

PART TWO.

CHAPTER 4.

APPROACHING A RIGHT TO FOOD BUDGET

INTRODUCTION

Part I of *Budget Work to Advance the Right to Food* dwelt on budget work that is designed to address specific situations or cases that raise questions about a government's compliance with its right to food obligations. Each of the cases focused on a community or on a specific group of people, and the goal of the related research, analysis and advocacy was to enhance the enjoyment of the right to food of the specific communities or groups. No matter how successful such cases might be in ensuring access to food for those communities or groups, however, they are not ideal in the sense that they do not normally address access to food needs of the many other different groups that comprise the society. Is it possible to take a more sweeping approach and develop a comprehensive range of policies and related budget provisions so as to advance the right to food of the entire population in a country? Perhaps another way of saying this is: Is it possible to develop a right to food budget?

Food is related to very many aspects of a society and an economy, and people's capacity to understand all of those relationships, and to develop well informed and effective policies and programmes that reflect these relationships, is quite limited. Thus, it should not be surprising to learn that developing a full right to food budget has to date proved not to be feasible in practical terms, as desirable as it clearly is in concept. As a result, it is not possible at this point to suggest a step-by-step process (comparable to the process set out in Part I) for developing a right to food budget.

That said, there remains a great deal that governments can do, starting from where they are today, that might fall short of perfection, but that could very substantially improve enjoyment of the right to food of their citizens. The remaining pages of this chapter are devoted to summaries of initiatives in three countries where the governments are involved in trying to get closer to a right to food budget. The challenges they and their civil society colleagues have faced in doing so, as well as the advances they have made, make for compelling and encouraging reading.

Two of the initiatives—in India and in Brazil—have their roots in cases initially brought to public attention by civil society groups. Both initiatives illustrate how work on individual cases (the focus of Part I) can in certain situations lead to a much broader treatment of right to food issues. They also once again illustrate the importance of alliances in budget work, as it was alliances in both countries that enabled civil society groups to develop solid documentation of their budget and right to food issues, as well as to generate broad public support for them and pressure on the government to undertake appropriate action.

The initiatives also illustrate different institutional responses by governments to the challenge of developing a right to food budget. In India, the institution at the centre of the case is the Supreme Court, which appointed Commissioners to assist it in ensuring that the Government of India carries out the Court's orders. In Brazil, the institution that was created, CONSEA, is a combined governmental and non-governmental body. Both CONSEA and the Office of the Commissioners have been very helpful channels through which civil society has been able to contribute its knowledge, information and insights, and make recommendations for action.

Not all such government initiatives require a civil society push to get them going, as the third case, related to the development of a right to food budget in Mozambique, illustrates. This last case and the India case do, however, share a common feature. To a greater or lesser extent, both have involved costing, a process that is integral to the development of government budgets. Because of the central role it plays in budgets, costing can be important to know about for those involved with budget work, whether as part of civil society, as legislators or as members of government institutions, such as a human rights commissions. For those as yet unfamiliar with costing, there is a short introduction in Annex 2.

INITIATIVE 1. BUDGETING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS: THE EXPERIENCE OF THE RIGHT TO FOOD CASE IN INDIA

In 2001, the right to food was greatly advanced in India when a civil liberties NGO, the People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), filed a lawsuit in Rajasthan to force the government to use food stocks to prevent hunger during a widespread drought. While India's Supreme Court considers a final judgment in this landmark case, it has issued a number of significant interim orders, which have turned various

government programmes into legally binding entitlements for poor and vulnerable persons. The Supreme Court has made it a ‘duty’ of every State and Union Territory to ensure that death owing to starvation and malnutrition does not take place. This implies that people who are too poor to buy their own food need to be guaranteed minimum means of subsistence by the government, either through direct food aid or access to gainful employment.

The central premise of the litigation was that the right to food flows from the right to life guaranteed in Article 21 of the Indian Constitution. Since 2001, the Supreme Court has issued more than fifty interim orders.³⁰ The case is the longest continuing mandamus³¹ on the right to food anywhere in the world. In its most important orders the Supreme Court has (i) stressed the utmost importance of the provision of food to the aged, infirm, disabled, destitute women and men, pregnant and lactating women and destitute children, especially when they or their family members do not have sufficient funds to provide food for themselves; (ii) given direction to the state to see that all of the shops of the Public Distribution System start functioning; (iii) ordered the states to implement food-for-work programmes in all scarcity areas; and (iv) ordered implementation of, among other programmes, a Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MMS) and Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) within a definite time frame.³² The Supreme Court appointed Commissioners to monitor the implementation of its interim orders.

The Court does not give the government months or years to implement the schemes, an attitude which essentially treats food as a right. Holding the Chief Secretaries of the states responsible for failure in implementing programmes or for starvation deaths also suggests a concern that a functioning system of accountability be in place. Taken together, these developments amount to making significant progress towards having food be a legally enforceable right in the country. Indeed, possibly the most important achievement of the interim orders, from the perspective of the right to food, is that the benefits of the food-related schemes sponsored by the central government have become legal entitlements for the relevant sections of population.

