



IDS WORKING PAPER

Volume **2011** Number **367**

Analysing Success in the Fight against Malnutrition in Peru

Andrés Mejía Acosta
May 2011



Analysing Success in the Fight against Malnutrition in Peru
Andrés Mejía Acosta
IDS Working Paper 367
First published by the Institute of Development Studies in May 2011
© Institute of Development Studies 2011
ISSN: 1353-6141 ISBN: 978 1 85864 995 1

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.
All rights reserved. Reproduction, copy, transmission, or translation of any part of this publication may be made only under the following conditions:

- with the prior permission of the publisher; or
- with a licence from the Copyright Licensing Agency Ltd., 90 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 9HE, UK,
or from another national licensing agency; or
- under the terms set out below.

This publication is copyright, but may be reproduced by any method without fee for teaching or nonprofit purposes, but not for resale. Formal permission is required for all such uses, but normally will be granted immediately. For copying in any other circumstances, or for re-use in other publications, or for translation or adaptation, prior written permission must be obtained from the publisher and a fee may be payable.

Available from:
Communications Unit, Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, Brighton BN1 9RE, UK
Tel: +44 (0) 1273 915637 Fax: +44 (0) 1273 621202
E-mail: bookshop@ids.ac.uk
Web: www.ids.ac.uk/ids/bookshop
IDS is a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England (No. 877338)

Analysing Success in the Fight against Malnutrition in Peru

Andrés Mejía Acosta

Summary

The prevalence of underweight children worldwide fell from 31 per cent in 1990 to 26 per cent in 2008 (UNICEF 2009). However, progress is still slow and very uneven. Half of the countries have made progress on hunger, but levels of malnutrition did not improve in 28 countries and got worse in 24. The case of Peru appears to be an encouraging exception to the rule. With the support of CARE and others organisations from civil society and the donor community, the Peruvian Government has generated the political momentum to overcome obstacles and create national coordination structures and mechanisms, increase public (and private) spending on programs to tackle malnutrition and align social programs with the national nutrition strategy (known as CRECER). This included adding conditionalities on taking children to regular growth monitoring in the Conditional Cash Transfer programme, JUNTOS. The international aid system has also aligned itself around CRECER. After ten years of almost no change in child chronic malnutrition (stunting) rates (25.8 per cent in 1996, and 22.9 per cent in 2005 – with rural rates moving from 40.4 per cent to 40.1 per cent), this change in strategy has started to lead to results: malnutrition rates fell to 17.9 per cent between 2005 and 2010, with reductions mainly occurring in rural areas where malnutrition rates are highest (from 40.1 per cent in 2005 to 31.3 per cent in 2010) according to the Peruvian National Statistical Office (INEI). Over 130,000 children under five are now not chronically malnourished who would have been had rates not fallen. Indeed, there is a strong case to be made that these changes would not have occurred without the formation in early 2006 of the Child Nutrition Initiative, and its advocacy success in getting ten Presidential candidates to sign a commitment to reduce chronic malnutrition in children under five by 5 per cent in five years ('5 by 5 by 5'), followed by the support provided subsequently to the new government to meet that commitment.

This paper documents and systematises Peru's recent experience in tackling malnutrition. Through an intensive review of quantitative and qualitative evidence, it argues that success is not explained by the presence of favourable socioeconomic changes in Peru, and it explores the political determinants of success in three dimensions. Horizontally, it looks at government efforts to form policy coalitions across representatives of different government and non-government agencies; it looks at the vertical integration of agencies and programmes between national, regional and municipal governments, and it analyses the allocation of government resources used to fund the government's nutrition effort.

In closing, the paper identifies some salient challenges to ensure long term sustainability of the initiative and draws policy recommendations and knowledge sharing lessons that could be of use for Southern Governments, donor agencies and civil society organisations.

Keywords: Peru; political economy; malnutrition; sub national politics; poverty reduction; political parties.

Andrés Mejía Acosta is a political scientist (Notre Dame 2004) and a Governance Research Fellow at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), University of Sussex. His research looks at how formal and informal political institutions contribute to policy change in Latin America and the Caribbean. His recently published book *'Informal Coalitions and Policymaking in Latin America'* (New York: Routledge 2009) explains the formal and informal mechanisms used by minority presidents in Ecuador to form legislative coalitions and adopt reforms through a highly fragmented legislature. His recent work at IDS analyses the workings of democratic accountability mechanisms to improve governance in different policy areas, such as legislatures, the budgetary process, the management of natural resources, and other areas of service delivery. He is currently working on a book manuscript on the political management of natural resource revenues in the Andean region.

Contents

Summary	3
Keywords, author note	4
Acknowledgements, abbreviations	6
Introduction.....	8
Approach and methodology	8
Paper overview	9
1. Global trends and reduction of malnutrition in Peru	9
1.1 What is the magnitude of chronic malnutrition reduction in Peru?	10
1.2 Peru in comparative perspective	10
1.3 Historical evolution and comparative performance.....	11
1.4 Socioeconomic determinants of change.....	13
2. The Peruvian context: social policies 1985–2010	19
2.1 Food security and government assistance	20
2.2 Recent government efforts in reducing child malnutrition.....	21
2.3 CRECER and the strategy for poverty reduction.....	22
2.4 JUNTOS	24
3. The politics of reducing malnutrition in Peru	26
3.1 The Child Nutrition Initiative.....	26
3.2 Horizontal coordination: multi-sectoral articulation	28
3.3 Vertical coordination: multi-level governance	30
3.4 Coordination from below: the case of Ayacucho	31
3.5 Costing nutrition strategies: Results Based Budgeting.....	33
4. Sustainability challenges and policy recommendations	35
4.1 Political challenges	36
4.2 Legal and organisational challenges	38
4.3 Economic challenges.....	39
5. Appendix	40
5.1 Terms of reference	40
5.2 Research protocol and survey questions (in Spanish)	44
5.3 Directory of interviewees	46
References	48

Figures

Figure 1.1 Average GDP growth rates (2000–2009) and prevalence of stunting (most recent year data is available). Latin America and the Caribbean.	11
Figure 1.2 Chronic child malnutrition in Peru, 1975–2010	12
Figure 1.3 Proportion of children under 5 with chronic malnutrition, by region (2009).....	13
Figure 1.4 Change in chronic child malnutrition (2009) vs. regional GDP growth (2000–2009) and public expenditure by region (2005–2009).	15
Figure 1.5 Extraction taxes paid to regional and local governments (2001–9) / change in child malnutrition (2000–9), logged values.	16
Figure 1.6 Change in child malnutrition (2000–9) / urban population growth (1993–2007), by region	17
Figure 1.7 Change in child malnutrition (2000–2009) / regional poverty level (2001–2009)	18
Figure 2.1 Articulation and coordination levels	23

Box

Box 3.1 Effective Inter-sectoral and Vertical Cooperation: the case of JUNTOS.....	29
--	----

Acknowledgements

This report benefited from valuable contributions and comments of Lawrence Haddad, Director, Institute of Development Studies. Linnet Taylor provided invaluable research assistance. The author also wishes to thank and acknowledge the support of the staff at CARE, especially Jay Goulden, Carlos Rojas, Walter Vilchez and Fiorella Oneeglio without whom this work would have not been made possible. All omissions and errors are responsibility of the author. The research has been supported by UKaid from the Department for International Development (DFID). The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the department's official policies.

Abbreviations

ACF	Action against Hunger
CNI	Child Nutrition Initiative
CST	Committee on Supervision and Transparency
CIAS	Inter-Ministerial Commission for Social Affairs (Comisión Interministerial de Asuntos Sociales)
DFID	Department for International Development
ENDES	National Survey of Nutrition and Health (Encuesta Nacional de Nutrición y Salud)
FONCODES	National Fund for Development Cooperation (Fondo Nacional de Cooperación para el Desarrollo)
GDP	Growth Domestic Product
GIZ	Organization for international cooperation (Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit)
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IEP	Institute of Peruvian Studies (Instituto de Estudios Peruanos)
INEI	Peruvian National Statistical Office (Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática)
MCLCP	Roundtable for Poverty Reduction (Mesa de Concertación para la lucha Contra la Pobreza)
MCHN	Mother and Child Health and Nutrition
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MEF	Ministry of Finance and Economics (Ministerio de Economía y Finanzas)
MIMDES	Ministry of Women and Social Development (Ministerio de la Mujer y Desarrollo Social)
MTC	Multi-Sectoral Technical Committees
MVCS	Ministry of Housing, Construction and Sanitation (Ministerio de Vivienda, Construcción y Saneamiento)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
ONAA	National Office for Food Support (Oficina Nacional de Apoyo Alimentario)
PAD	Direct Assistance Program
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PCM	Council of Ministers at the Office of the Presidency (Presidencia del Consejo de Ministros)
PIN	Integrated Nutrition Program (Programa Integral de Nutrición)
PRODIA	Proyecto de Desarrollo Integral con Apoyo Alimentario
PRONAA	National Program for Food Assistance (Programa Nacional de Asistencia Alimentaria)

RBB	Results-Based Budgeting (Presupuesto por Resultados)
SIS	Integrated Health Insurance (Seguro Integral de Salud)
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Program

Introduction

Between 1995 and 2005, malnutrition rates in Peru were virtually static, dropping from 25.8 per cent to only 22.9 per cent. But in the 2005–2010 period, the rates fell much more rapidly, to 17.9 per cent, with an even greater reduction in rural areas (40.1 per cent to 31.3 per cent). This paper asks why the rate accelerated and what the political economy drivers behind this success were. The report argues that government success in reducing malnutrition was less related to structural factors such as economic growth or the commodities boom. Rather, nutrition improvements appear to be associated with (1) greater government efforts to create national coordination structures and mechanisms, (2) increased targeted public (and private) spending on nutrition programs, and (3) alignment of social programs with the national nutrition strategy (known as CRECER).

One of the flagship social programmes associated with the reduction in malnutrition rates is the adoption of JUNTOS, a conditional cash transfer programme granted to the poorest, mostly rural, households. One of the salient features of the Peruvian success is the fundamental role played by the international aid system and civil society organisations in the formation in early 2006 of the Child Nutrition Initiative (CNI hereafter) that recognised the multi-causal nature of the problem and effectively lobbied the government to prioritise the allocation of resources and formation of policy around proven tactics against chronic child malnutrition. The initiative contributed to the design, implementation and dissemination of government efforts in the fight against malnutrition. It also provided clear programmatic guidance, lent opportune technical assistance for effective programme implementation, and generated the necessary political momentum by getting ten Presidential candidates to sign in 2006 a commitment to reduce chronic malnutrition in children under five by 5 per cent in five years ('5 by 5').

Approach and methodology

This study adopts a political economy analysis to document the success in adopting policy reforms and analyse their prospects for long term sustainability. It is argued that successful policy change takes place when a sufficient number of veto players share similar policy preferences (Tsebelis 2002). Swift policy change can occur when policymakers delegate authority to a single leader or agenda setter, but this new policy can only be enforced and *maintained* when other stakeholders derive a visible direct benefit from this type of change in the long run. Often, policymakers need to assemble reform coalitions with other players (elected and non-elected across different levels of government), to ensure that new actors are committed to supporting the new policy.

Using the insights of veto players' theory, this paper analyses two dimensions along which reform coalitions could have been assembled. Horizontally, it explores whether the government made efforts to cement policy coalitions with representatives of different government sectors and non-government agencies. Vertically, it analyses if the government sought to promote policy changes across different national and sub-national territories, looking at the extent to which stakeholders collaborated with one another in achieving nutrition targets. In addition to these two dimensions, the paper analyses the nature and allocation of financial and budgetary resources to fund the government's nutrition effort.

In order to document success strategies, the paper combines case specific in-depth qualitative information regarding government efforts to fight chronic malnutrition, with comparative and objective quantitative information about the existing dynamics. Qualitatively, the study builds on stakeholder interviews conducted during a one week visit to Lima and

Ayacucho during 8 to 15 November 2010. The interviews sought to explore and understand the coordination efforts and political dynamics around this successful nutrition effort (see Appendix B for questionnaire). In total, we interviewed 26 people selected from a broad range of elected and non elected government officials, non government and cooperation agencies, as well as regional and local governments in Lima and Ayacucho (see Appendix C for complete list). Some of these stakeholders were key players in the national government (Ministry of the Presidency, Line Ministries), elected government officials (legislators, regional presidents who lead the 25 Peruvian regions, and municipal mayors), donor and technical assistance agencies (USAID, UNICEF, World Bank), and research and civil society organisations such as the Instituto de Estudios Peruanos (IEP), PRISMA (a Peruvian NGO), the Instituto de Investigación Nutricional (IIN) and CARE. In addition to the qualitative information, the study documents and analyses secondary data on nutrition and food security, obtained from National Statistics Agency reports (INEI), National Census, donor project documents, government strategy papers and reports, and systematisation studies since 1998.

Paper overview

The first part of this paper documents the magnitude and general trends in the reduction of chronic malnutrition in Peru and examines the scope of reduction and alternative explanations for them. The second part briefly documents the evolution of social policies in Peru since the 1990s. The third part explains how the current government strategy differs from the previous pattern and focuses on the two flagship programs of social policy: CRECER (the National Strategy for Poverty Alleviation) and JUNTOS (the Conditional Cash Transfer programme). The next part develops in greater detail the ‘political economy of reducing malnutrition’ in Peru, with special attention to the formation of the Child Nutrition Initiative (CNI), and its role in coordinating a large number of stakeholders, the provision of technical expertise and the efforts for securing greater public visibility and political commitment around the Initiative. This section draws attention to three critical dimensions: the ‘horizontal’ articulation between government sectors, the ‘vertical’ coordination across different territorial units, and the ‘costing’ of the national malnutrition strategy based on results based budgeting. The fifth section explores the challenges for sustainability of the government effort and the final part elaborates policy recommendations and knowledge sharing lessons about success that could be of use for Southern Governments, donor agencies and civil society organisations.

1. Global trends and reduction of malnutrition in Peru

This section analyses the magnitude and the validity of the reported improvement in nutrition by exploring whether the improvements are significant when taken in historical and comparative perspective. For the historical perspective, we look at nutrition changes in different historical periods since 1975. For the comparative framework, we rely on a comparison with other Latin American countries. More importantly, this section begins to explore the impact of some socioeconomic factors like economic growth, fiscal transfers, urbanisation, increases in access to basic services, and poverty reduction, on the reduction of chronic malnutrition. The reported evidence does not suggest that the apparent success in Peru is a direct function of an ‘income’ effect. This lack of evidence for structural explanations leads us to explore, in the following section of the paper, the political economy explanations of success, associated with effective government strategies.

