a committee have any role in that process? Explain. (If not, should you? Explain.)
9. What is your view concerning linked programmes? For example, are programmes best implemented separately or coordinated? Explain. Can you offer examples to illustrate your views?
10. With respect to the two main programmes identified earlier are [name of programme] beneficiaries participating in any other programme or entitled to receive other benefits? If so, which ones (probe with regard to relevant agriculture/social protection interventions)? If not, why is that the case?
11. Should these programmes target the same groups/populations? If so why? Should they target the same households simultaneously or sequentially? Explain. Do targeting approaches need to be adjusted to ensure greater coherence and complementarities between programmes? If so, how? What would this entail?
12. How would you describe the implementation of your programme? Explain. Probe with regard to:
  - timely delivery
  - predictability and regularity
  - coordination
  - implementing actors across government tiers
  - formal/informal implementation processes
  - budget mechanisms, planning and delivery (e.g. existing mechanisms and scope for alignment)
  - grievance mechanisms
13. Is harmonized targeting in place? If not, why not? If so, how is this done? What are its core features? How is harmonized targeting implemented?

#### THEMATIC AREA: PROGRAMME EFFICIENCY AND BENEFICIARY EXPERIENCE

14. How well do the agriculture and social protection programmes in this district perform?
15. Are the programmes delivering the appropriate benefits to achieve the policy and programme goals? Explain. Do or can these benefits have a synergistic effect on one another to improve overall livelihoods? If so, provide examples (e.g. cash transfer enables purchase of fertilizer subsidy).
16. Do the outcomes of one programme affect another, either positively in creating synergies, or negatively by diminishing the results of another programme (as needed, give examples to help the respondent)? Or are the outcomes largely independent of one another?
17. Would agricultural programmes achieve more or less if coordinated with other policies/programmes? Please explain and give examples. Would social protection programmes achieve more or less if they were coordinated with other policies/programmes? Please explain and give examples.



## VILLAGE LEADERS

### THEMATIC AREA: UNDERSTANDING THE PROGRAMMES

1. What are the main challenges in regard to agriculture and poverty in [name of village/community]?
2. What are the two main programmes being implemented in this village/community? *Identify one agricultural and one social protection programme.*
  - target groups
  - type of benefits
  - size of benefits
  - number and regularity of transfers
  - timing of transfers, including issues of seasonality
  - messaging (nature and delivery channels)
  - layering vs sequencing of benefits/programmes
  - existence of referral systems across programmes
  - graduation and exit strategies
3. Describe your role in regards to implementation of these programmes, if any. Does any of your involvement entail issues or activities involving coordination or harmonization among programmes? If so, explain: how? to what extent? Are there multiple committees – one for each separate programme – or only one? What is the impact of this situation in terms of coordination between agricultural and social protection interventions? What is your view on this?
4. Who is in charge of the programmes at district level? How do they support you in your role and in assuring smooth implementation at community level?
5. To what degree are the programmes decided at the national level or by district leaders and how much can you adapt or change them to work more effectively in your village?
6. Is any part of the programme contested or not supported? Explain.
7. Are you aware of any potential or actual conflicts/inconsistencies between agricultural and social protection (probe on: objectives, activities, outcomes, etc.)? If so, how are they manifested? What are the impacts of this? What can be done to avoid/mediate such conflicts?
8. What is your view concerning linked programmes? For example, are programmes best implemented separately or coordinated? Can you offer examples to illustrate your views?
9. Are [name of programme] beneficiaries participating in any other programme or entitled to receive other benefits? If so, which ones (probe with regard to relevant agriculture/social protection interventions)? If not, why is that the case?
10. Should these (or other) programmes target the same populations? Why? Should they target the same households simultaneously or sequentially? Do targeting approaches need to be adjusted to ensure greater coherence and complementarities between programmes? If so, what would this entail?

11. How would you describe the implementation of these programmes? Explain. Probe with regard to:
  - timely delivery
  - predictability and regularity
  - coordination
  - implementing actors across government tiers
  - formal/informal implementation processes
  - budget mechanisms, planning and delivery (e.g. existing mechanisms and scope for alignment)
  - grievance mechanisms
12. Is harmonized targeting in place; in other words, are the different programmes coordinating and using similar methods for targeting eligible households? If so, what are the core features? How is harmonized targeting implemented?