30 For detailed texts of all orders, see Supreme Court Orders on the Right to Food, Updated Edition, September 2007, Right to Food Campaign Secretariat, at <http://www.righttofoodindia.org/orders/interimorders.html>.

31 A mandamus is an order from a court to a subordinate court or government body.

32 The directions under various schemes include identification of beneficiaries as well as fixing of the quantum of disbursement. For instance, the Court has directed the state governments to implement the Mid-Day Meal Scheme by providing every child in every government and government-assisted primary school a prepared meal of at least 300 calories and 8–12 gram of protein each day of school for a minimum of 200 days in a year. The order to implement this programme for all children in these schools makes it the largest school meal programme in the world. It serves more than 50 million cooked meals daily.

The role of budget work

Both in the Supreme Court and through the justiciability mechanism of the Commissioners, the focus has been on budgeting entitlements in considerable detail and monitoring them. The following paragraphs briefly examine the manner in which this is being done for the ICDS programme, as an example of the ‘battle with the detail’ that constitutes the struggle of the Right to Food Campaign.

The Supreme Court order, dated 28 November 2001, which first universalized the ICDS and fixed the entitlements within the programme, stated, *inter alia*:

... (i) We direct the State Governments/Union Territories to implement the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) in full and to ensure that every ICDS disbursing centre in the country shall provide as under:

- (a) Each child up to 6 years of age to get 300 calories and 8-10 grams of protein;*
- (b) Each adolescent girl to get 500 calories and 20-25 grams of protein;*
- (c) Each pregnant woman and each nursing mother to get 500 calories & 20-25 grams of protein;*
- (d) Each malnourished child to get 600 calories and 16-20 grams of protein;*
- (e) Have a disbursement centre in every settlement...*

The order directed the central government as well as the State governments and Union Territories to ensure, *inter alia*, that:

... All the State Governments/Union Territories shall allocate funds for the ICDS on the basis of one rupee per child per day, 100 beneficiaries per AWC³³ and 300 days feeding in a year (...)

... The Central Government and States/Union Territories shall ensure that all amounts allocated are sanctioned in time so that there is no disruption whatsoever in the feeding of children ...

The issuance of these orders, however, did not translate into an automatic increase in budgets or compliance with the other aspects of the orders. Indeed

³³ AWCs is an abbreviation for Anganwadi Centres, which are government-sponsored child care and mother care centres that cater to children in the 0–6-year age group.

compliance often required further pressure from the Commissioners or civil society, or both. For instance, when the Government of India raised concerns about the number of additional ICDS Centres that would need to be established to achieve universalization,³⁴ the Commissioners presented demographic information, disaggregated for every State, to challenge the government's numbers. This led to a landmark order in which the Supreme Court set state-specific targets for universalization to be achieved in a time-bound manner, based on the Commissioners' recommendations.

The Supreme Court further elaborated upon the allocations in the budget that should be set aside for ensuring the supplementary nutritional entitlements for children under six. The order directed the central and State governments to fully implement the ICDS scheme by, *inter alia*:

... (i) allocating and spending at least Rs.2 (=0.02 US\$) per child per day for supplementary nutrition out of which the Central Government shall contribute Rs.1 per child per day.

(ii) allocating and spending at least Rs.2.70 for every severely malnourished child per day for supplementary nutrition out of which the Central Government shall contribute Rs.1.35 per child per day.

(iii) allocating and spending at least Rs.2.30 for every pregnant women, nursing mother/adolescent girl per day for supplementary nutrition out of which the Central Government shall contribute Rs.1.15 ...

The role of civil society

The far-reaching orders of the Supreme Court would have been impossible without the persistent advocacy by the Right to Food Campaign.³⁵ This campaign emerged from the groups that were initially engaged in the legal case, but over time has grown much beyond the scope of the Supreme Court case, with more than 1000 national organizations involved.

Over the years the Campaign has ensured that legal and local actions—through social audits, rallies, protests and grassroots mobilization—complement each other, and together strengthen the struggle to make certain that the court-ordered entitlements reach the right holders.

34 Universalization means that programmes are not geographically targeted, or targeted only at specific vulnerable groups. The Supreme Court has followed the principle of universalization, with a priority given to vulnerable groups, such as indigenous people and scheduled caste communities, who face multiple deprivations.

35 To learn more about the Right to Food Campaign in India, visit www.righttofoodindia.org.

With regard to the budgetary provisions, the role of civil society has largely been one of informing the Court about details related to the need to enhance funding, providing specific budget information, and presenting monitoring reports on the allocation and utilization of funds by both State and central governments. Grassroots surveys, fact-finding reports, budget analysis, reports of social audits, and studies by independent academics have all been used in an effective manner to counter the affidavits filed by State and central governments in every single hearing.