1.1 What is the magnitude of chronic malnutrition reduction in Peru?

There are three different measures of malnutrition. Wasting (low weight for height) is a measure of underweight, usually as a result of a disaster. Stunting (low height for age) is a measure of chronic cumulative deprivations. Underweight (low weight for age) is a mix of the two indicators and is often used as an all-purpose measure. Undernutrition is caused by the interaction of poor diet and infection, underpinned by combinations of household food insecurity, poor infant feeding and caring behaviours and a weak health environment. In Peru the principal issue currently is chronic malnutrition, measured as the retardation of growth among children younger than five. This problem, also known as stunting, is a manifestation of long-term malnutrition that is associated with adverse health, educational and economic outcomes (the latter reducing productivity and resources both at the family and the national level). In this paper, the references to malnutrition refer to stunting unless otherwise specified.

Peru saw a 5 per cent drop in overall chronic child malnutrition between 2005 and 2010, from 22.9 per cent to 17.9 per cent according to the national statistics agency, INEI.¹ There was no drop in urban malnutrition, which rose slightly to 10.1 per cent, but a 8.8 per cent drop in rural malnutrition, from 40.1 to 31.3 per cent over the five year period between 2005 and 2010 (INEI 2010).²

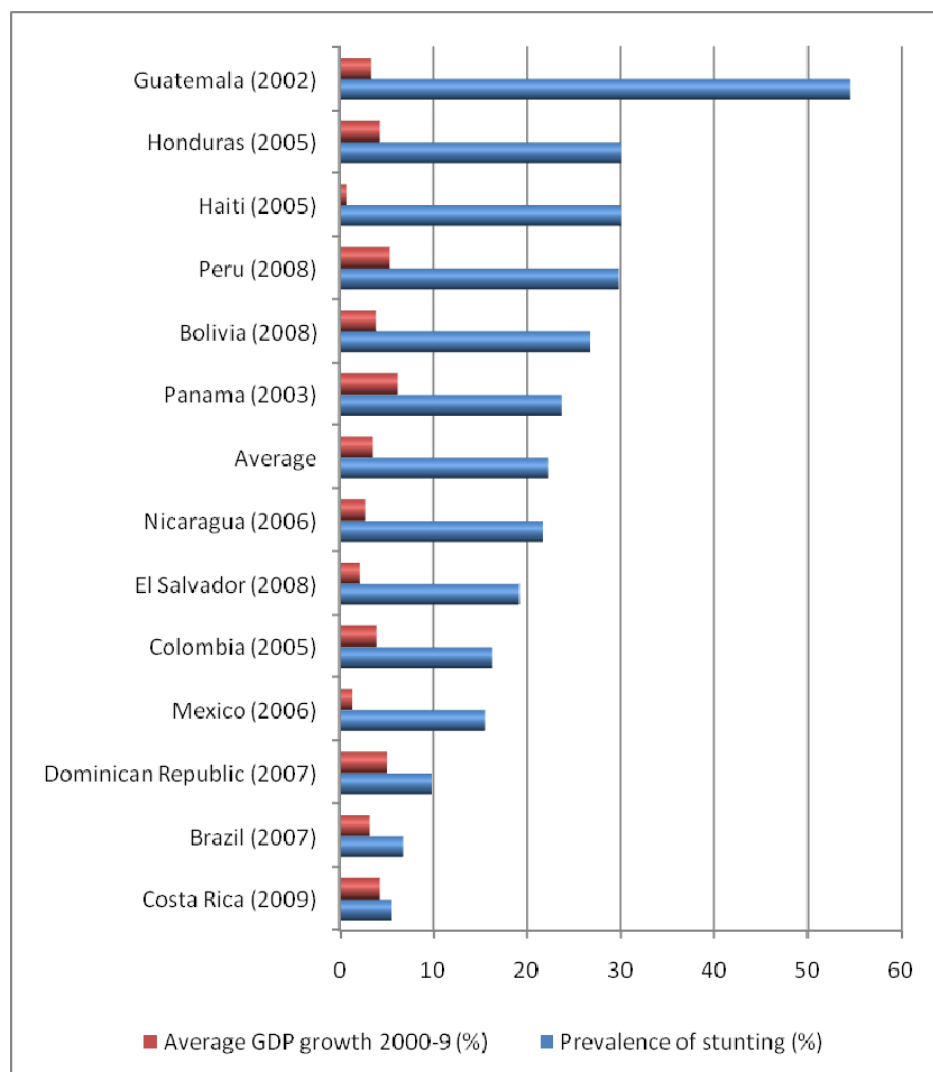
1.2 Peru in comparative perspective

The following chart (Figure 1.1) shows the prevalence of stunting among children under five, using the most recent official figures available for each country, from the years as shown, in Latin America and the Caribbean. To give a sense of comparison, it also illustrates the average GDP growth rates for those countries between 2000 and 2009. According to the data, Peru in 2008 had one of the highest rates of under nutrition in the region (29.8 per cent) according to the 2006 World Health Organization child growths standards, more than seven points above the regional average (22.3 per cent). This prevalence is especially significant taking into account the fact that Peru was the second fastest growing economy in the region after Panama and slightly above Dominican Republic, two countries with lower stunting rates in previous years (23.7 per cent and 9.8 per cent respectively).

¹ The year 2005 was taken as a baseline to set the goals for reducing chronic child malnutrition rates in Peru.

² There are two main sources of data in Peru, one produced by the National Survey of households (ENAH) and the other by the Demographic Survey and Family Health (ENDES). The ENAH data show a drop from 28 to 23.8 per cent from 2005-2009: a 4.2 per cent drop nationally, with a rural drop of 6.8 per cent (47.1 to 40.3 per cent), and a 0.7-point rise in urban malnutrition (13.5 to 14.2 per cent). Most of the data used and reported correspond to ENDES as it offers a more consistent long term data series, compared to ENAH which adjusted the series after 2004 after some methodological corrections. The figures here use the NCHS – the National Center for Health Statistics/WHO international growth reference to determine incidence of chronic malnutrition, rather than the more recent WHO growth standards (launched in April 2006), as the NCHS standards are currently more widely used in Peru. Where figures for stunting are in reference to the new 2006 WHO growth standards, this is explicitly stated in the report.

Figure 1.1 Average GDP growth rates (2000–2009) and prevalence of stunting (most recent year data is available). Latin America and the Caribbean.



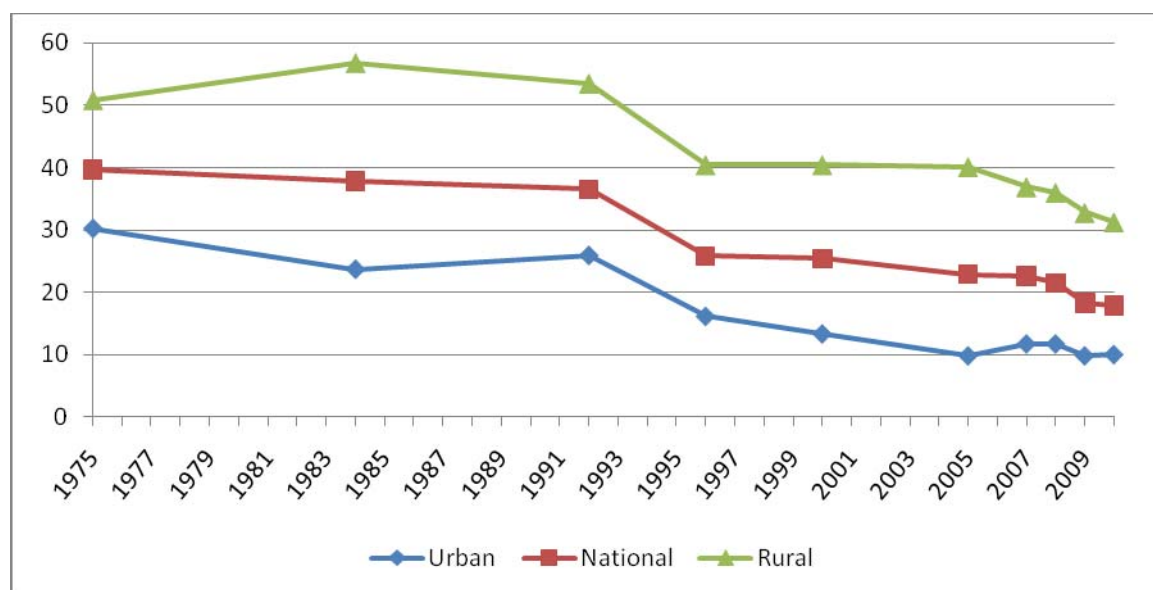
Sources: Stunting data – WHO analyses of DHS or Centers for Disease Control and Prevention surveys, Bull World Health Organ 2011; 89:22–30. GDP data – World Bank.

1.3 Historical evolution and comparative performance

A historical analysis of changes in nutrition in Peru over time reveals at least three periods of change, as shown by Figure 1.2: (a) a steady decline in malnutrition between the start of the time series in 1975 until the first Fujimori administration in 1996; (b) a relative ‘stalling’ in performance between 1996 and 2005, and (c) a renewed improvement after 2005.³

³ From 1975–92 the national percentage decline was $(39.7-36.5)/17$ years or 0.188 per cent per year. For 96-2005 the corresponding rate was $(25.8-22.9)/9$ or 0.3 per cent per year and for 2005–2009 it was $(22.9-17.9)/4$ or 1.3 per cent per year. So in the 1996–2005 period the rate of change was slightly higher than in the past (except for the sharp fall between 1992–1996), as well as substantially lower than the future. The difference between changes in malnutrition rates in rural areas is particularly remarkable between the 1996–2005 period and the 2005–2009 period.

Figure 1.2 Chronic child malnutrition in Peru, 1975–2010



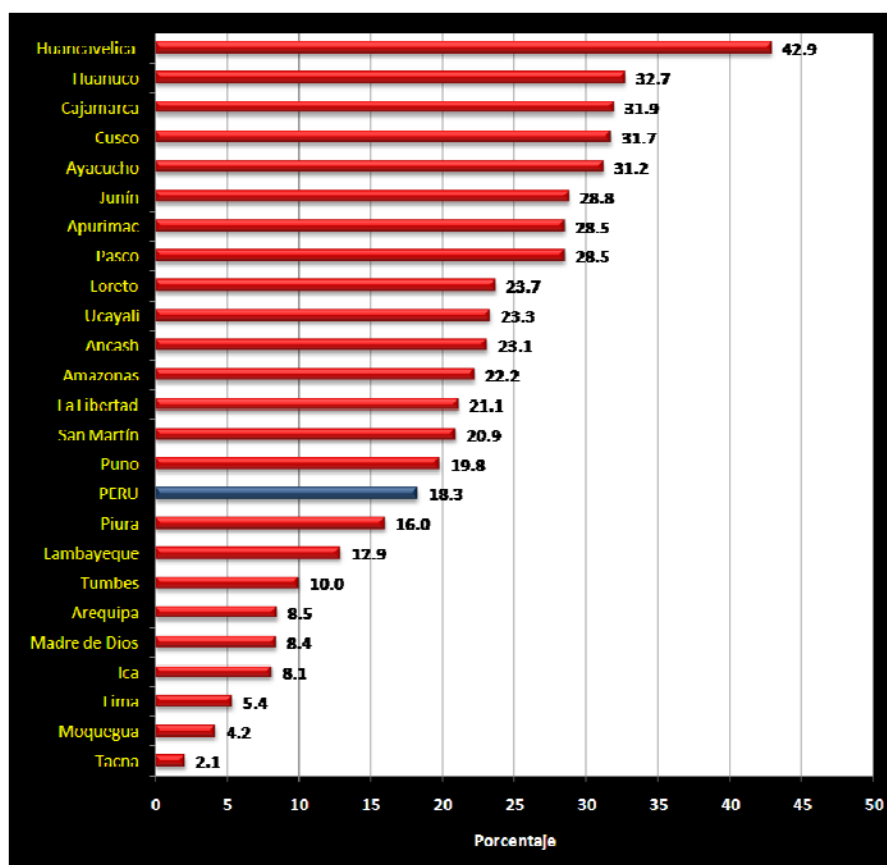
Sources: ENDES (INEI), 1992–2009, Encuesta Demográfica y de Salud Familiar (Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática) 1984; Encuesta Nacional del Poblador Peruano. (Ministerio de Salud, Instituto de Nutrición) 1975.

The first period could be largely explained by the greater socioeconomic modernisation that Peru witnessed, featuring factors like increased migration to cities, better access to education, and improved infrastructure, among others. During the late 1980s, a rise in urban malnutrition coincided with a drop in rural malnutrition. This may be related to the acute phase of the violent guerrilla conflict in Peru, which drove rural-urban migration and thus moved much poverty to Peru's cities. The easing of the conflict in the early 1990s coincided with the country's recovery from structural reforms and the revival of social spending. This combination produced an unprecedented reduction in malnutrition indicators during the first half of the 1990s. In the following ten years however, malnutrition indicators did not change significantly; although there was an important drop in urban malnutrition (from 16.2 per cent in 1995 to 9.9 per cent in 2005), rural malnutrition remained virtually unchanged (40.4 per cent to 40.1 per cent), thus stalling the national indicator. The rural and national rates of malnutrition began to fall once again after 2005, despite the short bulge of the urban indicator for that period.⁴ A closer look at the post 2005 reduction, and a key argument of this paper suggests that reduction could be attributable to the 2005 introduction of JUNTOS and the National Health Insurance programme (SIS),⁵ the June 2007 introduction of the CRECER poverty alleviation strategy, and the 2008 adoption of 'budgeting for results' approach. All of these government interventions featured the fight against malnutrition as the core set of priorities.

⁴ According to the 2007 National Census data, 75.9 per cent of the Peruvian population is urban, whereas 24.1 per cent is rural. In relative terms, it means that the urban improvement was considerable, but the difference may not be significant in absolute terms.

⁵ The SIS was introduced in 2001. www.sis.gob.pe/Portal/quienes_somos/antecedentes.html

Figure 1.3 Proportion of children under 5 with chronic malnutrition, by region (2009)



Source: INEI – Encuesta Demográfica y de Salud Familiar ENDES 2009.

A sub national picture of malnutrition in Peru reveals severe disparities in malnutrition rates. First of all there is a marked centre-periphery gap: malnutrition rates are among the lowest in the capital city of Lima compared to other provinces. Huancavelica, on the other hand, shows a malnutrition rate comparable to African nations such as Burundi, Madagascar or Malawi (UNICEF 2009). The regions located in the Andean sierra (Cajamarca, Cusco, Ayacucho), as well as those of the Amazonian area (Loreto, Ucayali, Amazonas and San Martín) are lagging far behind the coastal regions (Lima, Ica, Tumbes). Interestingly, there does not seem to be significant variation between mining regions that greatly benefitted from revenues of the commodities boom (Cajamarca) and those that were not eligible for such additional transfers (Ayacucho). In both cases, the average nutrition rates were above 31 per cent.

1.4 Socioeconomic determinants of change

Is the significant reduction in malnutrition rates associated with marked improvements in the socioeconomic environment, such as economic growth, greater fiscal transfers, the influence of mining rents or overall poverty reduction? This section compares some of the most relevant indicators to understand whether improvements are related to structural conditions or deliberate and effective government strategies. The following comparisons showing rates of chronic child malnutrition reflect a combination of census and inter-census data from the Peruvian Encuesta Demográfica y de Salud Familiar (Demographic and Family Health survey), or ENDES. Regional-level data on chronic malnutrition was collected in 2000, with further baseline surveys completed in 2007 and 2009.

