



RURAL SYNERGIES



INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS

*Building bridges between social and
productive inclusion policies*



With the technical support of:

With the technical cooperation of:



Facultad de Economía



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations



Institutionality for the coordination of social protection and rural productive development programmes. Experiences in Latin America and Africa.

KEY MESSAGES

Coordination between social protection and rural productive development programmes can help poor and at-risk households escape the poverty trap and break its intergenerational transmission.



In socioeconomic crises such as the current one resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, government responses must protect income through simplified subsidy and cash transfer strategies. Yet, in order to find those convergence strategies that optimise the synergies and complementarities between these interventions, we must first understand the institutional architecture behind the implementation of these coordination schemes.



Although political support plays a key role in promoting this type of coordination, it is not sufficient if institutional resistance and inertia are not taken into account, and if there is no coherent design with the appropriate technical conditions and viable incentives.



In the experiences analyzed, a constant resistance has been observed among ministries to work together. While in Africa the ministries of Agriculture are more consolidated and occupy an important space in public policy, in Latin America it is the Ministries of Development or Social Protection that have the greatest technical and budgetary capacity. However, this does not alter the conditions of resistance on both sectors. Also, the agricultural sector tends to prioritize its efforts in promoting larger scale agriculture, considering attention to small producers as the target population of the social sector.

A set of technical mechanisms exist that can help generate incentives and promote coordination, particularly in terms of budgets, targetting, and the definition of the target population. Coordination working groups and other similar formal components, especially if they involve a large number of stakeholders without real decision-making powers, are only effective for the exchange of information, but not for decision-making on fundamental aspects of coordination.



A common strategy to overcome difficulties, which we observed in Peru, Lesotho and Mali, is to implement a productive intervention that is complementary to social protection programmes. These then overcome the difficulties of obtaining political support from other sectors and the differences in priorities in serving small producers. One point to consider in these strategies is the resistance that can be produced among potential beneficiaries, by serving the same household with two different programmes in contexts of extreme vulnerability. The solution to this, in Lesotho and Peru, has been to opt for territorial targetting, thus allowing the participation of all interested households.



Less attention has been paid to vertical coordination, although it is an important aspect to examine, as many design difficulties are resolved during the implementation phase. At this level, it is worth mentioning the capacity and commitment of the teams of managers, promoters or local monitors of the programmes, who, even without a clear mandate, often resolve problems in the territory and promote the achievement of synergies between programmes.



T HIS DOCUMENT PRESENTS THE RESULTS OF THE INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS PERFORMED IN COLOMBIA, MEXICO, PERU, ETHIOPIA, LESOTHO, AND MALI, INTENDED TO ANALYSE THE INSTITUTIONAL, FORMAL, AND INFORMAL MECHANISMS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COORDINATION BETWEEN PROGRAMMES AND/OR COMPONENTS OF SOCIAL PROTECTION AND RURAL PRODUCTIVE DEVELOPMENT.

THE CASES STUDIED

Summary table: Institutional architecture of the cases included in the analysis

Country/ case study		Type of political-institutional architecture	No. of programmes	Intentionality of the coordination
Colombia	Familias en su Tierra (FEST) and the Estrategía UNIDOS	Different programmes, with complementary objectives, run by the same institution	2	Non-intentional
Colombia	Programa Proyectos Productivos	Different and independent programmes, run by different institutions, that target (coincidentally) the same population	2	Non-intentional
Mexico	Proyecto de Inclusión Productiva Rural (PROINPRO) and productive development programmes	Different programmes, with complementary objectives, run by different institutions that coordinate with each other	14	Intentional
Peru	Juntos and Haku Wiñay	Programmes with a complementary design, run by the same institution, forming an integrated strategy	2	Intentional
Ethiopia	Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) and Improved Nutrition through Integrated Basic Social Services with Social Cash Transfer (IN-SCT)	Different programmes, with complementary objectives, run by different institutions that coordinate with each other	2	Intentional
Mali	Nioro Cash+ Project	Unique integrated programme	1	Intentional
Lesotho	Child Grants Programme (CGP) and Sustainable Poverty Reduction through Income, Nutrition and Access to Government Services (SPRINGS)	Programmes with a complementary design, run by the same institution, forming an integrated strategy	2	Intentional

LATIN AMERICA: COLOMBIA, MEXICO AND PERU

Two case studies were conducted in **Colombia**, focusing on programmes that began to be implemented in 2011 to serve families that were victims of the armed conflict. The first study examined the Familias en su Tierra (FEST) programme and the Estrategia de Acompañamiento Familiar y Comunitario (Estrategia UNIDOS), both run by the Department for Social Prosperity. The second case study analysed the Programa Proyectos Productivos (PPP), run by the Special Administrative Unit for Land Management and Restitution (i.e., the Land Restitution Unit, URT).