Solid knowledge of budget work has been important in enabling the Commissioners and civil society to challenge government presentations of budgetary allocations. For example, with regard to the ICDS programme, when State governments based their budgetary allocations on the *current* levels of enrolment in the ICDS Centres, the Commissioners, supported by civil society, in turn re-calculated the per child expenditure on, for example, supplementary nutrition, using the parameter of the number of children who *ought* to have been covered in pursuance of the Court's orders on universalization.

When the Planning Commission of India³⁶ drafted the 11th Five-Year Plan for Food and Nutrition Security, civil society groups attended the meeting of the Steering Committee. They insisted on costing individual entitlements for the ICDS programme and presented a comprehensive document³⁷ that specified financial allocations, not just under broad activity headings, but for every specific age group for whom they were seeking to ensure entitlements.

An example was the provisions that were budgeted for ensuring the right to food entitlements of children under the age of six months (who should be exclusively breastfed). These included a component of maternity benefits, creation of crèches and provisioning of worksite facilities for women in the National Rural Employment Guarantee programme, information and communication material to promote breastfeeding, as well as activities for strengthening legislation on the prevention of the promotion of breast milk substitutes. A key player for this segment of the exercise was the Breast Feeding Promotion Network of India (BPNI). It was supported by other experts within the Working Group, including academics, nutritionists from the National Institute of Nutrition, paediatricians, field activists and representatives from the Office of the Commissioners. The support of these other stakeholders was essential.

36 www.planningcommission.gov.in

37 'Strategies for Children Under Six: A Framework for the 11th Plan.' For a short version of this document, see *Economic and Political Weekly*, 29 December 2007: 87–101. The costing exercise and preparation of the document were undertaken by a *Working Group for Children Under Six*, which was constituted by the Right to Food and the Right to Health Movements, which collectively represent more than 1500 NGOs, trade unions, political and non-party formations, networks and professional bodies in India.

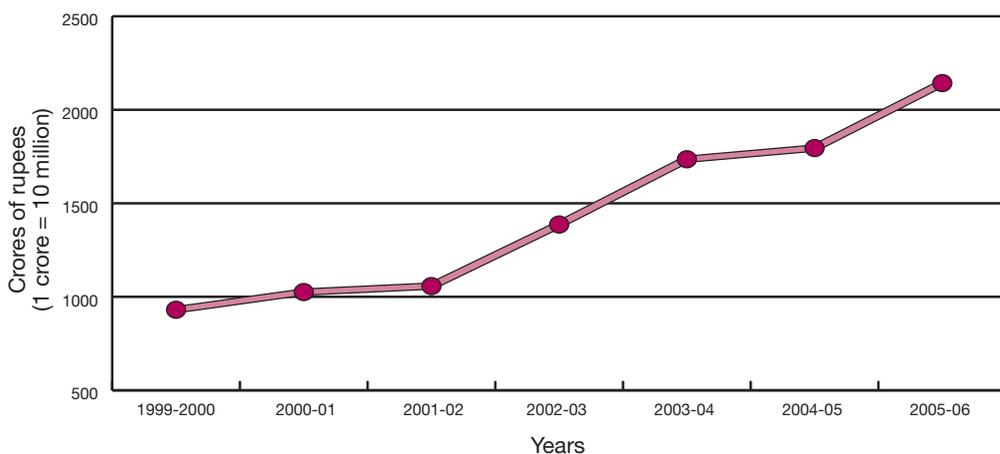
Conclusion

A key lesson to draw from this right to food case is that the collective effort represented in the cross-cutting alliance between the Commissioners' Office and the Right to Food Campaign has allowed for the development of a much more holistic analysis. In addition, the participation of the Commissioners' Office both in official bodies like the Steering Committee and in civil society efforts enables the Office to form a bridge between policy and the reality in the field. It also allows civil society to raise individual grievances for redress, as well as present their concerns at official forums through the Commissioners' Office.

The Right to Food Case has also provided civil society with access to an unprecedented amount of official data, and civil society is still equipping itself to properly analyze the information, so as to use it to effect lasting public policy changes. The key learning for civil society in this process has been that incisive analysis of the government's own data and budgets can be effective in the Court hearings, because the admissibility of the data cannot be questioned by the government.