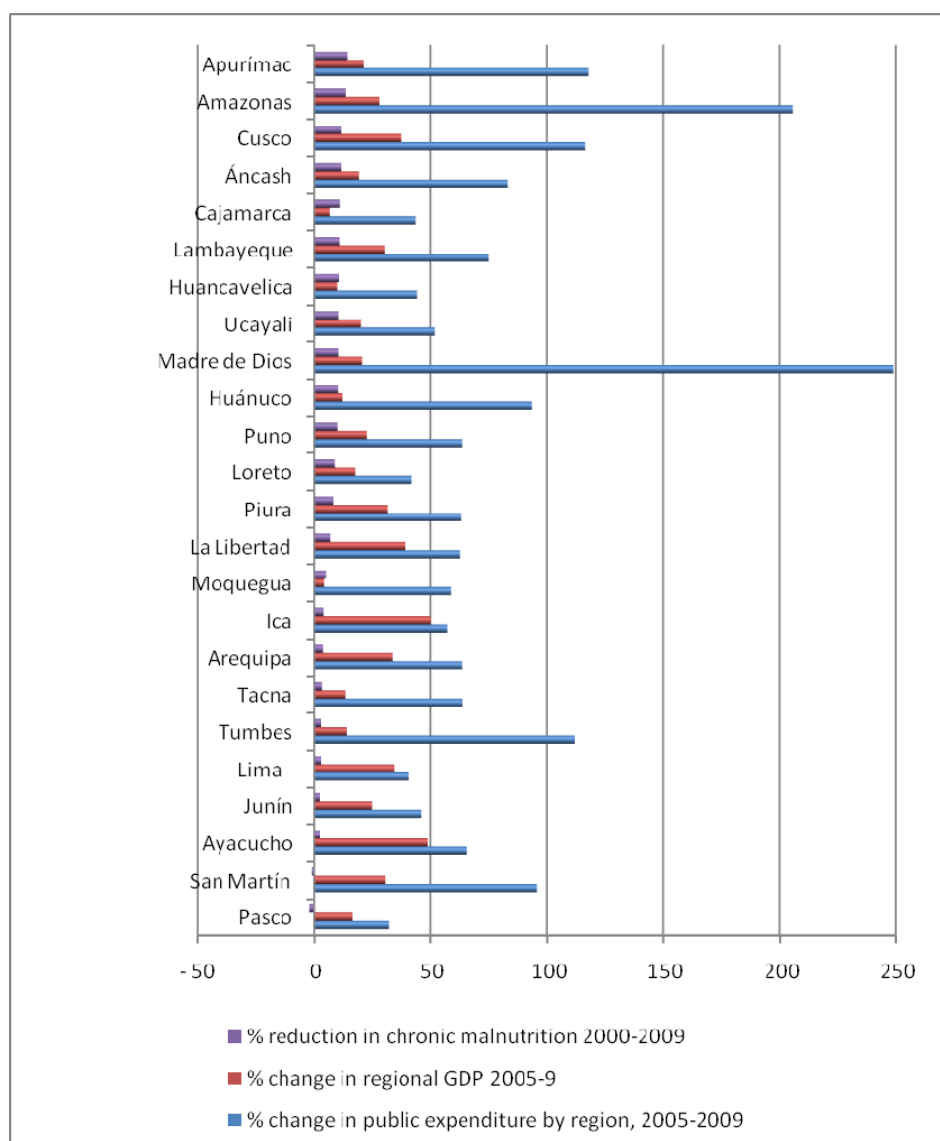
According to the World Bank, Peru's economic growth rate averaged 6.4 per cent between 2002 and 2010 (one of the fastest growing economies in Latin America), and its public budget nearly doubled between 2000 and 2010 (Tanaka and Vera 2010). Given the disparities of available data periods, it is difficult to argue that there is a clear association between the average change in economic growth rates, fiscal spending and changes in malnutrition rates when disaggregating by region. As illustrated by the graph below (Figure 1.4), the three variables do not appear to be related as there are regions with approximately 100 per cent change in public expenditure between 2005 and 2009 (Cusco, Huánuco and San Martín) that show very different changes in chronic child malnutrition rates. A similar comparison can be made for regions based on their average economic growth rates, but there is no association with improved nutrition performance. The calculation of Spearman rank correlation coefficients⁶ (not reported in Figure 1.4) confirms that neither of these factors, GDP growth or public expenditure, are significantly correlated with the reductions in chronic malnutrition (coefficients are -0.1726 and -0.0839 respectively, with neither significant at the 10 per cent level).

The next graph (Figure 1.5) explores whether the transfer of mining revenues contributed to reductions in child malnutrition. The chart reports the revenues each region received from mining activities in the form of tax collections from private mining companies. The expectation is that regions benefiting from windfall revenues during the commodities boom would have made significant improvements on their nutrition indicators compared to those that did not. The data uses logged values because a few of the regions (Piura, Ayacucho and Amazonas) saw sudden increases in extraction revenues over this period. The Spearman rank correlation coefficient (of 0.2114, not significant at the 10 per cent level) shows the lack of a clear relationship between mining revenues and reductions in child malnutrition, with the regions of San Martín and Pasco being the worst performers.

Another relevant comparison is to explore whether improvements in nutrition are more likely to happen in urban areas. Over the last three decades, urbanisation in Peru was especially strong in the larger urban areas. These areas received many rural immigrants from the Andean regions of Ayacucho and the Quechua and Asháninka areas, who were in many cases, fleeing from regional political violence and government reprisals arising from the Shining Path guerrilla conflict, which emerged from those regions in the 1980s and 1990s. The growth of cities and corresponding diminishing of the rural population led to a shifting of political participation in rural areas, and an increase in urban ones, further disadvantaging the rural poor and exacerbating spatial inequalities. The association between greater urbanisation and improved nutrition appears fairly weak based on the available data (Figure 1.6), partly because urbanisation data was collected on a regional level for the 1993–2007 period and the data on chronic child malnutrition was collected in 2000, 2007 and 2009. In any case, a weak Spearman rank correlation coefficient of 0.3293 (not significant at the 10 per cent level) suggests there is not sufficient evidence to establish an empirical association in the variables.

⁶ This is a non-parametric measure of statistical dependence between two variables. It assesses how two variables relate to one another; coefficients could adopt positive values (+1) when there is a positive relationship and (-1) when there is a negative relationship.

Figure 1.4 Change in chronic child malnutrition (2009) vs. regional GDP growth (2000–2009) and public expenditure by region (2005–2009)

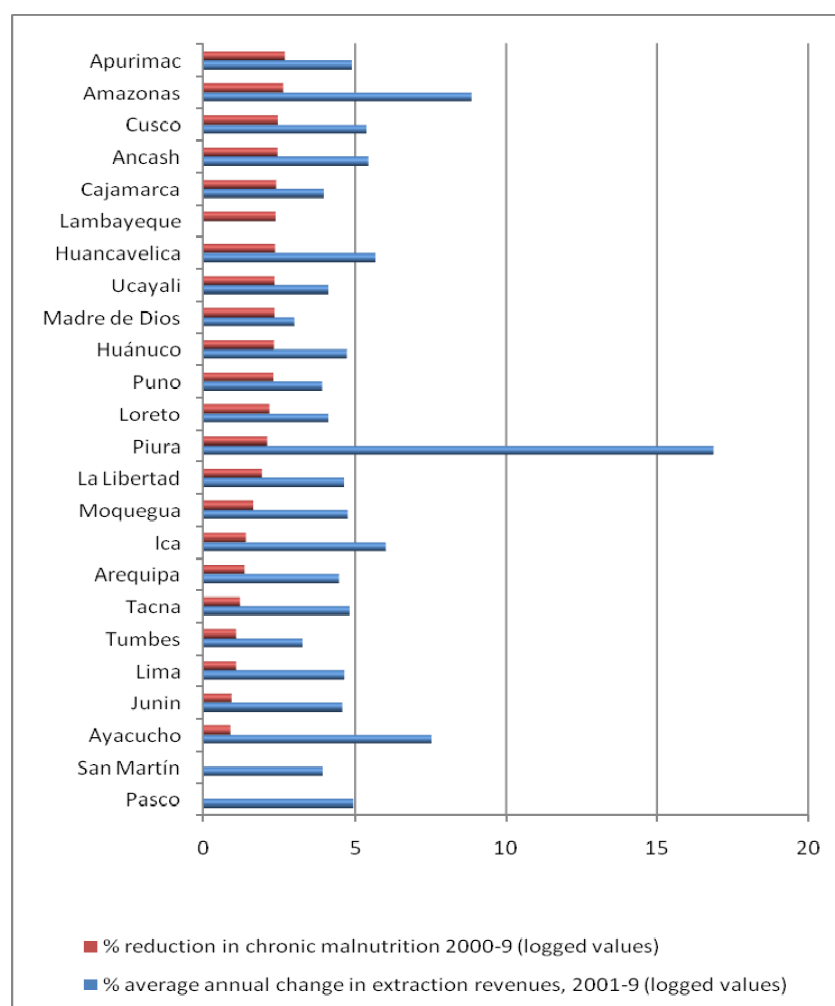


Sources: Regional GDP growth – INEI (ENDES), 2003, 2010. Public expenditure – Ministerio de Economía y Finanzas (MEF).⁷ Chronic child malnutrition – ENDES 2000 (national data only), ENDES Continua 2005 (regional data) and ENDES Baseline survey 2007–9.⁸

⁷ Regional public expenditure figures are not available before 2005.

⁸ Figures refer to children 0–59 months old at the time of the survey. Each index is in terms of standard deviations from the international average.

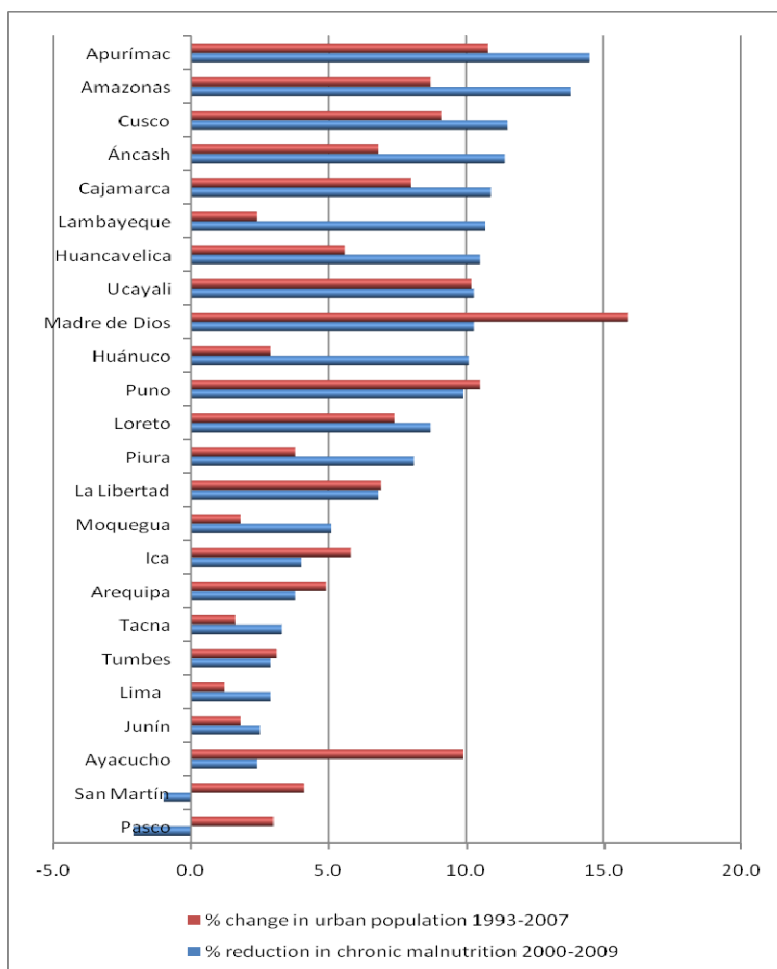
Figure 1.5 Extraction taxes paid to regional and local governments (2001–2009) / change in child malnutrition (2000–2009), logged values



Sources: mining: Ministerio de Economía y Finanzas – Portal de Transparencia Económica; oil and gas: PERUPETRO – Área de Desarrollo y Producción.⁹

⁹ Data for extraction revenues are not available for regions for 2000.

Figure 1.6 Change in child malnutrition (2000–2009) / urban population growth (1993–2007), by region

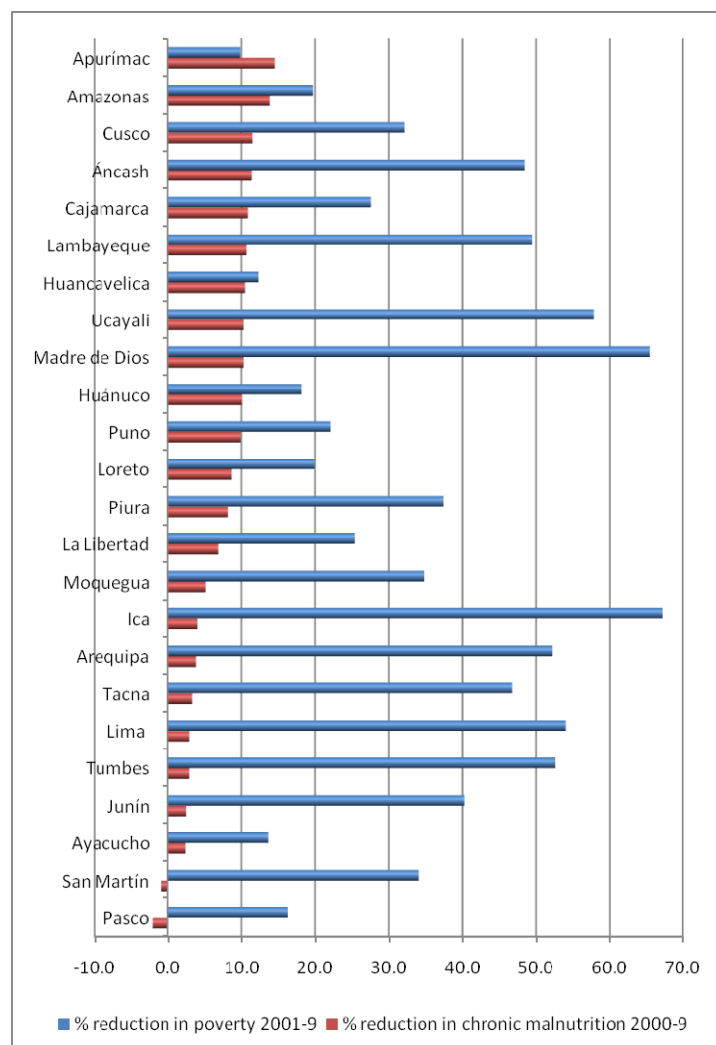


Sources: Urbanisation – INEI – Censos Nacionales de Población y Vivienda 1993 and 2007. Chronic child malnutrition – ENDES 2000 (national data only), ENDES Continua 2005 (regional data) and ENDES Baseline survey 2007–9.¹⁰

Figure 1.7 finds a positive relationship between changes in child malnutrition and changes in poverty levels by region. The Spearman rank correlation coefficient here is -0.6832 , which is highly significant (at the 0.001 level). This means that in general, regions that reduced poverty were also likely to reduce malnutrition rates. A closer examination of the data however shows that some regions (San Martín and Pasco) made important advances in reducing poverty but performed poorly in reducing malnutrition, whereas others (Apurímac) reduced nutrition in a greater proportion than poverty.