FEST /Estrategia UNIDOS coordination appeared to be of low intensity, despite the fact that both interventions are implemented by the same institution. The following stood out, among the obstacles to the coordination: i) the programmes being offered by the body responsible respond to government priorities, which tend to vary over time; ii) according to these priorities, the programmes have independent objectives and goals that hinder their interaction; iii) there are no incentives for coordination between programmes or entities.

In spite of the above, a number of formal and informal coordination opportunities were observed. At country-wide level, the regional Social Prosperity offices related to the programmes, generated formal agreements to include a shared targetting criteria. At local level, the Municipal Coordination Working Groups (MAM), which are formed by stakeholders with extensive knowledge of the context and participation processes with the programme beneficiaries, helped to coordinate local authorities and those in charge of public programmes. These interactions between the programmes were observed in dimensions such as food security and social capital, as well as in subjective variables such as the beneficiaries' aspirations and

expectations.

Institutional analysis of the Programa Proyectos Productivos (PPP) also found important differences between formal and informal opportunities for coordination and articulation.

The National System of Comprehensive Care and Reparation for Victims (SNARIV), provides a formal framework to guide and coordinate the actions of each institution involved in comprehensive care for victims of the armed conflict. However, it does not manage to provide a conceptual and operational strategy of articulation that can foster coordination, as there are no specific operational guidelines for coordination between institutions and sectors.

Despite the above, spontaneous coordination was found at local level between the PPP and other programmes such as Somos Rurales, Familias en Acción, and specific joint interventions with the Municipal Units for Agricultural Technical Assistance (UMATAS). However, it was noted that this informal coordination has positive impacts on variables such as savings and social capital. What is particularly relevant in attempting to understand these results is the alliance between the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in Colombia, and the URT, which enables the provision of public services, including access roads to the households' properties, the construction of aqueducts and sewers, and the creation of community associations that guarantee the marketing of agricultural goods produced through the PPP. This is an example of simultaneous interventions, which contribute to the sustainability of restitution, and demonstrate the possibility of generating synergies and complementarities between institutions.

The two cases studied in Colombia provide evidence for the existing potential of coordination strategies to advance the process of support and reparation for victims of the armed conflict, which is legally led by the SNARIV.

In the case of **Mexico**, an analysis was conducted of the Proyecto de Inclusión Productiva Rural (PROINPRO), both in its coordination with the PROSPERA Programa de Inclusión Social, which is the main conditional cash transfers programme of the Ministry of Social Development (SEDESOL), and with the productive development programmes (PDP) provided by different ministries at federal executive level.

The design of PROSPERA's productive inclusion component was supported operationally by the Technical Subcommittee on Employment, Income and Savings (STEIA), an entity that was expected to function as a coordinating node between PROSPERA and an assortment of PDPs. However, this area of intervention, which had been designed for high-level dialogue and negotiation, progressively lost its potential to bring stakeholders together, and ceased to operate with those representatives who had decision-making powers. It thus stopped being a mechanism for establishing agreements and commitments on public policy.

STEIA's failure to fulfil its role as coordinator highlights the need for a viable and simple technical design that defines the appropriate incentives. On the one hand, the lack of a designated budget in the Expenditure Budget of the Federation, which would be able to foster coordination and ensure sectoral interventions, translated into a lack of incentives for productive development programmes to join the strategy proposed by SEDESOL. And on the other, the fact that each productive programme had its own target population, which frequently did not coincide with PROSPERA's target population, was not addressed. In other words, PROSPERA's

target population barely met the requirements for participation and access to the productive supports offered by these programmes.

For its part, the case study in Peru involved the Programa Nacional de Apoyo Directo a los más Pobres -Juntos and its coordination with Haku Wiñay. The former is run by the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion (MIDIS), while Haku Wiñay is administered by of the Social Development Cooperation Fund (FONCODES), which also falls under the same ministry.