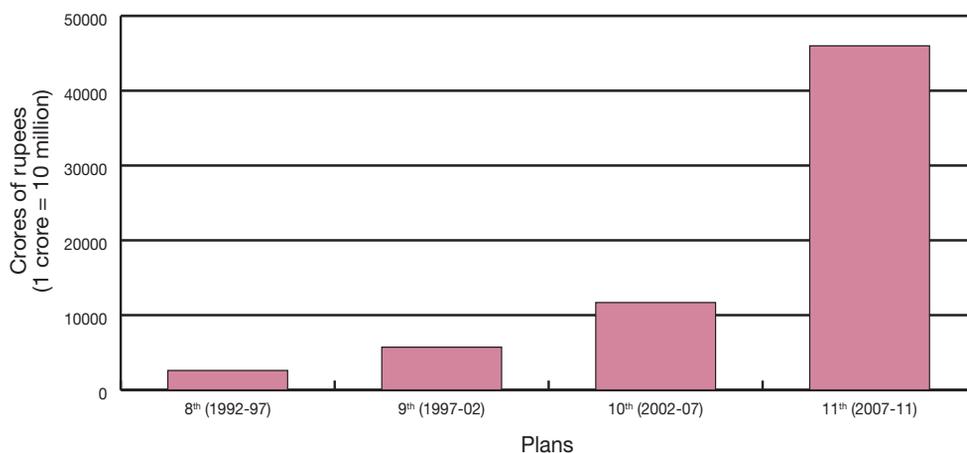
The efficacy of budget work and tracking individual entitlements as one of the approaches to ensuring the right to food can perhaps best be demonstrated by looking at the impact on expenditure patterns of the Government of India. Figure 9 illustrates the growth in expenditures for the ICDS programme during the period of the Right to Food Case (2001–2008). This evidence would perhaps be compelling enough to validate the approach.

Figure 9. ICDS reported expenditures



Similarly, the impact of civil society interventions to increase allocations for the ICDS are reflected in the 11th Five Year Plan (2007-2011).

Figure 10. ICDS allocations in successive Five-Year Plans of the Government of India



INITIATIVE 2. CONSTRUCTING A RIGHT TO FOOD BUDGET: THE EXPERIENCE OF BRAZIL

The National Food and Nutrition Security Council (CONSEA) of Brazil was first established as a public institution in 1993 as a result of broad pressure to include civil society in the development of government policy in a range of areas, including food security. While the Council was dismantled in 1994, its discussions succeeded in turning hunger in Brazil into a widely-recognized political issue. CONSEA was re-established in 2003, and currently comprises 40 representatives from civil society, 17 from government as well as 16 non-voting observers. It serves in a consultative and advisory role to the President on food security and right to food issues, and submits recommendations for action directly to the national cabinet.

In 2005 CONSEA decided to compile a right to food budget so as to be in a better position to monitor whether the Brazilian government's budget allocations to food and nutrition were adequate. It was envisioned that the right to food budget would also be a basis from which CONSEA could get involved in the budget planning process and make concrete suggestions for increases and decreases in specific budget lines.

The Challenge

While the idea of developing a right to food budget is appealing in the abstract, putting it into practice has proven to be quite challenging. The first question CONSEA faced was what to monitor in the budget. Two possible approaches emerged from prior in-country experiences:

- *An institutional approach*, in which the budgets of all government institutions that have major responsibilities for achieving food security goals, or for the realization of the right to adequate food, are totalled; or
- *The programme approach*, where the budgets of all programmes (and other governmental actions) that are identified to have specific food security objectives are totalled, irrespective of which institutions have responsibilities for those programmes.

CONSEA chose the latter approach, as it promised to provide a more accurate picture. Very many government institutions are involved in food and nutritional security in Brazil. These institutions have multiple roles and responsibilities, not all of which are related to food security, so it would be misleading for their entire budget to be included in a right to food budget. The Ministry of Education, for example, serves daily school lunches to over 37 million schoolchildren in the country, and in 2007 invested R\$ 1.6 billion (US\$ 1 billion) in this effort. That is not a negligible sum, and it should surely be included in the right to food budget, but including the entire budget for the Ministry of Education (around US\$ 12.5 billion) would result in a misleading picture.

CONSEA's first step in developing a right to food budget was to list all government food security programmes in Brazil. This proved to be more difficult than had been anticipated. On top of the 31 programmes included in the *Fome Zero* Strategy (a government initiative to eradicate hunger), there were many other government activities that had to be considered. To minimize the complexity of the process, CONSEA decided to include only activities carried out and financed by the federal government.

Much of the difficulty encountered by CONSEA is inherent in the breadth and complexity of the concept of food security. *Food availability* concerns, because they relate to food production, are very much linked to the work of the Ministry of Agriculture. Things get more complicated when talking about *access to food*. Economic access, for example, is related to whether individuals have sufficient resources to buy food. Brazil has a conditional cash transfer system (*Bolsa Família* Programme) for individuals below the poverty line, for example, which is obviously related to economic access.

Households that are slightly better off may also depend on government services to be able to feed themselves, through, for example, the government's

dissemination of information on market prices, development and maintenance of a sound infrastructure, proper training of children and adults, or an adequate health system. The list is potentially endless. *Physical access to food* falls within the purview of the Ministry of Commerce (e.g. ensuring the existence of local markets) or the State institution that takes care of infrastructure and feeder roads. *Utilization of food* encompasses food storage, food preparation, child care and nutritional aspects, and this falls in the domain of primary health care, nutritional education, basic sanitation, adequate housing, and so on.