¹⁰ Malnutrition data collected in 2000, 2007 and 2009. Figures refer to children 0–59 months old at the time of the survey. Each index is in terms of standard deviations from the international average.

Figure 1.7 Change in child malnutrition (2000–2009) / regional poverty level (2001–2009)



Sources: Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática (INEI) – Encuesta Nacional de Hogares (ENAHOG), Anual 2004–2009. 2002–3 Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática Encuesta Nacional de Hogares (ENAHOG) IV trimestre 2002 y anual 2003 Mayo/2004 Abril. 2001 INEI-Encuesta Nacional de Hogares – IV Trimestre de 2001.¹¹

The reported empirical evidence is consistent with the main hypothesis of this paper that socioeconomic changes in Peru over recent decades, including economic growth, commodities boom, and urbanisation processes are not directly associated with the improvement in child nutrition indicators observed since 2005. The next part of the paper focuses on additional factors that contributed to reducing malnutrition, including the design, coordination and implementation of a national strategy to reduce malnutrition in Peru. It offers a brief review of old and recent government policies to attack malnutrition, and the following section highlights the role of political factors that contributed to a successful strategy including horizontal coordination across different government sectors and vertical integration of territorial jurisdictions (national, regional and municipal).

¹¹ Regional poverty data for 2000 is not available.

2. The Peruvian context: social policies 1985–2010

For the past five years, Peru has been one of South America's fastest-growing economies, with average growth rates nearing 7 per cent GDP, despite the economic slowdown of the global economy. This growth has been fuelled by the dramatic increases in the price of minerals, Peru's main export, but the country has also become a leading exporter of consumer items such as clothing and commodities including fruit and vegetables. During this time, both private investment and domestic consumption have been growing fast (the former at 20 per cent annually and the latter at 9.2 per cent) (*The Economist* 2008). Peru also maintained in 2008 a budget surplus and a strong savings rate (24 per cent of GDP annually), despite higher inflation due to the rise in food and fuel prices globally. This improved economic outlook has contributed to the country's improved credit ratings (*The Economist* 2008). The unprecedented economic growth however, has not helped alleviate deeper social and economic inequalities. As the new wealth has been unevenly distributed, social inequality increased and the Andean and Amazonian populations have not received the same benefits than their coastal counterparts. In the Andean region for example, poverty is still at 70 per cent, where most indigenous people are still subsistence farmers and only a fraction of the population are waged workers (27 per cent in the Apurímac region) compared to the waged working force in Lima (60 per cent) (*The Economist* 2008). The gap between the formal and informal sector is an important factor for reproducing economic inequalities. While wages in formal-sector jobs are rising in a stronger economy, the informal sector continues to employ most of the poor, whose wages do not rise at the national rate.

The recent growth of the Peruvian economy also takes place in the context of fairly weak political institutions. The state generally lacks institutional legitimacy and political parties fail to effectively represent and aggregate the demands of the public. During the Fujimori administration (1990–2000), structural reforms were implemented to strengthen the state bureaucracy and improve its ability to manage public finances, promote economic growth and deliver services to the poor. However, Tanaka and Vera (2010) argue that the country's policy making could be characterised as 'neo-dualist', since there are economic incentives to support moderate and technocratic policymaking at the national level, but this style is contrasted by more radicalised expressions of discontent that resonate with those who still feel marginalised and left out of the current growth and prosperity at the local level. The perception of social and political exclusion has led to increased resentment and mistrust in government on the part of the poor, and has further fuelled social conflicts and citizens' preference for anti-system, outsider candidates. Low levels of faith in public institutions are captured by the 2008 Latinobarómetro survey, which shows that Peru has dramatically lower levels of public confidence in its congress and political parties than all the other Latin American nations. Only 12 per cent of Peruvians reported having faith in their Congress, the lowest of any Latin American country and far below the Latin American average of 32 per cent and 6 per cent below the next country on the scale, Panama. Similarly, just 11 per cent of Peruvians had confidence in their political parties, well below the regional average of 21 per cent. President approval ratings for the two most recent presidents, Alejandro Toledo (2001–2006) and Alan García (2006–2011), have been paradoxically low given the country's swift increase in prosperity which far surpassed that of countries with more popular presidents such as Brazil (where President Lula had a 79 per cent approval rating in 2008) and Colombia, where Alvaro Uribe had a rating of 84 per cent the same year. From this perspective, the political and institutional configuration did not provide a favourable context to promote the radical changes needed to improve the coverage and quality in the provision of public services in the country.

This section explores, without making a detailed historical analysis, the evolution of social policies for nearly three decades in Peru. The next part briefly looks at Peru's social and nutrition policies until 2000 and the last part explains recent government efforts including the adoption of a cash transfer programme JUNTOS, and the subsequent development of a national poverty reduction strategy (CRECER).

2.1 Food security and government assistance

The government of Peru has had an early involvement in the fight against malnutrition since the seventies, first with the creation of the National Office for Food Support (ONAA) in 1972, and followed by the creation of the Ministry of Nourishment in 1974. The task of these government offices was mainly to coordinate donations by overseas aid programmes, but government efforts were weak and inconsistent. The Ministry of Nourishment closed soon after its appearance and ONAA ended up coordinating only a fraction of food aid, with the bulk of implementation devolving instead to NGOs. During the 1980s, the government took a more prominent role in food assistance with the creation of the *Direct Assistance Program* (Programa de Asistencia Directa – PAD) for employment-based food assistance and the *Glass of Milk Program* (Vaso de Leche – VdL) to benefit at-risk children under six years old.

At the start of the 1990s, food assistance programmes remained spread across different government agencies, including the Presidency itself. Later, the PAD and ONAA were merged into the National Program for Food Assistance (PRONAA), and put under the direct control of the Office of the Presidency (Office of the Prime Minister).

The PRONAA managed most of the food programmes including a programme of direct feeding through *Comedores Populares*. The Comedores Populares were neighborhood organisations originally started by churches, parishes or NGOs and were locally funded to feed the local population (Aguilar *et al.* 2007). The Comedores Populares were further supported by USAID through the Proyecto de Desarrollo Integral con Apoyo Alimentario (PRODIA) as a way to alleviate the economic crises of the 1980s, and by 1994 there were 5,000 Comedores in the Lima Metropolitan area and approximately 13,000 elsewhere in the country, with about half of those being self-managed. The Glass of Milk programme was not integrated under PRONAA management and remained directly funded by the Ministry of Finance and Economics and managed by municipal governments. In the 1990s, the government passed a series of reforms to earmark and protect funding for these programmes from inflation and political changes.

By 2002, Peru was spending \$250 USD million annually on food and nutrition programmes, but without an integral approach to attacking the causes of malnutrition in Peru, the effort remained insufficient to produce effective reduction in stunting rates. More than half of Peru's food assistance budget (roughly 59 per cent in 2000) was concentrated in the Glass of Milk and Comedores Populares programmes, followed by Desayunos Escolares (a school feeding programme established in 1966). Despite government funding, the Glass of Milk and PRONAA programmes had little success in reducing malnutrition. As illustrated in the previous section, stunting rates declined from 36.5 per cent to 25.8 per cent between 1992 and 1996 but then flattened for the next ten years.¹² By 2000, 25.4 per cent of Peru's under-fives suffered from malnutrition, mostly in the Sierra region (60 per cent of total), the Selva region (14 per cent of total) and in rural areas (46 per cent of total) (Rogers *et al.* 2002). One related factor was poor targeting. For example in 2000, 28 per cent of districts with the highest child stunting rates received no nutrition services (from Vaso de Leche and Comedores Populares), whereas 47 per cent of districts with low prevalence of stunting did receive services. A related issue was low access to services and user rates. Although

¹² The less-than-expected success in nutritional indicators was echoed in other sectors. Progress was made on access to health service provision, school attendance and fertility rates between 1992 and 2000, but housing and household assets conditions barely improved and there was no significant change in regional and ethnic inequalities (Larrea 2005).

nutrition services from both programmes covered about 68 per cent among the poor in 2005, only 28 per cent of the eligible were actually benefiting from the services (Vásquez 2007: 68, quoted in World Bank 2009). PRONAA's Comedores also failed to reach many of their target beneficiaries, with 97 per cent coverage but only 36 per cent use (ibid). Another factor associated with low success was inadequate funding schemes: for example, Peru increased the number of beneficiaries of the Glass of Milk program (to include children up to the age of 13) without increasing the programme's funding in the 1990s (World Bank 2009). This example illustrates how the Glass of Milk programme had created political clienteles amongst families whose children had aged out of the initial beneficiary group. Although many of the stakeholders interviewed during this study corroborated the problems and inefficiencies of the Glass of Milk program, experts were quick to point out the political difficulty of dismantling or cutting funds for this programme given the vocal and active political lobbying formed around it. Not surprisingly, the government shift to a new articulation of social policies – to be discussed in the next section – left the political structure and funding of the Glass of Milk programme untouched. In 2006, the García Administration created the Integral Nutrition Program (Programa Integral de Nutrición – PIN) which consolidated six different food distribution programmes executed by PRONAA: PACFO, PANFAR, Comedores Infantiles, Desayunos Escolares, Almuerzos escolares, Comedores de Educación Inicial, under the Ministry of Women and Social Development (MIMDES).

It would be inaccurate to portray food distribution programmes as representative of Peru's nutrition policies. There were other important government actions that included broader policy interventions across different sectors, including health, education, agriculture and sanitation.¹³ The point of this section is to illustrate that: (a) food distribution programmes remained highly visible to the population and therefore produced and maintained important political capital especially during electoral times (with the Fujimori administration (1990–2000) reaping the most political benefits from these programmes), (b) that these food distribution programmes usually promoted little integration with other sectors including health, sanitation and education, and (c) did not have a positive impact on reducing chronic malnutrition. Two of these elements, political visibility and intersectoral cooperation were positively adapted into the design of Peru's nutrition strategy after 2006 as it will be described in the following sections of this paper.

2.2 Recent government efforts in reducing child malnutrition

Following the ousting of Fujimori in 2000, the interim president Valentín Paniagua (November 2000 to July 2001) created in January 2001 the Roundtable for Poverty Reduction (*Mesa de Concertación para la Lucha Contra la Pobreza – MCLCP*) as a convening space where state and civil society actors would coordinate poverty reduction initiatives.¹⁴ When President Alejandro Toledo took office in 2001, he prioritised the social agenda to reduce poverty and improve social justice by bringing together government representatives, civil society, the private sector, and international donor agencies around the MCLCP. Together these agents reached an agreement on reforming social policy, improving service delivery, and introducing greater participation by citizens in design, decision making, and financial planning of social policy (World Bank 2009).

The new social policy under Toledo comprised four pillars: first, to promote the Peruvian Social Charter, which had the goal of universal employment, guaranteed access to healthcare, education and culture, and greater government accountability; second, to promote the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); third, to involve the National Accord, a representative political body in which nearly all Political Parties participate, in the design of

¹³ For a broader historical analysis of Peru's nutrition policies, see "Política Nacional para la Reducción de la Desnutrición Crónica en el Perú" (Instituto Apoyo, July 2001) and the Ministry of Health's Nutrition Strategy (2001).

¹⁴ Paniagua (Nov-2000 to Jul-2001) had already recognised the complex nature of the malnutrition problem in Peru, and called for the need of a state policy that involved the participation of the private and public sectors as well as civil society in the design, implementation and monitoring of policies.

policies to promote social justice, and fourth, to strengthen the country's anti-poverty strategy (in 2004) with the goal of creating a social protection infrastructure, strengthening human and institutional capacity and promoting transparency and citizen involvement. Towards the end of his administration, Toledo also created the National Strategy for Food Security (Estrategia Nacional de Seguridad Alimentaria – ENSA) under the control of the Office of the Prime Minister.¹⁵ Although ENSA was never implemented, it established the organisational and administrative basis for the later creation of CRECER, and it helped outline some of the policy recommendations that were later taken up by the CNI (Interview # 26).

2.3 CRECER and the strategy for poverty reduction

The National Strategy CRECER was created through an Executive Decree in July 2007 as a coordinated poverty reduction strategy that articulates all public offices in the National, Regional and Local Government, as well as the private sector, international cooperation and civil society in general, to promote, facilitate and execute poverty reduction and human development goals.¹⁶ The national strategy was primarily conceived as a way to decrease the inefficiency and disarticulation of existing social programs, since it was calculated that around \$200 million of the \$1 billion assigned to social programmes were used on administrative costs in 2006. In March of 2007, President Alan Garcia initiated the Plan for the Reform of Social Programs to improve the quality of social expenditure, reducing and articulating 82 existing public programmes into 26 initiatives focused on poverty and child malnutrition. The 26 initiatives involved maternal-child health, nutrition, learning achievements, access to birth registration, access to basic social services and market opportunities among others. There were other programmes involving Results Based Budgeting that were added in 2010, such as environmental management, energy in rural areas, water and sanitation, and telecommunications in rural areas.

Some of the salient features of CRECER represented a radical change in the government's policy strategy for fighting malnutrition:

1. To go beyond food distribution. While the government could not entirely abandon food distribution schemes largely perceived as inefficient and clientelistic (such as Glass of Milk), it moved decisively to include a wider set of policy interventions that encompassed better training, improved cooking practices, improved hygiene, access to clean water, and the use of conditional cash transfers to support reductions in malnutrition.
2. To promote complementarity of interventions. Unlike other policy realms, nutrition appears to convene multiple approaches and policy interventions, thus generating few institutional conflicts over predominant or preferred approaches. This consensual nature facilitated policy coordination within government agencies and between government and non-governmental agencies to achieve complementarity through specialisation.
3. To decentralise the scope of interventions. The guiding premise is that the national government is no longer the sole provider of services. Rather, there is a sustained government effort to devolve administrative, financial and political responsibilities to regional and municipal governments.
4. To adequately fund policy interventions. The funding of the government's nutrition strategy is fully elaborated through Results Based Budgeting. This strategy allows government agencies to design, formulate and implement policies according to expected results while giving MEF the ability to monitor the use of budgetary

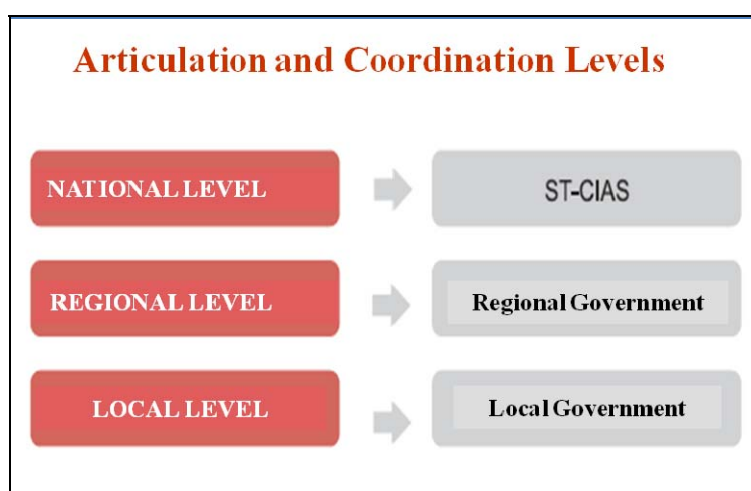
¹⁵ Decreto Supremo DS 0068-2006-PCM.