After a failed attempt to link Juntos with the productive development programmes of the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (MIN-AGRI), it was decided to design Haku Wiñay as a complementary programme to Juntos, as part of MIDIS's economic inclusion strategy.

The analysis concluded that the problems in coordination between MIDIS and MINAGRI were due to differences in objectives and priorities between the two sectors, as well as the lack of budgetary incentives. While MIDIS seeks the inclusion of small producers, MINAGRI's focus is on promoting agro-exports. This has occurred despite the strong political support by MIDIS and its mandate to coordinate its provision of social programmes with other sectors.

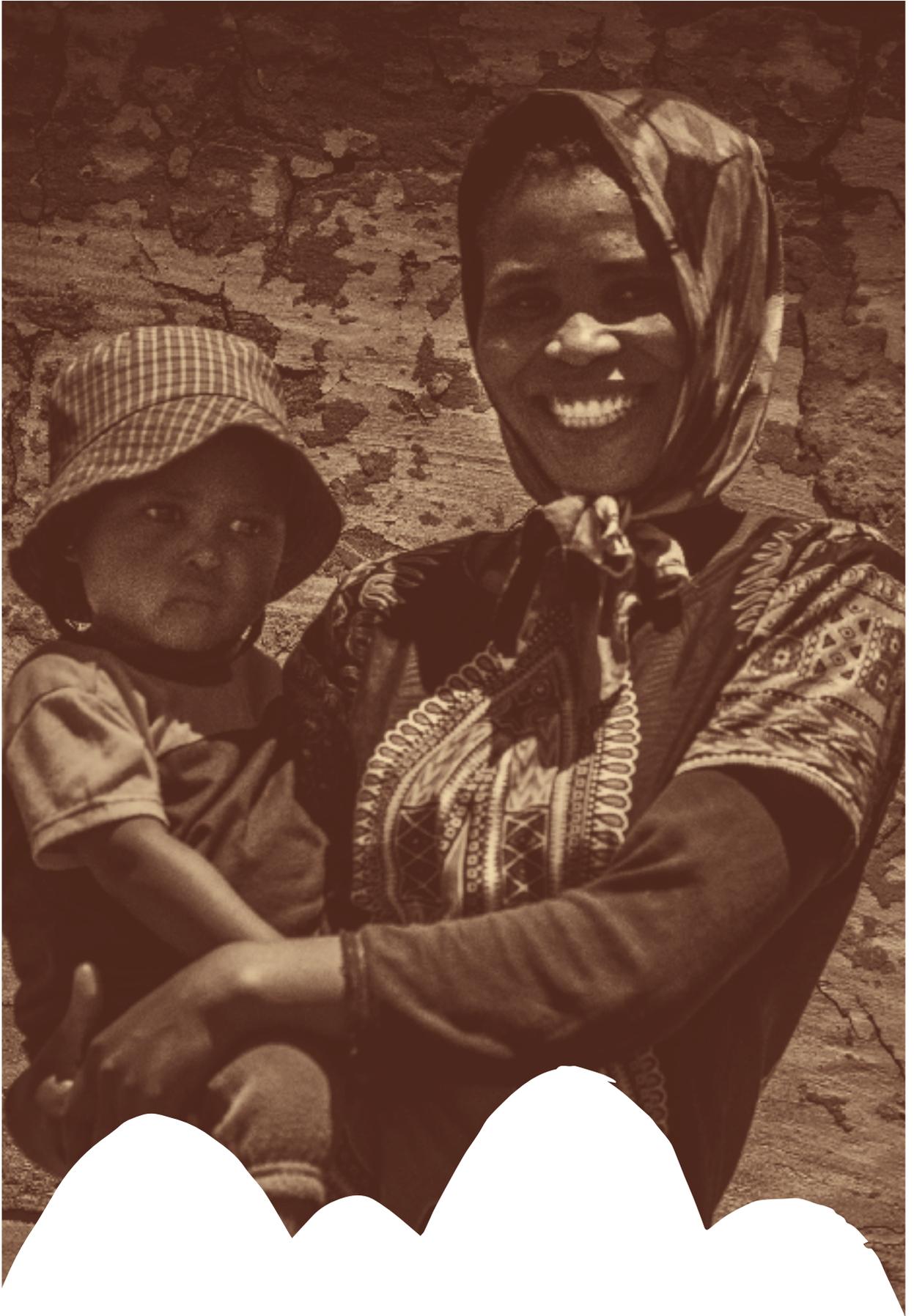
Once Haku Wiñay was created within MIDIS, its coordination with Juntos was defined on the basis of HW's territorial focus in communities with a high participation of Juntos beneficiaries. However, subsequent changes in Haku

Wiñay's targetting criteria have resulted in the loss of the requirement for coordination with Juntos.