#### THEMATIC AREA: PROGRAMME EFFICIENCY AND BENEFICIARY EXPERIENCE

13. How well do the agricultural and social protection programmes in this district perform?
14. Are the programmes delivering the appropriate benefits to achieve the policy and programme goals?
15. Do the outcomes of one programme affect another, either positively in creating synergies, or negatively by diminishing the results of another programme (give examples to help the respondent)? Or are the outcomes largely independent of one another?
16. Does or can agriculture achieve more if it is coordinated with other policies/programmes? Please give examples. Does social protection achieve more if it is coordinated with other policies/programmes? How about agriculture? Please give examples.



## PROGRAMME BENEFICIARIES

### *Notes to interviewer*

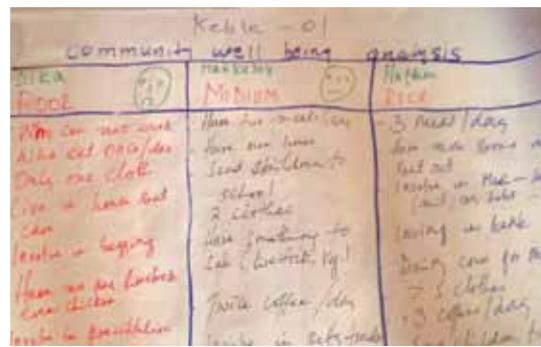
- *This interview guide is designed for programme beneficiaries who participate in single and/or multiple programmes.*
- *It is important that the focus groups are composed of the “right” mix of participants. For instance: only women, only men, only older people or youth, or a mixed group. The group composition will be determined by the programmes being studied and the nature of interventions at the local level. Sex-disaggregated groups are advised when possible.*
- *As noted in section 3.2 above, a FGD should allow for individual informants in the group to share their experiences and views, while also bringing out and leading to development of patterns and trends, as well as differences. The discussions should provide sufficient detail and findings to substantiate conclusions.*
- *This module can be adapted to be used during household in-depth case studies.*

### THEMATIC AREA: UNDERSTANDING THE PROGRAMMES

1. Describe the general livelihood strategies in the community. What are the major challenges, shocks and stresses faced by people in your community? Probe with regard to individual, household, community (disaggregated by gender and age, if possible).
2. What are the two or three main programmes being implemented in this village that are aimed at improving agriculture and the livelihoods of the poor (social protection should be prompted and/or discussed)? (Responses should be drawn on a large flipchart sheet for each programme.)
3. In this community, how are people identified (targeted) to participate in different programmes? Among the two or three main programmes, what is the level of participation in each and why is this the case?
4. Is it common for households here to receive multiple types of support? For instance, to receive agricultural support as well as social protection support? Is this positive, or negative? How is this viewed in the community? Please provide examples of cases you know about.
5. Do you think the main programmes that you have identified are fair about targeting the right people and households who need support? If yes, why? If no, why not?
6. Do you think there are households in this community that are unfairly excluded from receiving social protection support? Please explain and give examples.
7. Are programme support and benefits provided on time? Are they predictable? If not, how does that affect your situation (probe with regard to welfare status and livelihoods decisions)?
8. Do you receive everything you are entitled to receive? Please provide details.

## BOX 5

### PROPOSED TOOL FOR ELICITING ADDITIONAL RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS FOR UNDERSTANDING THE PROGRAMMES: COMMUNITY WELL-BEING ANALYSIS



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#### Objectives:

The tool can be used: (i) to understand the socio-economic status of the community (including characterization by wealth groups) as well as perceptions of differences among different wealth groups and reasons for these differences; (ii) to elicit estimates about the distribution of wealth; (iii) to elicit estimates of proportions of people on different programmes and reasons why; (iv) to discuss and understand perceptions of the targeting effectiveness; and (v) to prompt broader discussion on views concerning multiple programme access and benefits/constraints.