¹⁶ Decreto Supremo N° 055 – PCM, publicado el 8 de septiembre de 2007.

allocations. The RBB helps to focus government spending while improving the transparency and accountability of policy interventions.

One of the key moments for institutionalising the strategy for poverty reduction consisted in the transfer of the responsibility for the fight against malnutrition from the Ministry of Development (MIMDES) to the Technical Secretariat of the Inter-ministerial Commission for Social Affairs (ST-CIAS) based at the Prime Minister's Office (PCM).¹⁷ Although CRECER was based at the PCM, its implementation at subnational level was led by regional and local governments. CRECER also involved horizontal coordination across civil society, government and NGOs (see diagram below).

Figure 2.1 Articulation and coordination levels



Source: MIMDES (2010)

CRECER's interventions were conceptualised according to a causal model of malnutrition principally focused on water and sanitation, nutritional practices and fighting infectious diseases, especially diarrhoea and respiratory problems. The programme marked the first time that Peru has adopted a cause-and-effect model for interventions in terms of its national budget, and has incorporated broad objectives and results that can be quantified and measured.

There are three operational axis of the national strategy CRECER: (1) the development of human capabilities and respect of fundamental rights, (2) the promotion of opportunities and economic capacities, and (3) the establishment of a social protection network.¹⁸ These dimensions require significant coordination across government agencies. From the range of existing policy interventions, the conditional cash transfer programme JUNTOS has been made perhaps one of the most visible programmes of CRECER since it directly contributes to the first and the third objectives of the national strategy.

CRECER's decentralised implementation involved the participation of civil society organisations and international donors. This decentralisation was rearticulated in 2008 when JUNTOS programme leaders were assigned to build capacity at the local level and, in the same year, the budget assigned to the main social programmes was increased from its 2007

¹⁷ During this transition, the sub secretary of MIMDES Ivan Hidalgo was a key figure to give CRECER greater political salience within CT-CIAS, as well as facilitating the communication with the Donor led Child Nutrition Initiative (CNI). (Interview # 26).

¹⁸ www.cias.gob.pe/crecer.php?var=5

level of \$1.1 billion to \$2 billion. Under the reformed programme, local governments provide technical assistance and resources, and also help communities share knowledge through *pasantías*, or learning visits. CRECER was implemented in 1,119 districts at the first two quintiles of the poverty index, with an emphasis on the rural Sierra and urban districts with the highest concentration of child malnutrition (MIMDES 2010).

The Initiative's first-year review of the fight against malnutrition (CNI 2007) stated that the regional governments had committed under the program to spend 30 per cent above their usual malnutrition budget, but that they were failing at building capacity and needed to be incentivised. MIMDES and MINSA were doing work with municipalities to build capacity, but it was still on a small scale. MEF was supporting regional governments through SNIP, but did not focus on social investment. The evaluation recommended incentivising regional governments for the next period. According to the 2008 report of the Child Nutrition Initiative, 12 regional governments had institutionalised CRECER and the results based budgeting strategy was being implemented at the national level (CNI 2008).

2.4 JUNTOS

JUNTOS is a conditional cash transfer programme that seeks to reduce poverty and children's chronic malnutrition, and break the intergenerational transmission of poverty by building human capital especially among high risk and socially excluded populations (Government of Peru 2011). Originally set up in the last year of the Toledo Government, the programme entails a strong educational component (aimed at increasing primary school attendance and decreasing dropouts and child labour) and a health component (aimed at decreasing infant and child malnutrition and mortality and increasing healthcare during pregnancy). This goal demands that JUNTOS plays an active role in improving the quality and the adequate delivery of public services through schools health service centres. JUNTOS, like most CCT programmes that distribute cash transfers, also promotes productive activities led by women with the idea of increasing the number of females with stable incomes (Perova and Vakis 2009).

The cash transfer scheme was created by the Toledo government in 2005, as an initiative for poverty reduction. Toledo was inspired by the experience of other CCT programmes, particularly ProgresA/Oportunidades in Mexico, with the belief that cash transfers were less expensive but more effective than food transfers. The programme was opposed by those who claimed that transfers would be used for patronage during the 2006 elections. In adopting JUNTOS, the government also went against the advice of some Peruvian analysts who argued that existing poverty reduction programmes should be brought together and restructured instead of creating new ones (UNICEF 2006). In the end, the government initiative gained political momentum when endorsed by a congressional recommendation and the Programme was originally put under the control of a directorate named by the National Roundtable for Poverty Reduction (MCLCP) in order to ensure transparency.

JUNTOS offers eligible households a bimonthly cash transfer of 200 soles (US\$ 71), paid as a lump sum, conditional on:

- Acquisition of complete civic identification documents for the whole family
- 85 per cent school attendance among children
- complete vaccination, health and pre and post-natal care checks, and attendance at related capacity-building programmes
- use of the National Nutritional Assistance Program package for children under three, and use of chlorinated water and anti-parasite medication (UNICEF 2006)

Regarding the issue of targeting, JUNTOS is unusual among CCT programmes in that part of its targeting is designed to provide reparations to those affected by violent political conflict. The first community where the programme was rolled out was Chuschi, the community

where the Shining Path's campaign against the government began in 1980, and which suffered a massacre by the group in 1991. Overall, its targeting is done in three stages. The first is based on objective criteria like exposure to violence, poverty level, child malnutrition levels and extreme income poverty. The targeting data comes from the Ministry of Finance and Economics (MEF) and FONCODES poverty maps, the INEI national census and the Report on the Commission for Truth and Reconciliation. The second stage is done based on a household-level survey by INEI, with an algorithm that provides a cut-off point for poverty. This algorithm has been the source of conflict because it does not clearly distinguish between eligible and ineligible families, since in some cases the difference is based on very small percentage divisions. This has resulted in both inclusion and exclusion errors on the part of the programme. The third stage is validation of eligible households through local assemblies, where again there has been conflict due to power relations and the fear of retaliation when the extent of a neighbour's assets are declared and compared (Valente 2010).

On the issue of management, the programme was designed to minimise the problems that prevailed with other social programmes in Peru: political capture of programme benefits, clientelist networks affecting beneficiary populations, lack of collaboration across government sectors and, failure to successfully target poor populations. To counter these pitfalls, the design of JUNTOS includes, a centralised directorate managed by the PCM, the provision of mechanisms to promote inter-sectoral coordination such as the multiple conditionality (as described above), and a strong M&E system with its own managing committee and community facilitators. The JUNTOS directorate is composed of a president, four civil society representatives from the National Accord, and individuals from the Ministries of Education, Health, MIMDES and MEF. The directorate is charged with both the ongoing management of the programme's components and with resolving issues of service overload and politicisation. The directorate practices consensus decision-making and transparency to stress the legitimacy of JUNTOS. Coordination across government sectors is managed by Multi-sectoral Technical Committees (MTCs) which are charged with linking the programme to different government sectors and the Roundtable for Poverty Reduction (MCLCP).¹⁹

JUNTOS' budget was established by Law N° 28562 in 2005, which provided 120 million soles (c. \$40 million USD) to finance the pilot phase of the programme. This pilot phase covered 110 districts in Huancavelica, Ayacucho, Apurímac and Huánuco. The next year 300 million soles were disbursed for expansion to 210 more districts in five additional regions: Puno, Cajamarca, La Libertad, Junín and Ancash. From the total allocated budget, 60 per cent is used to pay for the actual cash transfers, 30 per cent goes to fund basic services, and 10 per cent covers operational costs, which are lower than those of Mexico and Chile's CCT programmes (UNICEF 2006). The budget allocations granted to the JUNTOS programme have significantly increased in recent years, from \$106 million in 2006 to \$177 in 2007 (Alcázar, 2009). In 2009, the JUNTOS budget allocation (through results based budgeting) represented 8.2 per cent of the total budget assigned to social programmes.

¹⁹ Administration and implementation is managed by the executive director with a technical committee and regional and district coordinators. There are also facilitators, who are chosen in a competitive public process overseen by the Roundtable for Poverty Reduction, and who are supposed to liaise between the programme's services and beneficiaries. M&E is facilitated by a system that is partly automated, using barcodes for each transfer that offer information on each beneficiary. The record system of JUNTOS also brings together information on other social programs that do not themselves have adequate registries. The M&E is overseen by the Committee on Supervision and Transparency (CST), composed of members from the church and civil society, in association with local and provincial RTRs (UNICEF 2006).

3. The politics of reducing malnutrition in Peru

This report argues that government success in reducing malnutrition rates is less related to structural factors such as economic growth or the commodities boom, but rather to an effective government intervention that: (a) promoted effective coordination of a nationwide strategy across different government sectors and multiple stakeholders, (b) implemented the strategy across different territories at the regional and local level, and (c) effectively allocated the necessary government funding through results based budgeting. A key ingredient of policy success has to do with the role played by the Child Nutrition Initiative, a collective body formed by cooperation agencies, international NGOs, civil society organisations and research institutions that promoted and facilitated horizontal integration across sectors (a), vertical integration across territories (b), and financial or budgetary coordination (c) across all levels.

3.1 The Child Nutrition Initiative

The Peruvian experience of reducing malnutrition features a successful coordination effort between government and non-governmental agencies to promote good policies beyond nutrition by working across different policy sectors including health, education, housing, and public finances. The Child Nutrition Initiative (CNI) was formed and developed in 2006 to accompany these government efforts. The CNI is an advocacy coalition integrated by several agencies, all of which had been actively working to reduce Peru's child malnutrition problem. These agencies included Action Against Hunger (ACF), ADRA Perú, CARE Perú, CARITAS Perú, UNICEF, UN Population Fund, Future Generations, Institute of Nutritional Research (IIN), Mesa de Concertación para la Lucha contra la Pobreza (MCLCP), FAO, Panamerican Health Organization (PAHO), Plan International, PRISMA, World Food Program (WFP) and USAID.

The creation of the CNI in 2006, as recognised by many of the stakeholders interviewed, can be largely attributed to the leadership role played by CARE-Peru, and its National Director Milo Stanojevich in particular. For CARE, the formation of the CNI represented a valuable window of opportunity to upscale to the national level, the continuous effort made by the NGO to fight malnutrition at the regional and local levels. Until 2005, CARE and other development agencies working on child malnutrition (Caritas, ADRA, PRISMA and UNICEF) had received funding from USAID to support mother and child health and nutrition (MCHN) in Peru. By 2005, the consortium had received nearly US\$50 million from USAID, most of it in the form of food aid, to work in high poverty areas such as the Peruvian Sierra and Selva. The end of USAID (Title II) funding in 2005, offered CARE with an opportunity to continue and upscale efforts to fight poverty and malnutrition at the regional level. CARE's malnutrition programme in Peru had begun in 1990. In 2006, domestic and international cooperation agencies had recorded some successful experiences to reduce chronic malnutrition (height for age) by attacking some of its underlying causes, including poverty. However, a greater effort was needed to show the government that chronic malnutrition could be reduced through integral and coordinated policy interventions.

The CNI offered a coordinating space to bring together several multilateral partners working on diverse child nutrition efforts. CARE for example, had been promoting health programmes that educated people about the nutritional values of local foods, as well as promoting access to water and sanitation, and increased local government spending on food security. Some agencies mainly pursued feeding programmes such as the distribution of monthly food packages to eligible families with children under five years of age or pregnant or breastfeeding women, or ran on-site feeding centres in the villages where they operated.

Others were sponsoring programmes to improve agricultural production and infrastructure, including sanitation, or offering microcredit programmes as a strategy to reduce malnutrition. Donors like World Bank funded health and nutrition projects between 1995 and 2001, or supported the distribution of micronutrients for iodine deficiency as in the case of UNICEF (USAID 1997). From the perspective of one of its founding members, the CNI offered donor and cooperation agencies an opportunity to focus on ‘*what works?*’, the common and complementary approaches to fighting malnutrition, in order to overcome the fragmentation of multiple government sectors and make sure that government strategies reached the lowest -household- level of beneficiaries (Interview # 22). Some interviewees acknowledged that the CNI had achieved greater success at promoting policy coordination between the government, NGOs and cooperation agencies, compared to the moderate coordination achieved by the *National Agreement*, Toledo’s previous attempt at creating a poverty alleviation collective (Interview #10). Unlike the CNI, the National Agreement lacked the necessary buy in from key political stakeholders. Others acknowledged CNI’s critical role in attracting private sector investment to poverty alleviation and nutrition initiatives and increasing the policy influencing potential of smaller NGOs (Interview #8).

In substantive terms, the CNI played a key role to (a) advocate in favour of making nutrition the central component in the government’s fight against poverty, (b) establish an informal coordination mechanism to channel technical and financial contributions from different cooperation agencies, and (c) serve as a public platform to disseminate and review government efforts in the fight against malnutrition and secure future political commitment from elected politicians. According to an interviewee, the *Iniciativa* became a sort of ‘Jiminy Cricket’, a sort of ‘advocacy conscience’ that reminded, guided and monitored government commitment to reducing malnutrition (Interview #25). Regarding the first role, the CNI developed alongside the Government of Peru a comprehensive framework to understand the contributing causes and negative consequences of malnutrition in Peru, and its impact on poverty reduction. Secondly, the CNI established a platform to increase policy advocacy and influence government policymaking. Although the CNI lacked a legal entity status (*personería jurídica*), it was internally governed by a Board of Directors and composed by Technical and Communications Committees (CNI Acuerdo Interno 2006). Through this platform, donors and cooperation agencies could meet and discuss urgent policy issues, analyse effective mechanisms for policy influencing, and devise cost sharing and co funding schemes that helped advance the fight against poverty campaign. The Initiative however did not seek to share programmatic cost or priorities, as it was perceived that coordinating the allocation of programmatic funds will inevitably lead to greater controversy between the agencies involved.