Nevertheless, informal coordination mechanisms were identified at the local level thanks to the role played by Juntos local managers. Given that some of the technologies offered by Haku Wiñay are aligned with Juntos goals, local managers have promoted the development of joint activities and undertake work to reinforce messages relevant to both programmes, such as the importance of homestead organic gardening, promoting the construction of a solid waste pit and encouraging the adoption of other technologies promoted by Haku Wiñay.

Figure 1. Synthesis of results from Latin American case studies

Colombia FEST UNIDOS	Colombia PPP	Mexico PROINPRO PDPs	Peru Haku Wiñay Juntos
National level formal agreements to prioritise targetting criteria	SNARIV as a strategy and architecture of coordination	Robust political willingness	Changes in the design of Haku Wiñay have changed the coordination.
Low level of coordination	Low level of coordination, without being able to provide a conceptual and operative coordination strategy	Failure of STEIA as coordinating node. Lack of relevant incentives and budgetary provisions	Differences in priorities and budgets between sectors
Local level informal coordination for the development of programme activities	Local level informal coordination with other institutions and programmes	Differences in the target population and programme requirements	Informal coordination at the local level between programme managers



AFRICA: ETHIOPIA, LESOTHO AND MALI

In **Ethiopia**, an analysis was undertaken of the coordination between the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) - a social protection programme run by the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)- and the Improved Nutrition through Integrated Basic Social Services with Social Cash Transfer (IN-SCT) pilot programme, which is administered by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA).

IN-SCT was designed so as to complement the interventions of the PSNP, targeting beneficiaries considered the most vulnerable population segment and sharing the same budget. The implementation of IN-SCT had to deal with the difficulties derived from the lack of formal binding mechanisms between the ministries involved, which resulted in the retention of the IN-SCT budget by the Federal Food Security Coordination Directorate - FSCD (which falls under the MoA). This affected activities in terms of gender and social development, nutrition and the link-ups of services.

In spite of these difficulties, formal multi-stakeholder coordination initiatives were established at the local level, which allowed for coordinated work and permanent contact between the different stakeholders involved in the programme. This was one of the key aspects in which IN-SCT provided added value to PSNP.

As a result of the above, the institutional analysis revealed important benefits of the coordination between the sectors involved. Based on this experience, MoLSA has managed to position itself and receive recognition from other larger sectors, which has allowed it to greater trust in its capabilities. The experience has also consolidated capacities among the different stakeholders involved, once again to the benefit of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

In the case study of **Lesotho**, an analysis was undertaken of the Child Grants Programme (CGP) -the second most important social assistance programme in the country, and run by the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD)-, along with an analysis of the Sustainable Poverty Reduction through Income, Nutrition and Access to Government Services (SPRINGS) programme-an integrated community development initiative-. The latter emerged following a review and the lessons learnt of two previous interventions by FAO and the Catholic Relief Services (CRS).

SPRINGS was designed as a complementary programme to CGP, through territorial targeting by SPRINGS in communities with a high proportion of vulnerable people and beneficiaries of social protection (not just CGP). This was the only formal criterion for coordination between the two programmes, and there were no formal coordination mechanisms between them.

The institutional analysis revealed informal coordination mechanisms between the different stakeholders involved and at what levels (central, intermediate and local). Coordination was weak at intermediate and central levels, and stronger at local level. As a result of the monthly community council meetings, which included all the NGOs and service providers working within the council, four key stakeholders were able to work together, i.e.. auxiliary social workers from the Ministry of Agriculture; agricultural outreach workers from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security; members of the NGOs implementing the initiative; and the council elected by the local community.