CONSEA identified 18 policy priority areas related to food and nutrition security, which together make up the food and nutrition security budget of around R\$ 27.2 billion (US\$ 16.3 billion).

BOX 29. Food and Nutrition Security Budget – National Food Security and Nutrition Council (CONSEA), Brazil

The food and nutrition security budget defined by CONSEA for the year 2008 (within whose framework it was to make budget proposals to the executive branch of government) consists of 18 food- and nutrition-related thematic areas, which in turn comprise a total of 43 programmes. Each programme is divided into specific activities, ranging from 1 to 13 activities per programme, for a total of 149 activities. The thematic areas are:

1. Food marketing and storage
2. Food access
3. Structural interventions (employment, small-scale production in poor communities, small businesses)
4. Smallholder agriculture
5. School feeding
6. Healthy foods promotion, surveillance and health care
7. Biodiversity and traditional populations
8. Collection and processing of recyclable waste in rural and urban areas
9. Public policies management (monitoring, mobilization and education activities)
10. Water resources and infrastructure for food security
11. Fisheries and aquaculture
12. Agrarian reform, credit and conservation
13. Food and nutrition security of afro-Brazilian populations
14. Food and nutrition security of indigenous populations
15. Potable water and sanitation
16. Income transfers
17. Food and nutrition security in semi-arid regions
18. Safety surveillance (for water, food and drugs)

This is a long list, it has many sub-items, and yet one could easily find more examples. Many government actions (and omissions) directly or indirectly influence the ability of individuals to feed themselves. Although many of these actions are not strictly food-related (e.g. basic sanitation), they should, at least partially, be accounted for in a right to food budget. However, adopting such an approach would doom the budget to being vague and subjective. How much of the budget allocation for sanitation should be attributed to the right to food? 20 percent? 30 percent? 50 percent? There does not seem to be a sound way of drawing a line, and thus CONSEA left such items out of the right to food budget.

It is also important to remember that not all government spending influences food security in a positive way. There may be some budget items that have the potential to negatively affect the realization of the right to food. For example, a mega-project may displace peasants who before the project's construction were able to feed themselves, or a government's decision to enter into a free trade agreement may generate winners and losers. How does one account for the 'negative spending' such losing represents? Indeed, there may even be government programmes whose positive vs. negative aspects conflict. For example: A farmer receives support through a rural development programme (+), but faces serious threats from subsidized imports dumped on the local market (-), which the government acknowledges and for which, in response, it offers compensation (+).

As was already said, it is not (yet) possible to construct a true right to food budget, i.e. one that adds all the budget allocations of relevance to the right to food. One essential difficulty is that many important right to food considerations have few or no budget implications. For example, because of the fundamental human rights principles of access to information (transparency), equity, non-discrimination and participation, the process by which a policy is implemented is equally as important as the final output. While there may be budget allocations to enable civil society participation in policy formulation, many aspects of the budget and budget process, such as participation, depend more on the attitude of individuals than on resources.

In addition, it is possible to track some expenditures that are relevant to the right to food but that are also of a quite general nature and serve multiple purposes. Training poor individuals concerning the law in order to facilitate their access to the legal system, for example, is surely essential in guaranteeing the right to food, but it is also essential for other human rights. Including such expenditures in a right to food budget would distort the budget.

CONSEA has been monitoring allocations and expenditure of a smaller number of priority programmes since 2006. This work has enabled it to make concrete proposals to the federal government related to the budget for food and nutrition security, and to examine the food and nutrition security proposals within the annual budget bill. In 2007, for example, CONSEA successfully influenced the national budget when it proposed strengthening the National Food and Nutritional Security System (SISAN), and approximately R\$ 2.7 billion (US\$ 1.6 billion) was distributed among the 27 Brazilian states to support the drafting of food security laws at the state level. For the 2009 annual budget CONSEA recommended budget increases in the 18 priority areas mentioned earlier. Among these, it proposed that the government increase funds for SISAN to R\$ 13 billion (US\$ 7.8 billion) to further strengthen the system at all levels. That said, the proposals that CONSEA has made have not been the result of a rigorous application of formulas or equations, but have resulted instead from negotiations between CONSEA and the Ministry of Finance.

Conclusions

Linking the core content of the right to food to a national budget appears to be very complex. The bottom line is that *what* should be included in a right to food budget and *where* to find the relevant allocations is country specific.

In addition, a budget may tell us what is allocated and what has been spent, but not what *should be* spent. It also does not provide direct insights into the effectiveness and efficiency of actual expenditures and how well the poor are actually being targeted. Thus, in developing a right to food budget, there seems to be a need to first conduct a right to food assessment that identifies the underlying, root causes of hunger in the country. This, in turn, should point to the most relevant government actions to be undertaken and then monitored.