A third role of the CNI was to launch and maintain the advocacy efforts to secure the commitment of elected officials, political elites (including presidential candidates first and then regional presidents) and the public at large. One of the key events that publicised the advocacy work of the CNI was the 2006 launch of a campaign subscribed by ten presidential candidates who pledged to make the fight against malnutrition a national priority if elected. The specific pledge signed by candidates was to reduce chronic child malnutrition by 5 per cent in children under five years old in the five years to 2011 (‘5 by 5 by 5’), and to close the urban-rural gap.²⁰ After the presidential election, the challenge for the CNI was to persuade the winning candidate, Alan Garcia, to fulfil his electoral promises. Once again, CARE and the CNI took the initiative to draft a policy document for action during the first 100 days of government. Once in government, President Garcia committed his government to reducing children’s malnutrition, upping the target to 9 per cent, with a priority for children under three who were the most vulnerable in terms of malnutrition and poverty. Garcia’s original plan focused on developing human capital, promoting social development and co-responsibility, and reducing poverty in 1,119 districts nationwide. In light of the successful effort to secure

²⁰ The latter was an important contribution as it reflected the rights based approach adopted by the CNI agencies.

political influence, the CNI moved next to engage Peru's regional government leaders, along with other allies such as the World Bank (who were not formally part of the CNI, but attended its meetings). The *Presidentes Regionales* signed the Lima Declaration on Child Nutrition which committed them to reducing chronic child malnutrition by 5 per cent by 2011.

Through these public acts of political influencing, the CNI ensured long term commitment of political elites to advancing policy efforts in the fight against nutrition. These CNI efforts obtained the direct support and endorsement of Peru's Premier, Jorge del Castillo, a close collaborator of President García, and Virginia Borra, the Minister for Women and Social Development (MIMDES). When Mr. Del Castillo was replaced in office by Yehude Simon in 2009, the CNI swiftly moved in to remind the incoming Premier of the political commitments signed by his predecessor (Interview #24).

At the end of its first year, the Initiative's evaluation of government progress in the fight against chronic malnutrition showed that regional governments were not playing the role that had been hoped, and that incentives and training were needed to bring them into step with the national effort (CNI 2007). This was addressed in two ways. First, in 2008 a law (Norma 001-2008) was passed to decentralise the local implementation of CRECER to municipal and regional governments, so that 12 regional governments signed up formally to indicate their commitment to the program.²¹ Second, to address the need for training, JUNTOS programme managers were assigned to build capacity among 108 local governments.

The initiative resonated beyond Peru. In 2008, the Summit of the heads of state of Latin America, the Caribbean and the EU made a declaration that the fight against child malnutrition was to be recognised as a main element of the fight against poverty and inequality. This ambitious regional up scaling is a direct result of CNI's experience, since Manuel Peña, representative of the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) leading the 2008 declaration, was one of the core members of the CNI in Peru (Organización Panamericana de la Salud 2010).²²

3.2 Horizontal coordination: multi-sectoral articulation

One of the critical factors for the success of malnutrition policies was the effective 'horizontal coordination' of different government sectors and non-government agencies in the delivery of a coherent effort to fight malnutrition in Peru. The coordination challenge implied: (a) a direct involvement of the Prime Minister's Office in the management of the malnutrition and poverty reduction strategies, and (b) an effective intra-sectoral collaboration across relevant ministries. As extensively discussed in the previous section, a third contributing factor for successful horizontal articulation was the role of the Child Nutrition Initiative (CNI) which allowed non-government agencies and cooperation donors to accompany the formulation, adoption, implementation and monitoring of the strategy.

The first relevant factor for success is the political ownership of the Executive Power who placed the National Strategy for Poverty Reduction and Economic Opportunities directly under the control of the Office of the Prime Minister (*Presidencia del Consejo de Ministros-PCM*).²³ After some initial debate as to whether the Strategy should be delegated to the Ministry of Women and Social Development (MIMDES), the President finally left the coordination, execution, monitoring and evaluation of the National Strategy in the hands of the PCM, through the Technical Secretariat of the Inter-Ministerial Commission for Social

²¹ At the time of writing, there were 21 regional governments and 650 local governments that adopted and institutionalized the National Strategy CRECER.

²² The WHO's Strategy and Action Plan for Reducing Chronic Malnutrition (CD50.R11) demands that Member States: a) Prioritize intersectoral efforts to prevent chronic malnutrition, and b) promote dialogue between Ministries and other public entities, private sector institutions and civil society to generate national consensus around preferred courses of action to prevent and undermine chronic malnutrition.

²³ Executive Decree N° 002-2003-PCM (02.01.2003).

Affairs (CT-CIAS).²⁴ The decision had been politically contested as both the head of MIMDES, Virginia Borras, and PCM, Jorge del Castillo, actively participated in the technical meetings preceding the formation of the Strategy and sought to receive this mandate from the President (Interview #26). One of the key arguments made by the CNI against putting the National Strategy under MIMDES was that it would reduce cooperation from other social Ministries and the Finance Ministries, given the limited political clout held by MIMDES. Thus, the decision sought to give the National Strategy CRECER sufficient political leverage to convene other government entities. The Executive Committee was formed by the Technical Secretary of the Inter-Ministerial Commission for Social Affairs, and convened representatives from the Woman and Development Ministry, Health, Education, Work and Job Creation, Transport and Communications, Agriculture, and Finance Ministries. The Finance Ministry representative usually chaired the CIAS (Interview #24).

The PCM through CIAS played a critical role to articulate and coordinate CRECER since 2007. As explained earlier, CRECER was instrumental to articulating multiple social protection initiatives previously spread across different ministries and executed under different government branches (Interview #21 and World Bank 2007).²⁵

Box 3.1 Effective inter-sectoral and vertical cooperation: the case of JUNTOS

The adoption of a cash transfer program JUNTOS illustrates the key role that effective centralised authority can play to ensure successful horizontal (inter-sectoral) articulation. In the case of Peru, the executive branch had a leading role in the design, implementation and monitoring of the JUNTOS program. Working from Lima, the PCM-CIAS was able to design, identify and target cash allocations to poor households in districts in most need. The calculation and transfer of the funds was coordinated from the Central government through the Ministry of Finance (MEF). The allocation of conditional cash transfers required parents to show that children attend school, fulfil complete vaccination charts, take children for health and pre and post-natal care checks, and make use of National Nutritional Assistance Program. In order to deliver the services and enforce the conditionalities of the Programme, different government branches had to coordinate efforts at the local level. Ministries such as Health, Education, Housing, and Social Development had to coordinate actions, share information, monitor compliance and report expenditures back to MEF. To facilitate these coordination challenges, a directory of JUNTOS was established at the district level and it was composed of a president, four civil society representatives from the National Accord, as well as representatives from the Ministries of Education, Health, MIMDES and MEF. In a way, the coordination structure established at the national level was replicated in proportional scale at the district level. Thus, the inter-sectoral coordination is managed by Multi-sectoral Technical Committees (MTCs).

Paradoxically in Peru, the strong delegation of policymaking power to the executive authority also implied that nationally elected representatives gathered in the National Congress were implicitly excluded from the design, formulation, or implementation of the National Strategy. With very few exceptions, Members of Congress maintained very limited discussions or interactions with representatives from the Health, Social Development (MIMDES) or Education Ministries, and only recently they became aware of the existence of ST-CIAS as the government entity in charge of social policies (Interview #9). The non-involvement of the

²⁴ CT-CIAS had been created in under Legislative Decree N° 560 of the Executive Branch (28.03.1990).

²⁵ The programme of Pensions and the Glass of Milk Program (GoM) was coordinated by the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF); the Temporary employment/labour market, by the Ministry of Labor and Employment Promotion (MINTRA); other food distribution programmes (except Glass of Milk) were coordinated by the Ministry of Women and Social Development (MIMDES); Child protection, displaced people and elderly programmes were under FONCODES; Subsidies to the poor were managed through the Ministry of Housing, Construction and Sanitation (MVCS) and the Ministry of Energy and Mining (MEM); and the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources for Rural Populations programme was managed by the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAG).

National Congress in advancing policymaking efforts was perhaps not surprising given the self-reported low levels of technical capacity and its low levels of public approval ratings (Mejía Acosta 2008). The exclusion of Congress as a legitimate policymaking arena however, is largely explained by the chronic fragmentation of its political parties. In the absence of a single party majority backing Alan García's government agenda, the president has concentrated policymaking prerogatives in the belief that political bargaining with multiple coalition partners would undermine the coherence or cost of much needed policy reforms (Mejía Acosta 2009).

The absence of national political parties is an important gap in the governments' strategy to tackle malnutrition in the long run. As will be discussed in the closing section of this paper, Congress has the responsibility and the mandate to: (a) produce quality legislation to advance and institutionalise government efforts in the fight against malnutrition, (b) play an active role in the monitoring and oversight of government initiatives, and (c) establish direct accountability linkages between legislators and their constituents when it comes to reducing malnutrition. So far, Congress has played a marginal role in the policymaking process, by drafting a food security bill in cooperation with FAO, but there are other policy issues remaining (like the Special Lactancy Law) where Congress can play a decisive role in the fight against malnutrition (Interviews #9 and #17).

3.3 Vertical coordination: multi-level governance

The challenge of effective *vertical articulation* refers to the government's ability to coordinate, implement and monitor its poverty reduction strategy across different government tiers at the national, regional and municipal level. Paradoxically, this paper finds that the critical factor that contributed to an effective *horizontal coordination*, namely direct executive authority in policy planning and guidance, can sometimes be counterproductive to promote effective vertical coordination. The central question to understand is: what are the cooperation incentives of sub-national governments (regional and municipal), to adopt, advance and benefit from the policy interventions established by the national central government. This is a particularly difficult cooperation dilemma in the context of the highly disconnected and fragmented Peruvian political landscape. After the 2006 presidential election, only two out of 25 elected regional governments pertained to the governments' political party, the APRA. At local levels, in the 195 provinces and 1,831 districts, the picture is even more fragmented, with a domination in power of local political groupings, little connected to national parties.

The stakeholders interviewed for this paper confirmed the notion that a vertical articulation of the National Strategy had promoted an effective coordination between the central and regional governments, but there were significant gaps remaining to link poverty reduction policies between the regional and municipal levels. This narrative is consistent with the government efforts to devolve to regional governments some administrative and financial responsibility to advance the National Strategy for Poverty Reduction. The CNI played a crucial role to ensure policy coordination and political commitment from national and regional authorities. After the official launch of CRECER in March 2007 with the Lima declaration, signed by the President and the regional governors, the CNI and its allies (such as the World Bank) mobilised the presidents of Peru's regional governments to sign the Lima Declaration on Child Nutrition, thus securing their political commitment to reducing chronic malnutrition by 5 per cent before 2011.

The actual (regional) implementation of CRECER was far from smooth in practice. One of CNI's internal evaluations of the process released at the end of 2007, showed that regional governments needed to gain clearer incentives and improved training to boost the strategy to match national efforts (CNI 2007). To this effect, a 2008 decree was passed (Norma 001-2008) to decentralise the local implementation of CRECER to municipal and regional governments and only 12 regional governments initially signed up formally to indicate their

commitment to implementing the programme Decentralization was crucial to encourage regional presidents to gradually take over the CRECER agenda and put their own regional stamp on it, such as Ayacucho's CRECER -Wari program. The Ayacucho experience shows how the nutrition strategy started as a state priority and it gradually developed into other key programmes to improve human capital, to promote economic growth and improve provision of social services (Interview #14).

In contrast to CRECER, the implementation of the JUNTOS programme triggered greater political conflicts between the central government and local authorities over ownership and control of resources. In principle, the conditional cash transfer scheme directly allocated central government transfers to eligible households in selected municipalities based on needs assessments, poverty lines and a local peer review process. The central government trained and deployed JUNTOS programme managers to build administrative and executive capacity in more than 100 local governments.

The allocation of central transfers to the local level generated multiple conflicts. First, households excluded from the programme benefits challenged the selection and allocation of programme funds on the basis that benefiting households were perceived to be sympathetic to local authorities (JUNTOS 2009). Mayors in turn, resented the fact that they were not in charge of directly managing funds or social priorities even though they were elected representatives (Interview # 6). Others argued that the presence of JUNTOS produced a positive political impact that increased mayors' electoral prospects in recipient municipalities even though they could not directly manage JUNTOS funding (Interviews # 3, 12 and 16). For the purpose of this study however, it was not possible to empirically demonstrate what the exact impact of JUNTOS on the likelihood of municipal re-election is, and whether the presence of JUNTOS was likely to sway political support in favour of the government party. The recurrent theme when interviewing stakeholders was that the implementation of JUNTOS created unsolved coordination problems between municipal governments and the regional and national levels. A related issue that hindered cooperation was the limited technical and administrative capacity of local governments to administrate central government funds.

Paradoxically, many interviewees repeatedly argued that the government efforts to reduce nutrition produced positive results *thanks to the absence of political parties* at the local level. The underlying assumption was that nutrition policies had to preserve their technical nature to produce the expected results and that parties would have politicised the design of nutrition policies and the allocation of antipoverty transfers (Interviews #3, 9 and 11). Based on fieldwork observation, it is fair to argue that local political elites don't have a clear structure of career ambitions or incentives that would define their policy goals in the long term, in the contemporary Peruvian context. Rather, political dynamics appear to be guided by short term actions that seek an immediate impact on their electoral prospects. In the long run however, political parties will need to play a central role to secure the country's commitment to reforms. Strong political parties will be instrumental to coordinate, fund and mobilise re-election campaigns, provide clear and reliable career paths to young ambitious politicians, and facilitate political cooperation between central, regional and municipal governments. In short, political parties can provide clear incentives and tangible benefits for politicians committed to the success of poverty reduction strategies. This idea will be further developed in the next section.

3.4 Coordination from below: the case of Ayacucho

Many observers interviewed coincided that the region of Ayacucho offers an excellent case study of policy coordination across sectors and political cooperation across elected officials at the sub national level. The region achieved both a record economic growth (of 11 per cent GDP in 2009) with a dramatic reduction in chronic malnutrition of more than 6 per cent

points, and a reduction of poverty rates of 15.6 per cent during the 2005–2009 period. The case of success in Ayacucho is especially remarkable because this region was the primary target of political violence during the 1980s and 1990s. The violence undermined the civilian population, destroyed the social fabric and dismantled the economic productivity. Ayacucho is also remarkable because it achieved success without having access to rents and transfers from the export of natural resources, unlike the region of Cajamarca, which benefited from abundant revenue flows but could not improve its socioeconomic indicators.

There are reasons to believe that the Ayacucho success story is partly explained by good sectoral (horizontal) and territorial (vertical) coordination of government offices in charge of fighting malnutrition. The adoption of CRECER -Wari strategy, the regional version of the CRECER, reproduced the same instances of policy coordination to facilitate intersectoral and political dialogue, and established a clear division of roles in the planning and programme execution between government and non-government entities. Ayacucho has in fact, ensured the cooperation between national authorities (including the Technical Secretariat of CT-CIAS, the National Coordination of CRECER and representatives from the ministries of Health, Education, Housing and Labour), regional government entities (including the Presidency of the Regional Council for the Fight against Poverty and Child Nutrition, and Regional Managers of JUNTOS, PRONAA and FONCODES), elected authorities including the Regional President of Ayacucho, and mayors from 12 municipal districts. Representatives of the *National Agreement*, the *Poverty Alleviation Roundtable* also contributed to policy coordination and implementation of the CRECER -Wari strategy through their regional offices in Ayacucho (Interviews # 13, #14 and #16).