The **Mali** case study consisted in an analysis of the Nioro Cash+ Project, a unique programme that incorporates modalities of social protection and rural productive development. The programme was a pilot project designed and implemented by FAO between 2015 and 2017¹. Its purpose was to provide support in terms of food security and, in the case of one of its modalities (Cash+), facilitate access to and availability of livestock in times of food shortages.

The Nioro Cash+ Project is a unique programme that did not consider coordination mechanisms with other ministries at central level. Despite this, the project considers the local setting as a place to obtain coordination and synergies with other larger-scale initiatives, such as the Emergency Safety Nets projects (Jigisemejiri) and the Food Insecurity and Malnutrition Programme (PLIAM). The institutional analysis indicates that the coordination function with PLIAM was taken up by the PLIAM coordinator, which made it possible, for example, for the health security component of PLIAM to implement strategies for its beneficiaries to register with the mutual health insurance funds. Agreements were also reached with the health centres of the intervention sectors to support beneficiaries of the mutual funds. Within the framework of Cash+, meetings were also held with the Coordination and Technical Unit of Mutual Insurers of PLIAM to provide information and encourage Cash+ participants to register voluntarily. With the Jigisemejiri programme, there was no coordination or formal contact, but Cash+ was able to benefit from Jigisemejiri, using the focus committees that the programme created to carry out its own targeting process with local

participation. The Nioro Cash+ Project excluded Jigisemejiri beneficiaries at the request of village authorities, so as to avoid overlapping benefits and the exclusion of other households.

The institutional analysis was also intended to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the institutional architecture of the national social protection policy, and to assess the quality of its links to agricultural policies and programmes in Mali. The results point to the government's strong political commitment to strengthen coordination policies, however this does not translate into a willingness to generate coherent mechanisms between both sectors. Although intersectoral coordination mechanisms exist at different levels of government, they are subject to difficulties associated with the numerous stakeholders and the lack of coherence in terms of representation in coordination interventions. They also lack of compliance with periodic meetings, nor do they have any clear budgetary mechanisms for coordination between the two sectors.