This case of Brazil demonstrates why it is very difficult to take a human rights approach when developing the national budget, as such an approach would include, among other things, attitude change, process considerations, as well as the empowerment of right holders, issues that are either not in the budget at all or are there only in a disguised way!

It would be fair to conclude that summarizing all food security-relevant items in a budget is very time-consuming and subjective. Even when such an overview is prepared, it is rather challenging to monitor over time. Thus far, few groups have tried to develop a right to food budget, and it is impossible to suggest, on the basis of the limited experience available, a best way to handle the dilemmas faced in trying to do so. It will be important over time to learn more about initiatives pursued in different countries, and the information needs related to, as well as the process of, compiling a right to food budget at the national level.

INITIATIVE 3. COSTING FOOD SECURITY INTERVENTIONS IN MOZAMBIQUE

A growing number of governments recognize that the problem of hunger and food insecurity has to be tackled directly, because economic development and a growing GDP have not, on their own, resulted in expected reductions in hunger in many countries. Consequently, more and more national strategies and policies mainstream food security, treating it as a cross-cutting issue. However, this integration is often a bit weak. Food security may be mentioned as a core policy area, but the programming of specific interventions and related funding allocations are not well elaborated. Such is the case with Mozambique's Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSP)³⁸.

BOX 30. Mismatch between Planning and Budgeting in Mozambique

In Mozambique, the Medium-Term Fiscal Framework sets financial ceilings for each sector, under which they should design their budget proposals. This is often done arbitrarily and does not factor in any added tasks agreed upon by national plans (for example, the PRSP).

There is a lack of transparency in the process of making budget allocations to sectors (for example, health or education). Apparently, it is easier to negotiate directly with the Ministry of Finance than undertake the tedious exercise of submitting detailed work plans and budgets. This type of approach gives an advantage to well connected individuals.

There is a lack of capacity in the sectoral Ministries to prepare sound financial plans and to estimate unit and overhead costs

Cognizant of these shortcomings, the Ministry of Development and Planning (MPD) in Mozambique asked FAO to prepare a simple method for costing the food security interventions mentioned in and implied by the PRSP. FAO produced a dynamic Excel™ table that details the costs for each of approximately 40 food security interventions for each of the ten provinces (see the addendum at the end of this section). The table is dynamic in that if an input cost varies or if a programme needs to be expanded or reduced in scope, the Ministry can quickly introduce the adjustments and retrieve the new cost estimate.

Three simple steps can illustrate the costing exercise:

- identify the relevant programmes and activities to ensure food security;

38 *Plano de Acção para a Redução da Pobreza Absoluta (PARPA II) 2006-09.*

- find out for each programme who the beneficiaries and responsible authorities are; and
- investigate the unit and overhead costs of each programme, and use these to calculate the cost of the food security intervention.

Simple steps, yes, but this should not disguise the fact that to do the steps, it is necessary to have large amounts of data that are not always accessible to non-governmental groups. A costing estimate, such as that done by FAO in Mozambique, can most probably only be done by a government or with a government partner. It is, for example, very difficult, if not impossible, to deduce the cost for a food security programme from the national budget. In Mozambique the national budget is structured according to administrative or economic classifications and does not provide substantial detail. The situation is even worse when it comes to externally funded projects. These are often put together in a lump sum of (undefined) service provisions in the investment budget, thereby making it impossible to determine the exact cost of a programme, let alone how much of the money is to be spent for the actual service, for administration or for personnel.

With those provisos in mind, let us consider the three steps.

1. Identify the relevant programmes and activities to ensure food security

Identifying food security interventions (and estimating the number of beneficiaries) is a tedious exercise. Mozambique's PRSP, although an 'Action Plan' according to its Portuguese name, does not include detailed actions, the number of targeted beneficiaries or the cost for the different interventions. The PRSP does not even say which concrete action needs to be undertaken to realize specific provisions in the text.

It is also a matter of debate as to what should be regarded as a relevant intervention for food security. Much of the PRSP has implications for the hunger situation in Mozambique. Even such seemingly unrelated activities as deactivating mines or investing in tourism can be seen as food security interventions as both can enable individuals to participate in the labour market, earn a living and feed their families.

The chapter of the Mozambican PRSP on food insecurity has a rather narrow focus on chronically hungry children (stunting) and vulnerable groups (food insecure, AIDS-affected, and ultra-poor households). In its costing exercise FAO thus did not look at food security interventions in the broadest sense just mentioned, but limited itself to programmes related to education, health, social action and gender equality. The result was a list of some 40 interventions. The list could only have been developed with the active participation of the responsible authorities in the specific sectors, because the PRSP identifies only the broad goals (e.g. 'increase school attendance of undernourished children'), but tasks the relevant ministries with designing specific interventions (e.g. a school feeding programme).