The international cooperation and donor agencies also played an important role to make coordination possible by lending technical expertise and financial support for implementation, capacity building and training initiatives. Informally, CARE generated other important synergies between cooperation and the government, which facilitated policy success. For example, Raul Luna, the first official in charge of social development for the CRECER -Wari strategy had already worked for CARE Peru before and was also very familiar with the policy approaches of UNICEF. Another expert, the second manager of social development in the Ayacucho Government, Hugo Garcia Godos, had also been chief of Food Security at CARE Peru. And the regional president of Ayacucho, Ernesto Molina Garcia, had developed a close working relationship with the technical team of CARE and other agencies, which cemented his commitment to the implementation of the nutrition strategy since he was first elected (Interview #16).

In terms of vertical integration, the Ayacucho experience shows important synergies between the national and the regional government. The regional president Ernesto Molina adopted the national CRECER strategy as the core social policy of his government, gave it his own branding and adapted it to his regions' capabilities and potentials. He set up an inter-sectoral committee (mirroring the national coordination structure) to facilitate 'horizontal' alignments in the fight against poverty. President Molina had also developed a good personal relationship with the main stakeholders at the national level, including national Director of CT-CIAS Iván Hidalgo and the Minister for Women and Social Development Virginia Borra. The regional government also established a close relationship with the congresswoman for the Ayacucho region, Elizabeth Leon, which facilitated some policy influencing at the national level (Interview #16). In the fragmented Peruvian context however, this type of involvement of congress with regional politics has been more an exception than a rule.

While Ayacucho shows a good example of national with regional coordination, the real challenge lies in the region's ability and capacity to coordinate policy implementation between the regional presidency and the 111 municipal districts. Usually the regional governments lack the capacity and resources to help implement projects at the local level, and this is where agencies like CARE can step up to train project coordinators, bring

expertise and technical assistance to municipalities (Interview #16). Regional-local coordination is further challenged when districts are governed by different political groups. After the 2010 municipal election for example, it emerged that less than 20 out of 111 districts had direct partisan affinities with the newly elected regional president, which undermines the districts' political incentives to collaborate and adopt a poverty reduction strategy led by another party. President Molina in turn, decided not to run for re-election in the 2010 regional elections, so the political continuity for his policies has not been assured yet. As it will be later discussed, the lack of incentives to develop political careers in Peru is a serious threat to policy continuity not just in the Ayacucho region but nationwide.

3.5 Costing nutrition strategies: Results Based Budgeting

One of the key factors helping explain policy success was the decision to design and fund the national strategy to fight malnutrition through Results Based Budgeting (Presupuesto por Resultados) or RBB.²⁶ Although the initial proposal for adopting a results-based system of public budgeting was first considered during the Toledo Administration in 2001, the idea only gained political momentum with President Alejandro García. The decision to move towards a RBB approach was originally suggested and promoted by the World Bank because it contributed to greater government accountability and operational efficiency in the use of public and donor monies (Interview #26). In this context, it was a strategic decision to choose nutrition as a pilot area to adopt RBB since it required the coordination of several government ministries and social programmes (Health, Education, Housing, Labor, JUNTOS, PRONAA) to provide public services and attain complementary goals. The RBB strategy had a double advantage: (a) it helped calculate and secure the necessary funds for accomplishing nutrition targets – and thus protect social spending –, and (b) it created direct incentives for government bureaucrats and elected authorities to make government spending more transparent and visible to the public and to one another (Interview #26).

Although the Bank was not a CNI member, its Representative in Peru actively supported the goals pursued by the CNI since the Bank's interest for a more transparent and accountable budgeting process was compatible with the CNI's concern with protecting the long term funding of nutrition policies. Thus, the Bank worked alongside the Government, and the Ministry of Economics and Finance in particular, to adopt and implement the RBB (Interview #26). In addition to this synergy, there were many other instances where informal and personal affinities across agencies that facilitated cooperation and information sharing between the CNI, the World Bank, and the Finance Ministry.

The Ministry of Finance and Economy (MEF) was directly involved in the budgeting process through its executive units (unidades ejecutoras) in charge of calculating and collecting the appropriate budget estimates for the following year, and conveying that information to the central level for a proper forecast of next years' budget. This was a fundamental change because it shifted budgeting from an input oriented approach to a product oriented approach that focused on delivery of services. It also allowed for project coordination between the administrative and logistical persons in charge of providing the service, with the technocrat in charge of executing the budget, with the government planner in charge of signing the cheques (Interview #1).

The decision to cost nutrition efforts through RBB highlighted important differences between the MEF – that placed emphasis on results and value for money – and members of the social sector such as the Poverty for Poverty Reduction (MCLCP) that focused on social outcomes and processes. An important compromise achieved was the inclusion, thanks to the advocacy of MCLCP, of specific social targets to be achieved as part of macroeconomic goals set by the MEF (Interview #11). While MEF has made good progress in the allocation

²⁶ The legal base for the results based budgeting is contained in the Ley Marco de Modernización de la Gestión del Estado (Law N° 27658 – 29.01.2002) and the 2007 Public Budgets Law.

of budgets according to outputs, it has been more difficult to monitor the disbursement and effective spending according to results and this remains one of the pending challenges (Interview #26).

At the micro level, it is not clear that the introduction of RBB completely eliminated the political lobbying and bargaining of ministries to obtain greater budgetary allocations. With the adoption of RBB, it is more controversial to try to break up and identify current spending rather than capital spending (Interviews #3 and 11). As a result, the same political motivations to reshuffle funding between capital spending and current spend remains under the RBB scheme (Interview #11), but it is argued that under the RBB scheme it is difficult to overestimate spending, thus reducing motivations for rent seeking (Interview #26).

The growing predominance of the Executive and the MEF in the RBB process triggered mixed reactions among stakeholders and beneficiaries. On the one hand, many recognise the organisational and technical advantages of MEF to forecast and transfer budgetary allocations, which has enabled continuity of funds to advance government nutrition efforts. By the same token it is important that MEF allows districts some autonomy and spending flexibility to adapt to unexpected circumstances such as food price increases or windfall revenues (Interview #6). As one of the interviewees warned, if MEF officials continue to have an excessive control of spending decisions from the capital city Lima, they run the risk of asphyxiating the planning process and undermining the innovative capacity of regional officers (Interview #6).

At the sub national level, the RBB scheme has not solved the conflict over budget allocations between regions and municipalities. On the one hand, regional governments have the capacity to absorb and use fiscal transfers in a more accountable manner than municipal governments. In terms of long term sustainability however, municipal governments need to improve their planning abilities to make the most use of fiscal transfers. Currently, most stakeholders recognise the need to improve investment at the municipal level, but the central government insists in promoting spending at the regional level because 'municipal governments are not ready yet, they lack the technical capabilities and we cannot afford to waste our social investment...' (Interview #20).

In theory, there are many mechanisms through which municipal governments try to access the central government, including *canon* transfers or royalties from the exploitation of natural resources, JUNTOS funds (although targeted at the individual level), RBB transfers, and competitive access to Foncomún and Foniprel investment funds. In practice, there is a great variation regarding municipalities' technical abilities to access these funds, especially under competitive schemes. In talking to the Mayor of Tambillo, it emerges that the budgetary allocation given to his district from the central government in 2009 was around 600 thousand new soles (c. \$200,000 USD) per year for a population of nearly 6,000 inhabitants. 'There is not much we can do with that money' he says, and explains that uses participatory budget mechanisms to allocate 50 per cent in current spending and the rest in capital investment (Interview #12). The recently re-elected mayor Arturo Quispe, invested significant resources to hire outside expertise to help him attract more investment from donors, cooperation agencies and competitive national Foniprel development funds (Interview #12). He also won the right to host a branch of MEF's Investment Promotion Bureau in his district, to offer technical assistance in project preparation to neighbouring municipalities. The income from other sources combined, reported him many times over the amount obtained through direct government transfers. Not surprisingly, Tambillo is one of the districts with the highest budget execution rate in the country (at 89 per cent of the allocated budget) and it is portrayed as a success story of effective local government.

The combined analysis of the vertical, horizontal and financial integration offers an analytical template to evaluate government efforts in the fight against chronic malnutrition. The Peru

experience illustrates a successful integration of different government sectors as well as non-governmental organisations in the design, implementation and monitoring of the nutrition strategy. There has been a partial (vertical) integration between the national and regional tiers of government, but there is much coordination left to do to effectively integrate municipal governments with the national and regional spheres. Finally, the results based budgeting has made it possible to allocate and protect the necessary funds to make the strategy sustainable in the long run, but it has not yet emerged as a model that can produce more accountable use of government resources independently of strong executive influence. These factors are further developed in the next section.

4. Sustainability challenges and policy recommendations

Has the government strategy to reduce malnutrition reached a threshold of success? If so, which are the political, technical and financial aspects contributing to success? How can successful government interventions be maintained in the long run? How can the CNI effectively contribute to this goal?

This paper argues that the observable reduction in chronic child malnutrition especially in the rural areas between 2005 and 2010 is not directly linked to increased fiscal resources or socioeconomic factors but rather to effective government interventions – good policies. The articulation of a national strategy for poverty reduction that primarily focused on the distribution of conditional cash transfers contributed to the reduction of children's chronic malnutrition in Peru. The imminent next question is whether the current strategy has reached 'a point of no return' beyond which it will be difficult to reverse or downscale existing government efforts to reduce malnutrition. The question of policy and political continuity is of utmost importance when most of the political elite directly involved in the design and implementation of the national strategy will end their political tenure after new general elections are held in Peru in April of 2011 with a runoff election between the two most voted candidates in May 2011. As the weekly *The Economist* recently argued, 'Peru's election runs some risk of turning into a lesson in what happens when economic growth is not backed up by more effective government, and when a democracy is hobbled by weak and fragmented political parties'.²⁷

Taken in comparative perspective, Peru is a unique case in Latin America where significant economic growth and the apparent success of its social policies has brought no visible electoral returns to the government. Unlike incumbent governments in Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela, Mexico, Ecuador or Bolivia, Peruvian president Alan Garcia will not be able to evaluate the electoral success of its poverty reduction policies as Garcia will not seek the re-election or actively endorse the electoral campaign of a successor for the April 2011 general election. Furthermore, the lack of a leading political figure has destroyed the electoral prospects of APRA candidates for the 2010 municipal and regional elections and it only contributed with 6.5 per cent of congressional seats for APRA candidates in the 2011 legislative elections.

While there is widespread consensus on the need to upscale poverty reduction and child nutrition efforts, there are divided opinions as to how to maintain the effort over time. As discussed, the main challenge is to ensure political continuity. The following pages discuss two additional dimensions to ensure long term sustainability: the technical expertise and

²⁷ *The Economist* (2011) 'The Risk of Throwing it all Away: Peru's Presidential Election'. Mar 31st 2011. www.economist.com/node/18486281?story_id=18486281

organisational strengthening, and the sustainable financing. Each section outlines the nature of the problem, identifies specific challenges and extracts specific policy recommendations where the CNI could play a stronger advocacy and policy influencing role vis-à-vis the government and civil society.

4.1 Political challenges

The fact that the entire governing elite will be leaving power in 2011 constitutes a very serious challenge for the sustainability of the poverty reduction strategy. In a democracy, incumbent politicians face a dilemma between investing their time and efforts on the provision of short term visible benefits to some voters, or to contribute to the implementation of long term policies and programmes that benefit the majority of voters. The key challenge to ensure that elected leaders continue to promote nutrition initiatives is to link current policy efforts with the long term political benefits of maintaining healthy voters. In Peru, this is a work in progress. It used to be a common saying that it didn't pay to invest on children's welfare because 'kids don't vote', but as one of the interviewees pointed out, more politicians have become aware that 'their mothers do vote' (Interview #9).

During the period of analysis, there has been an increasing awareness in Peru that the need to reduce poverty and children's malnutrition are key issues of the public agenda. Many stakeholders interviewed concur that government efforts to combat malnutrition reached a point of no return when the fight against nutrition became a visible issue in the public agenda (Interviewees # 3 and #22). As discussed for the 2006 general election, all presidential candidates showed their strong political commitment by signing a public declaration, and the increased public awareness was echoed and validated by independent (non-government) printed media such as *Revista Caretas* and other media like *Radio Programas del Peru* (RPP) (Interview # 3).

Looking ahead, it is unclear that elected politicians and political organisations in Peru would have direct incentives to organise, distribute and implement the national strategy CRECER along the programmatic lines established by the current government. Given the ban on presidential re-election and the traditionally low rates of re-election for political parties and elected officials, there are few institutional guarantees that existing candidates would strengthen the positive features of existing social policies. Thus, the following policy recommendations aim to bridge that gap.

1. To secure the **political commitment** of incoming elites, the CNI and CARE in particular adopted in 2006, a decisive strategy to seek political influence which proved to be effective. Long term sustainability is likely to increase by continuing and expanding this influence:
 - a. A renewed coordination effort on the part of CNI is needed to secure the **formal endorsement** of a national strategy for reducing malnutrition from the new **presidential candidates**, as well as **newly elected regional and municipal authorities**, around a concise plan of action. The CNI could support the development of an action plan to guide the first 100 days of government. For example, CARE and the MCLCP have been key catalysts to promote the *Vota por la Niñez* coalition during the 2010 regional and 2011 national elections. This initiative offers a complementary platform to support child rights along the lines of issues that CNI has advocated for, including concrete targets for reducing chronic child malnutrition and anaemia, as well as targets on six other critical areas of child rights (health, education, identity, working children, participation, violence). The commitments set forth by *Vota por la Niñez* have already received the endorsement of all the main Presidential candidates, as well as the signatures from 23 of the 25 regions in

the 2010 local and regional elections. This is a solid step forward to ensure future political continuity of ongoing efforts.