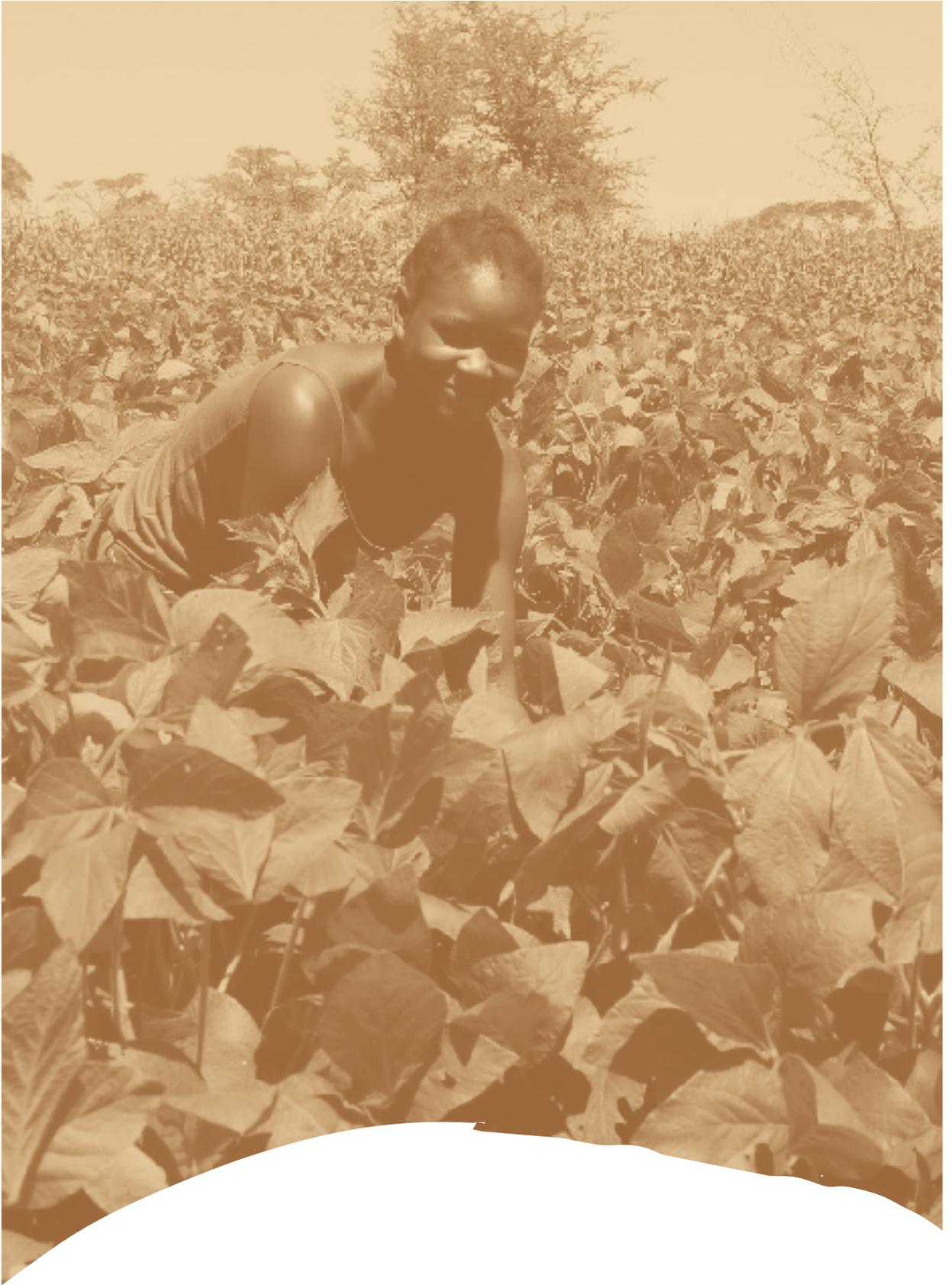


¹ The pilot project was implemented in Mali and Mauritania.



Figure 2. Synthesis of results from African case studies

Ethiopia PSNP IN-SCT	Lesotho CGP SPRINGS	Mali Nioro Cash+ Project
Coordination through the targeting of beneficiaries	Coordination through territorial targeting with the beneficiaries of social protection	Formal coordination at the countrywide level not considered
Lack of formal linking mechanisms between the ministries involved	There were no other formal coordination mechanisms between the two programmes	Informal coordination at the local level with PLIAM
Formal coordination at the local level led to permanent contact with stakeholders	Informal coordination at different levels. At the local level this permitted the coordinated work of key stakeholders	There was no contact with Jigisemejiri, but benefits were obtained from their participation mechanisms



POLITICAL WILL, INCENTIVES FOR COORDINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION AT LOCAL LEVEL: KEY LESSONS FROM THE INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS

One aspect that plays a fundamental role in promoting coordination efforts is the **political support** of government authorities. Even so, the evidence indicates that this **is a necessary but not sufficient condition on its own** to ensure that the different sectors and their institutions work in coordination to create joint cooperation agreements.

It is therefore necessary to complement political willingness with **adequate technical conditions** that make coordination possible. In this sense, budgetary aspects play a key role in the articulation and coordination of policies and programmes, especially when those involved hold different views on institutional work and coordination is seen as a cost rather than a benefit.

In this regard, there is a fundamental difference between Africa and Latin America, which is the different relative weight of the social and agricultural ministerial sectors in the public apparatus, in general, and with respect to budgetary matters, in particular. While in Latin America, social development ministries have more political weight and resources than their agricultural counterparts, in Africa this relationship is reversed, with the social ministries being relatively new and social protection programmes still not well consolidated.

Other critical aspects for a design that promotes coordination are the targeting and definition of the target population. In the experiences analysed, there is a reoccurring lack of willingness to adapt the productive support instruments to the most vulnerable groups of the rural population.

When these aspects are not adequately resolved at design level, they translate into problems at the time of implementation. However, and in most of the cases analysed, the multiple relationships and interactions that are established in managing the programmes in the field, end up compensating for the lack of coordination at design level. This finding encourages us **to highlight the importance of the local level and its stakeholders in the success of the interventions.**

It is also worth mentioning the capacity and commitment of the programme's local teams of managers, promoters, and monitors, who, even without a clear mandate, often resolve problems during the implementation phase.