2. Find out for each programme who are the beneficiaries and the responsible authorities

For each of the interventions identified, it is necessary to know the number of beneficiaries. Depending on the anticipated coverage of the programme and plans for future expansion, not all of the individuals in need may be served. Some programmes, for instance, may only be in a pilot phase and can only be scaled-up slowly because of the complexity of the programme or the costs involved.

For the costing study in Mozambique, FAO assumed that the reduction goals stated in the PRSP would actually be realized, which would result in the number of individuals in need decreasing over time. Thus:

- the percentage of underweight children under five years of age (low weight for age) would drop from 24 percent in 2003 to 18 percent by 2009 (Source: PARPA's Global Indicators Matrix);
- the percentage of children below five with low weight for height (a measure of acute malnutrition or wasting) would stabilize at a rate of between 0 percent and 5 percent (Source: PARPA's Strategic Matrix); and
- the percentage of the population in a situation of chronic hunger (stunting) would be reduced by 35 percent from 1990 to 2009. Chronic hunger is assessed by comparing by height to age for children under five.

Since the prevalence of food insecurity varies among the provinces in Mozambique, the specific targets for each province are different. For example, the Zinc Supplement Programme (see the addendum at the end of this section) is designed for chronically undernourished children under five years of age. With regard to Tete Province, Table 2 sets out the anticipated number of beneficiaries for four years.

Table 2. Anticipated number of ZSP beneficiaries in Tete Province, 2006-2009

	2006		2007		2008		2009	
No. of children <5 yrs	285 023	100%	291 417	100%	297 923	100%	304 649	100%
No. stunted	130 826	46%	127 072	44%	123 414	41%	119 890	39%
No. wasted	4 560	2%	4 430	2%	4 302	1%	4 179	1%
No. underweight	71 541	25%	69 488	24%	67 488	23%	65 561	22%

A number of sources were used to estimate and extrapolate the number of beneficiaries per programme and per province for the years between 2006 and 2009. Population figures (in the case just given, of children under five) were taken from the demographic projections of the national statistics institutes. More specific information, such as number of children under five without mosquito nets, had to be extracted from other sources (in that case, from the Demographic Health Survey).

In terms of coverage of the different programmes, the FAO costing assumed that all programmes would reach 50 percent of the intended beneficiaries until the end of the period of the PRSP, if not stated otherwise by the responsible government entity. Thus, the costing favoured feasibility over aspirational goals (i.e. full coverage), which, given that some programmes were starting from a 0 percent coverage base, would be illusory in this case. With regard to the Zinc Supplement Programme, for example, the Ministry of Health set a different goal, assuming only a 10 percent coverage of the programme up to and including 2009; i.e. 13 000 children in Tete in 2006, 12 000 in 2009. The responsible authority for implementation of the Zinc Supplement Programme is the Provincial Directorate of Health. It receives the budget allocation for the programme and is responsible for service delivery.

3. Investigate the unit and overhead costs of each programme, and use these to calculate the cost of the food security intervention

This third and last step deals with the actual costing of programmes. While the information needed for the first two steps might be publicly accessible, information about the costs of the different interventions is more difficult to obtain.

Four items are needed to cost a programme:

- the number of beneficiaries (step 2);
- the unit value (the cost of service per beneficiary);
- the human resources (staff needed to implement a programme, including community workers, extension service providers and health-care workers); and
- logistical items (transport, fuel, stationery, etc.).

Programmes differ in the type of inputs needed. Some programmes provide a direct service in cash or kind to beneficiaries, which involves a transfer of money or goods (such as mosquito bed nets). For other programmes, the costs are mostly salaries of ministerial personnel who provide advisory services (e.g. nutrition education).

For each programme, the costs of human resources and logistics have to be estimated. For example, the Provincial Directorate of Health, which is responsible for therapeutic feeding, salt iodization, Vitamin A, zinc, iron and zinc supplement programmes, breastfeeding promotion and so on, estimates on average 5 percent of programme costs for human resources and 4 percent for logistics.

The best sources for the unit and overhead costs are surely the responsible ministries. Either the ministries know from past experience or, in the case of new programmes, they have estimated the costs for their own financial monitoring. If the ministries do not know how much the implementation of a certain

programme may cost, or if they do not want to reveal 'sensitive' data, a review of scientific literature on food security and nutrition can provide some estimates. These, however, have to be taken with a grain of salt, as the costs for implementation of a programme can vary significantly between countries and over years.

This table provides some details of the implementation costs of the Zinc Supplement Programme in Tete Province.

Table 3. Implementation costs of the Zinc Supplement Programme, Tete Province (in MTN)

COST ITEM	2006	2007	2008	2009	TOTAL
Total Cost	2 224 558	2 160 739	2 098 529	2 038 611	8 522 437
Transfers (Coverage × Unit Value)	2 040 948	1 982 329	1 925 256	1 870 285	8 110 368
Coverage	13 083	12 707	12 341	11 989	
Unit Value	156	156	156	156	
Human resources (5% of Transfers)	102 047	99 116	96 263	93 514	390 941
Logistics (4% of Transfers)	81 638	79 293	77 010	74 811	312 753

The same calculation had to be made for all programmes identified and for all provinces. According to FAO's calculation, an investment of US\$ 205 million would be needed to implement the food security programmes mentioned in the PRSP.