#### Step 1: Wealth categories

Ask participants to think about how many wealth categories can be found in their community. To help ensure this tool's manageability try to narrow down the number of categories to three (e.g. rich, medium, poor) or four (e.g. rich, medium, poor, ultra-poor), at most. On a flipchart sheet, draw three or four faces (or other indicators) – depending on the number of categories identified by group participants – to represent different wealth categories (e.g. rich 😊, poor ☹️) and write the name of each category in both English and the local language (see Figure above).

#### Step 2: Characteristics of wealth categories

Ask participants to list the characteristics of each category under each category. These lists should be quite comprehensive: probe and seek clarification and group consensus. If possible, a great deal of probing in line with the areas of investigation is encouraged, as well as in more general categories such as food security (e.g. number of meals per day), general health and nutrition, and others.

#### Step 3: Distribution of wealth

Place a pile of ten seeds on the flip sheet. Ask participants to estimate the proportion of seeds for each group. Participants will be debating and moving seeds before a consensus is reached. Make a note of dissenting opinions. Count the seeds under each wealth category, write the percentage on the flip sheet and set the seeds aside.

#### Step 4: Programme targeting

Under the categories, create two or three rows representing the two or three programmes identified above (agriculture and social protection) and place the ten seeds on the flip sheet again. Starting with one programme, ask group participants to estimate the proportion of programme beneficiaries for each category. Participants will be debating and moving seeds before a consensus is reached. Note discussions. Count the seeds under each wealth category and write the percentage under each category. Repeat this for each programme.

Discuss access to multiple programmes during the exercise. Probe to elicit detailed information about programme targeting, levels of beneficiaries and from which wealth categories, fairness, programme coordination, etc.

#### Step 5: Analysis

Delve deeper into targeting, wealth and coordination issues. The tool/flipchart sheet should be in front of you to help guide the discussion. Note that you can also revise the chart during the discussions if needed.

#### THEMATIC AREA: ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

9. Do you have a say in the way the programme(s) is/are being implemented (e.g. can you lodge a complaint, make suggestions for improvements)? If not, does that bother you? How do you think this can be improved?
10. Is there an official appeals and complaints committee in this community that you know of (probe regarding both formal and informal arrangements)? Does it work? If not, why not? Provide examples.

#### THEMATIC AREA: PROGRAMME EFFICIENCY AND BENEFICIARY EXPERIENCE

11. Do you think this community has improved in any way as a result of the programmes that you have described above (for instance, in regard to food security, livelihoods, agricultural productivity, service provision)? In what ways has the community benefited? In what ways could the programme(s) be improved?
12. Has the situation of households in the community changed since the introduction of the social protection/agricultural programme? (Discuss each of the two or three main programmes separately.) Please explain how and why these changes have occurred? Are there any new challenges/constraints due to these changes? Probe with regard to:
  - Human capital development outcomes:
    - a) improved access and utilization of basic services
    - b) changes in food security/health/education outcomes
  - Livelihoods security outcomes:
    - a) increased incomes
    - b) increases in assets
    - c) increase in savings
    - d) diversification of livelihoods, etc.
  - Level of agricultural productivity/changes in labour status
  - Social inclusion/exclusion outcomes and effects on the social capital
13. Over the past two years has the community faced any large shocks that affected most of the households? (Refer to those mentioned in question #1 above.) Please explain. Are these shocks common or unusual events? Do you think the programme (s) helped the community to cope with those shocks? If yes, how?
14. Have your attitudes to risk and poverty changed as a result of participating in this programme(s)? How?

- 15.** How could positive outcomes of programme support be improved? Probe in regard to:
- Design features: type of the transfer (e.g. cash, seeds, fertilizer, food); size of the transfer; access to complementary support; conditionality; accessing multiple programmes at once.
  - Implementation: timing (one-off, lump-sum, regular transfer, seasonal payment, reliability/predictability); aligned well to seasonal specificities; payment/delivery modality (bank, mobile, checkpoint)?
  - Role of local committees/implementers and their potential to increase impacts of benefits for the programmes.
- 16.** In your opinion, would access to multiple/other programmes improve the well-being and livelihood strategies of households in the community? Which programme(s)? Why and how? Explain.

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