Furthermore, and as just as important as the above, they play a fundamental role in strengthening the beneficiaries' soft skills -as seen in the cases of Mali and Peru-, by promoting hygiene and healthy eating habits, promoting the use of certain technologies, and training on association and savings strategies, among other critical factors. In addition to these and other informal mechanisms, sometimes formal mechanisms also operate more efficiently at regional/local than at the national level. This is illustrated by the work of the Woreda IN-SCT Steering Committee and the Kebel FSTS, which make it possible for the activities of the Nioro Cash+ Project in Mali to be coordinated with programmes such as PLIAM and Jigisemejiri.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The institutional analysis leads to important recommendations, both for development aid and cooperation agencies, and for governments interested in promoting coordination mechanisms between their social protection and productive development programmes, in order to overcome rural poverty. As shown in this document, simple institutional architectures with the right incentives can have enormous potential to promote synergies and their consequent contribution to increasing household income and resilience, supporting socio-economic recovery following the crisis caused by the COVID-19 emergency.

Some of these recommendations are general and others encourage the adoption of differentiated strategies to support these processes in Africa and Latin America. This is because the results of the analysis confirm the institutional differences between middle/upper middle income and low/lower middle income countries.

Given the weight of the institutional inertia rooted in Latin American organisational culture, it is recommended **to promote the design of multidimensional programmes that integrate the social and productive dimension into a single design that is managed by a single sector.** The coverage of conditional transfer programmes is widespread in the region and it is being complemented with direct transfer mechanisms to respond to the crisis resulting from the pandemic. Even the issue of minimum income has entered the debate. In this context, the social aspect should focus on providing the beneficiary population with the initial skills required to make better use of the productive options that the programme would offer them, and connect them to social programmes and services in each country.

Another recommendation is to **situate these programmes in Latin American**

agriculture ministries rather than their social development counterparts. This will avoid interinstitutional jealousy and budgetary differences, such as the ones described in this document, which go against the visibility and potential priority assigned to the programme.

In low- and middle-income countries, such as those in Africa, it is very important to continue to focus on a financial and technical support strategy through cooperation agencies and international **NGOs to support the strengthening of ministries and public services. This strengthening includes the design of formal coordination mechanisms that create adequate coordination incentives.** Greater institutional weakness may represent, in this context, an opportunity to incorporate cooperation and articulation agreements from early on, which, as we have seen, can be very difficult to promote in contexts of greater strength, but also of greater institutional rigidity.

Along with the above, and for both cases, it is recommended that **special attention be paid beginning at the design stage to the role that the local level is expected to play in the implementation of programmes.** This must be based on an adequate and exhaustive knowledge of the capacities, stakeholders and sources of resistance that may be at play at this level in order to reinforce the strengths and mitigate possible risks derived from inadequate consideration of the key role that all of the experiences analysed show the local level to play. Strengthening the response capacity at this level is of particular importance in the context of the current socioeconomic crisis, as a result of the health emergency caused by COVID-19. This is engendered by the fact that different territories have been affected by the pandemic to different degrees and, therefore, require different reactivation strategies.



TECHNICAL SHEET

The Project

Over the past few years, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), together with Universidad de Los Andes and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), have been analysing the potential synergistic effects of interventions on rural households that involve social protection programmes and productive rural development projects. IFAD and Universidad de Los Andes have implemented this project through the “Conditional Cash Transfers and Rural Development in Latin America” grant (www.sinergiasrurales.info/); and FAO through the project entitled “From Protection to Production: The role of Social Cash Transfers in the Promotion of Economic Development” (PtoP) (www.fao.org/economic/ptop). Some evidence of such synergies and complementarities has been identified, but the evidence has also raised new questions. These inquiries are related to the types of synergies and how to take advantage of them, the correct sequencing of programme rollout, the institutional reforms that need to take place and the political economy behind these options, and thus improve the results of the programmes.

To answer some of these questions, the project entitled “Improving the Coordination between Social Protection and Rural Development Interventions in Developing Countries: Lessons from Latin America and Africa” - which is being developed by Universidad de Los Andes (UNIANDES), through its Centre for Economic Development Studies (CEDE), and financed by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) - seeks to gather evidence of the benefits of such coordinated interventions.