A calculation of the economic growth foregone due to chronic hunger (the 'cost of hunger')³⁹ suggests that investing in the reduction of hunger is cost-effective. For example, halving the prevalence of protein-energy malnutrition, iodine deficiency disorder and iron deficiency anaemia yields a discounted benefit of US\$ 885 million, which far outweighs the required investment cost of US\$ 205 million.

Table 4. Cost of food security programmes mentioned in PRSP (in MTN)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	TOTAL
Direct Hunger-Reducing Interventions					
Chronically hungry children	249 657 035	174 286 184	245 341 722	241 270 523	910 555 465
Ultra-poor households	170 600 457	197 049 511	364 407 056	420 992 050	1 153 049 075
Aids-affected households	168 777 632	214 960 452	225 708 475	236 456 497	845 903 056
Subtotal	589 035 124	586 296 147	835 457 254	898 719 071	2 909 507 595
General Food Security Interventions					
Food insecure children	236 529 858	272 165 259	293 960 755	316 018 126	1 118 673 998
Food insecure households	255 624 798	304 623 078	338 051 472	391 735 785	1 290 035 132
Subtotal	492 154 656	576 788 337	632 012 227	707 753 911	2 408 709 130
Grand total (MTN)	1 081 189 780	1 163 084 484	1 467 469 480	1 606 472 981	5 318 216 725
(US\$)	41 584 222	44 734 019	56 441 134	61 787 422	204 546 797

Calculations based on US\$ 1 = MTN 26.

39 Dista, S. & Vicente, C. 2009. The Cost of Hunger in Mozambique in *Food Security Policy - Insights from Mozambique*.

Challenges in doing costing

Costing, such as that undertaken by FAO in Mozambique, is complex and difficult. The most common challenges faced in such a costing exercise are summarized below.

- Concrete figures, such as those in Table 4, are misleading. The reality is that often data are not available and have to be estimated, and the differences between real costs and such guesswork can be huge.
- There is the question of which interventions should be included in the costing. For Mozambique, the question was: What should be included in food security and what should be omitted? Often strategies, and sometimes even plans of action, are not sufficiently detailed in terms of clear interventions, coverage, beneficiaries, costs, and so on.
- The target group is often only specified in a descriptive manner (e.g. 'ultra-poor households'), with insufficient information about actual numbers. How many beneficiaries are there? Are they women, men, children, the elderly? Is government data sufficiently disaggregated?
- It is difficult to calculate how interventions change over time. If medium-term predictions are made (as in this example), will it be possible to see an impact of the first years' interventions in the later years? Will the number of beneficiaries go down (because of the impact of this and other programmes, and because of overall development in the country) or will the number go up (because of higher coverage or higher need due to detrimental factors like climate change, high food prices, an increased number of food insecure people)? Is it possible to make an educated guess about these changes?
- What programme coverage should be assumed? Is it appropriate to use the assumption articulated by the ministry in charge? If there is none, is it better to use the desirable rate of coverage or the doable? And, if doable, what is doable?
- Is the unit value correct, and how will it change over time? Because of the recent high food prices, for example, school feeding is now much more expensive than it was a few years ago.
- Are the overhead and costs for logistics known? Is it possible to get precise values (perhaps extracted from previous experiences)? Often overhead costs are quite high for new programmes, but decrease after some years of implementation. Ministries may also be reluctant to reveal high overhead cost and might understate the percentage going to personnel and administration.

Addendum

List of interventions related to the PRSP in Mozambique

A) Direct hunger-reducing interventions

- *Chronically hungry children:*
 - therapeutic feeding;
 - salt iodization;
 - vitamin A supplementation;
 - iron supplementation;
 - zinc supplementation; and
 - school feeding.
- *Ultra-poor households:*
 - community-based growth promotion;
 - community-based food supplementation;
 - prevention of water-transmitted diseases;
 - early child care programmes;
 - malaria prevention;
 - routine treatment expansion;
 - cash transfer (PSA); and
 - community-based nutritional health schemes.
- *AIDS-affected households:*
 - basic social services provided by CSOs and NGOs.

B) General food security interventions

- *Food-insecure children:*
 - growth monitoring programmes;
 - poverty certificates;
 - birth certificates;
 - promotion of recommended complementary feeding practices;
 - hygiene education and promotion programmes; and
 - breastfeeding promotion in hospitals.
- *Food-insecure households:*
 - workfare;
 - income generation;
 - community development programme;
 - community workers training;
 - micro-credits for women with (AIDS) paternal orphans;
 - financial subsidies for HHS integrating COVS;
 - reproductive health schemes; and
 - direct social support.

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