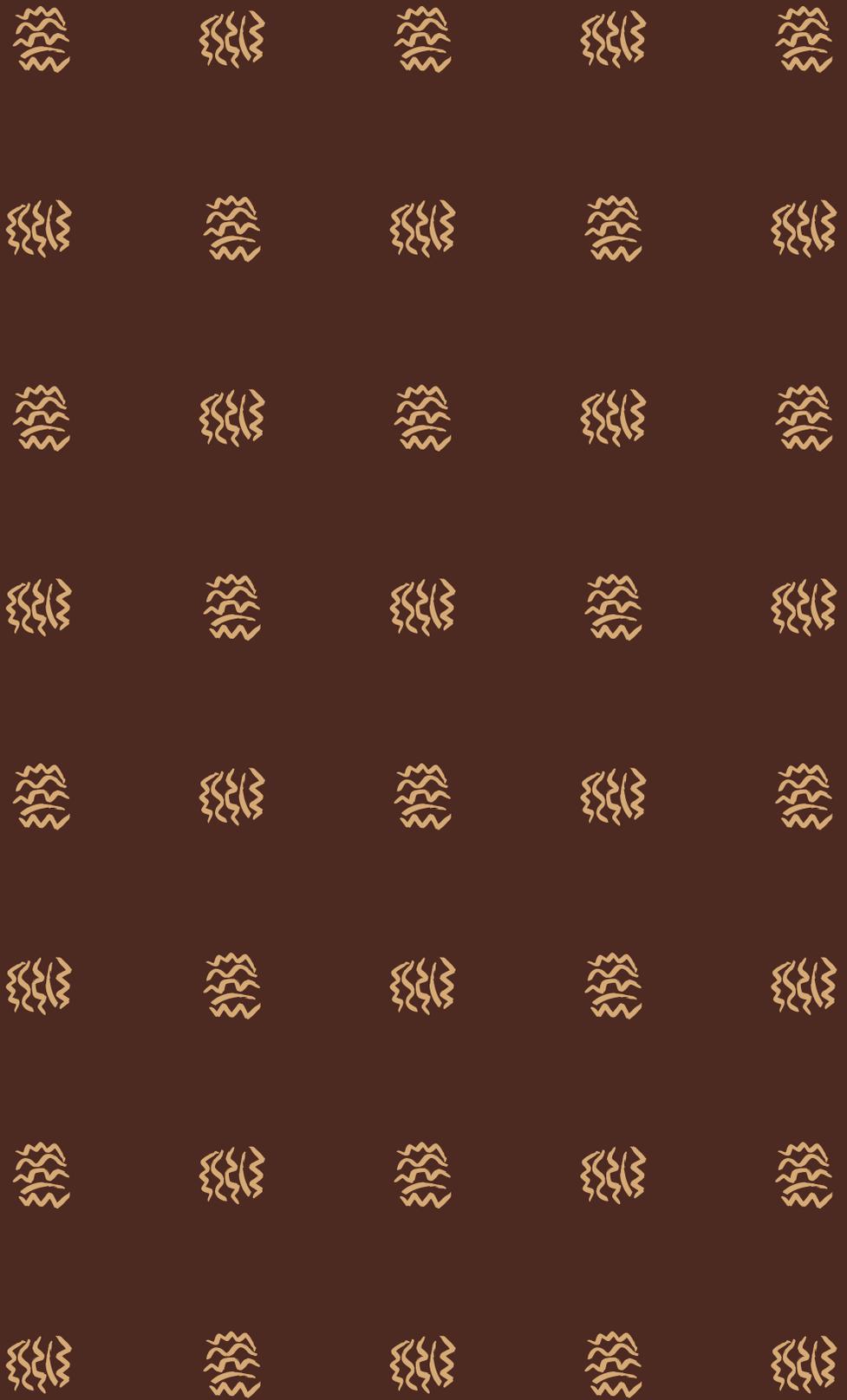
The goal of the project is to gather evidence for policymakers and donors of the benefits of the coordinated interventions that could provide inputs

regarding the appropriate institutional and operational design, and enable them to use these inputs as a basis for improving anti-poverty interventions targeted at rural households, thus helping small farmers to take a proactive part in rural transformation.

The main objective of the project is to try to influence governmental institutions related to rural development and social protection (anti-poverty) policies, so they can take advantage of identified synergies between social protection and productive initiatives. The project was implemented in seven countries, three in Latin America and four in Africa.

The evaluation undertaken

The same methodology -adapted to the national conditions- was used for each of the case studies. This methodology consisted of an exhaustive review of the national legal framework that accompanies the programmes, as well as operational documents and other available secondary information. This information was complemented by in-depth interviews with national and subnational political authorities and programme technical managers.



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