2. There is a greater need to expand the political influence to engage the **National Congress as a key arena for policymaking in Peru**. This dimension is of paramount importance as less than 23 per cent of legislators from the previous period re-elected after the 2011 elections, none of which could be identified as being 'champions' of nutrition issues. The CNI should continue its political influencing efforts working alongside 'champion' legislators who can advance specific agendas and introduce pieces of legislation (i.e. Special Lactation Law). The CNI could also support the work of key legislative committees to table legislative debates and invite academics, nutrition experts and civil society representatives to hold legislative hearings around nutrition initiatives. The legislative branch can also play a key role for ensuring and amending the allocation of funds for social programmes.
 - a. One specific recommendation is to offer incoming politicians with intensive **short term training on the background, goals and importance of fighting malnutrition in Peru**. In addition to bringing politicians up to speed on critical issues, these workshops may help legislators to network amongst themselves.
 - b. A related recommendation is to **identify and work with legislative champions** that are sufficiently knowledgeable, committed and capable of exerting policymaking influence to ensure a proper debate and consultation about new legislation, funding and organisational reforms as discussed in this document.
3. The CNI could strengthen their effort to promote greater **vertical integration** of policy interventions across the regional and municipal levels. Paradoxically in Peru, greater executive influence was key to explain the success of improved inter-sectoral coordination in the fight against malnutrition. Further progress requires that the central government devolves power to sub-national units but remains a central player for coordinating different policy initiatives.
 - a. The CNI has been instrumental to promote programme priorities and replicate national coordination structures at the regional level. Its members could coordinate efforts to ensure that **other regions in Peru adopt the national strategy according to the region's own capacities and specific challenges**. Establishing realistic and context specific goals is key to ensure compliance and successful policy outcomes from regional governments.
 - b. The CNI itself should consider **replicating its own technical, advocacy and financial coordination efforts at the sub national level**, to avoid duplication of roles and expand the reach of its own policy influencing given limited resources available. One step in this direction could be the creation of a 'Regional CNI' committee to coordinate such actions.
 - c. The CNI should play a greater role to **reach and support a greater number of municipalities** with technical assistance, financial resources and capacity building efforts. The CNI needs to devise political incentives to encourage mayors to cooperate with other tiers of government, and reward good performance (according to outcome or coverage indicators) with financial incentives (such as matching funds). A proper set of incentives needs to be offered to those *municipios* that receive and do not JUNTOS funding.
4. The CNI should continue to play an oversight role to continually **demand, monitor, and influence the work of elected politicians and government officials**. There are multiple channels and stakeholders to carry out this work.

- a. CNI could support the strengthening of mechanisms such as the Sistema de Focalización de Hogares (SISFOH) to identify and target the poorest households -especially in rural areas- for the delivery and monitoring of social programmes.
- b. The CNI could strengthen and support the monitoring role of the MCLCP, and expand this **oversight capability** to ensure the adoption of nutrition and poverty reduction targets **by the national government and regional counterparts**.
- c. CNI partners could work with civil society organisations to promote the **creation of social accountability mechanisms like citizens' watchdogs** to analyse nutrition data and monitor government commitments. In this regard, the CNI could lobby the government to make available data from annual national surveys to monitor intermediate and final progress in the fight against children's chronic malnutrition.

4.2 Legal and organisational challenges

The critical role of the Executive branch (ST-CIAS/PCM) in promoting policy coordination across Government agencies is far from secured in the long run without a strategy to institutionalise organisational practices and adopt legal frameworks to advance poverty reduction efforts. The CNI facilitated policy success by contributing to the formulation, adoption, implementation and monitoring of the National Strategy CRECER and provided technical and logistical support to the cash transfer scheme JUNTOS.

There are two types of reforms that need addressing: the strengthening of existing and adopting new legal frameworks, and ensuring the continuity of technical and administrative expertise of existing staff in government and non-governmental organisations.

1. Regarding the role of legislation, interviewees highlighted the need to **adopt some key pieces of legislation** that could secure and advance efforts in the fight against malnutrition. Some of these pieces of legislation included the effective application of the 'Lactation's special Law' to uphold the children's right to access to mothers' milk, and control the propaganda, eliminate ambiguity, and increase the sanctions for those that advertise artificial milk as a proper substitute (Interview #2).
 - a. CNI could do more to **actively engage Members of Congress with cooperation agencies, organised citizens and relevant interest groups** in the formulation and discussion of pieces of legislation along the lines of the priorities of the existing successful malnutrition programmes.
 - b. The CNI should expand its effort to **identify, commission and incorporate into legislative discussions relevant academic research** on the factors contributing to reducing children's malnutrition and poverty reduction, in Peru and in comparative perspective.
2. A second challenge is to **retain and promote civil servants and technical staff** in government and non-government agencies. In the current situation, there are few career or material incentives to retain and promote the best civil servants. There is a greater risk of losing the accumulated technical expertise of government officials for policy formulation and implementation. More importantly perhaps, there is a risk of losing the accumulated expertise to carry the kind of political bargaining with regional and local elites that has been critical for success and it is currently done by some of the MCLCP, MIMDES and CT-CIAS staff.
 - a. Bureaucrats often feel overwhelmed with growing demands from the executive (in terms of policy implementation) and the citizenry (greater service delivery),

but lack the technical and financial resources to respond to those expectations (Interview # 2). The CNI could contribute to the discussion of a clear **separation of roles and internal coordination** to facilitate an effective division of labour but also the **design of specific training programmes to expand the accumulated expertise** of government officials in key areas such as Results Based Budgeting.

- b. The CNI has witnessed and in some cases facilitated the exchange of policy experts that moved from the government sector to non-governmental organisations and from the municipal and local spheres to the national arena. These experts can play a critical role to advise new government officials on the continuation of such initiatives. The CNI can play an important role to **create and maintain a roster of the necessary policy expertise** around nutrition initiatives.
- c. The CNI can also **support and expand existing government initiatives to improve its technical expertise** such as SERVIR whereby the central government can hire highly skilled technocrats for up to five years on a secondment basis, in order to compensate for the lack of governments' own technical skills (Interview # 21).

4.3 Economic challenges

The adoption of Results Based Budgeting was one of the key pillars to ensure the continuous and transparent funding of the nutrition strategy. The adoption of RBB also encouraged greater coordination across government agencies and between government and non-government agencies. The challenge is now to secure the continuity of funding for social programmes under the new administration. A related challenge is to find ways to balance the funding allocation between regional and local governments, to ensure that programmes are properly funded, but also to allocate according to needs and administrative capabilities of each government level.

1. The Finance Ministry (MEF) played a critical role in centralising the design, allocation and monitoring of funds to finance the nutrition strategy. Paradoxically, the strong and centralised technical nature of the MEF that was key in producing early success, has been seen by some interviewees as a potential threat to the long term sustainability of nutrition efforts. The complaint is that the MEF has become 'too powerful' and bureaucratic in a way that asphyxiates innovation, it does not **allow for a flexible allocation of funding** and reproduces inequalities by rewarding the efforts of local and regional governments with better technical skills at the expense of those less capable to do so.
 - a. One important challenge is the need to **decentralise a share of the funds allocated by MEF for the use local and regional governments**. Currently, the MEF has a regional representative of SIAF to ensure the allocation of funds. The CNI could advocate for greater technical support from the MEF to help regions prepare their budget estimates, through a resident results based budgeting (RBB) expert in each region for example.
 - b. The CNI and cooperation agencies should continue to provide complementary funding to support additional or new initiatives not originally considered in the RBB plan, thus giving local governments the possibility to try pilot projects. The recommendation is for CNI to **continue and focus the coordination and funding of nutrition efforts especially at the local level** to balance the capabilities of municipal governments' vis-à-vis regional ones.
 - c. For some time, the CNI (particularly USAID) has debated the possibility of pooling programme funds to assist the government with more flexible programme implementation (Interview #8). While this initiative may give a

short term boost for programme implementation, the recommendation for ensuring long term funding is to consider a **matching funds scheme** with the government. In this scheme, the CNI would pool some programme funds but would establish common conditionality criteria that the government has to meet in order to receive the disbursements. The matching fund would give regional and local governments some additional flexibility to implement initiatives according to context specific policy priorities, while remaining accountable for the responsible use of funds.

5. Appendix

5.1 Terms of reference

Documenting learning from the fight against malnutrition in Peru

Institute of Development Studies – University of Sussex
CARE UK
September 2010

1. Background²⁸

The prevalence of underweight children worldwide fell from 31 per cent in 1990 to 26 per cent in 2008.²⁹ However, progress is still patchy and not necessarily directed to support the worst affected. Half of the countries have made progress on hunger, but levels of malnutrition did not improve in 28 countries and got worse in 24. The MDG target (1.C) of *reducing by half the prevalence of underweight children under five years of age by 2015* is where the world is most off-track and shows wholly insufficient progress.

The DFID Undernutrition strategy published in 2010 (*The neglected crisis of undernutrition: DFID's strategy*) argues that undernutrition is a *human disaster on a vast scale*, with chronic malnutrition affecting *one in three children in developing countries*, responsible every year for the death of more than three million children and more than 100,000 mothers. Chronic malnutrition *prevents proper brain development, which means children are less able to start school when they should, and less able to learn and perform. Adults who were undernourished in childhood earn significantly less and contribute less to economic growth. Undernutrition reduces GDP by at least 2–3 per cent.*

Poor governance is an underlying cause of the persistence of malnutrition. Lack of political commitment, assignment of largely insufficient public funds, ineffective schemes and programmes, inability to reach the most affected populations, and corruption combined with poor administrative/ technical skills are among the main reasons underlying the failure in meeting global targets. DFID strategy clearly highlights the importance of governance strategies to address the problem and accelerate progress.

Delivering an effective multi-sectoral response requires strong co-ordination and leadership at national and international levels. However, national capacity and response are often weak and there is often low political demand for action against undernutrition. Top level leadership is needed to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each sector necessary to achieve

²⁸ Text provided by Jay Goulden at CARE_UK
²⁹ UNICEF, 2010

a common goal. Weaknesses of national level systems for nutrition are further compounded by an ineffective international system with weak co-ordination and limited collective action.

In Peru over the last five years, supported by CARE and others, the Government has generated this political will, created national coordination structures and mechanisms, increased public (and private) spending on programmes to tackle malnutrition and aligned social programmes with the national nutrition strategy (known as CRECER). This included adding conditionalities on taking children to regular growth monitoring in the Conditional Cash Transfer programme, JUNTOS. The international aid system has also aligned itself around CRECER. After ten years of almost no change in child chronic malnutrition rates (25.8 per cent in 1995, and 24.1 per cent in 2005), this change in strategy has started to lead to results: malnutrition rates had fallen to 18.3 per cent in 2009, with reductions mainly occurring in rural areas (40.1 per cent to 32.8 per cent). Over 130,000 children under five are now not chronically malnourished who would have been had rates not fallen. Indeed, there is a strong case to be made that these changes would not have occurred without the formation in early 2006 of the Child Nutrition Initiative,³⁰ and its advocacy success in getting ten Presidential candidates to sign a commitment to reduce chronic malnutrition in children under five by 5 per cent in five years ('5 by 5 by 5'), followed by the support provided subsequently to the new Government to meet that commitment.

The food distribution programmes of CARE and other NGOs and UN agencies have also changed, from large-scale community level projects in the years prior to 2006,³¹ to a strategy more focused on providing technical support to government bodies, at national and sub-national level, advocacy to generate political commitment at national level and to put in place more inclusive and accountable systems for designing and delivering the programmes. This has also included a joint government, civil society and private sector budget monitoring of the Government's Articulated Nutrition Program, part of the Ministry of Economics and Finance's Results Based Budgeting programme.³² These strategies fit well with CARE UK's focus on strengthening more accountable, effective and responsive state-citizen relations ('negotiated development'), mainly by supporting civil society 'voice', building its capacities to do policy influencing and engage in participatory planning, decision-making on public expenditure and budgeting. The child malnutrition initiative took advantage of a pre-electoral political window to gain political commitment on a clear and concrete target. This model of a pre-electoral advocacy campaign has attracted interest and has recently also been adopted by a group of alliances and coalitions working on different aspects of child rights, in developing a shared agenda for child rights and a joint advocacy initiative ('Todos con la Infancia. Vota por la Niñez Ahora' – *Everyone for childhood: Vote for children now*) in the framework of the October 2010 subnational elections, and the April 2011 national (Presidential and Congressional) elections.³³

2. Goal and objectives

The purpose of this proposal is to document and systematize Peru's apparent success in tackling malnutrition, analysing the contributing and intervening factors for success, outlining

³⁰ The Child Nutrition Initiative (hereafter "The Initiative") is made up of national and international NGOs (Action against Hunger, ADRA, CARE, Caritas, Future Generations, Nutrition Research Institute, Poverty Fighting Roundtable, Plan, PRISMA), UN agencies (FAO, PAHO/WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP) and donors (USAID, with the EC and GIZ as observers). CARE Peru functions as the secretary.

³¹ See for example final evaluation of REDESA (CARE) at www.care.org.pe/pdfs/cinfo/libro/finalevaluation.pdf, or of UNICEF's Good Start at www.sopenut.net/site1/files/congreso2009/pdf_junio4/UNICEF_Buen_inicio.pdf.

³² For a good overview of this, in Spanish, see the presentation at www.mesadeconcertacion.org.pe/documentos/documentos/doc_01463.pdf.

³³ The campaign includes 7 themes (Identity, health, nutrition, education, participation, protection against violence and working children), with specific targets under each area, at national level, and for each of Peru's 26 regions. Under the nutrition area, led by The Initiative, targets include reduction of chronic child malnutrition by a third, and of anaemia by a half. The campaign is coordinated by the Poverty Fighting Roundtable ("Mesa de Concertación de Lucha contra la Pobreza") a joint government-civil society-private sector body set up in 2001 to generate consensus on poverty reduction efforts.

the political dynamics and coalitions that made success possible, and exploring the factors that would ensure the long term sustainability of this initiative. In addition to the research component, the study will extract policy recommendations and knowledge sharing lessons that could be disseminated to Southern Governments, donor agencies and civil society organisations embarking on similar initiatives.

More specific objectives include:

- Understanding the political economy of child nutrition reforms in Peru, including the interactions among the main stakeholders such as national and subnational governments, development donors, civil society organisations and citizens.
- Reviewing and documenting the existing (secondary) data, including reports on national nutrition data, donor project documents, government strategy papers and reports, and systematisation studies from 2006–2008.
- Drawing policy recommendations to inform key domestic audiences, including other Southern governments, sub-national authorities, and CSOs.
- To support and influence donor agencies in their efforts to attack malnutrition in children (including DFID's Undernutrition Strategy, CARE's own strategy, and other members of The Initiative).

As a separate contribution to be discussed with CARE, this study would develop a strategy to:

- Assist and inform the ongoing systematization process carried out by the Roundtable for Poverty Alleviation on the Vote for Children campaign at subnational (2010) and national (2011) levels, so as to capture learning and recommendations before March 2011
- Assist and collaborate with members of *The Initiative* to produce learning documents on the work in Peru for regional publications (e.g. the Panamerican Health Journal).

3. Research framework

The proposed research seeks to carry out a political economy analysis to document and explain (the apparent success of) policy reforms and analyses the prospects for their long term sustainability. We recognise that successful policy change take place when the necessary actors share similar preferences and it is in their own interest to adopt and maintain a new policy (Tsebelis 2002). This type of change can occur in a *decisive* manner if the top policy players delegate authority to a single leader or agenda setter, but the new policy will not be necessarily enforced or maintained unless there are other stakeholders who derive a direct or indirect benefit from this change. Often, policymakers need to gather support to form reform coalitions, ensuring that all relevant players are properly compensated for their support to the new policy.

In a democratic setting, citizens play a critical role to ensure the transparency of these policy coalitions through the regular election of their representatives. Both elected and non elected politicians realise that voters hold the necessary tools to reward or punish their government performance. But elections are not the only means to ensure accountability of public officials, as there are many other mechanisms such as public protest or naming and shaming strategies that may be equally or more effective to hold politicians to account in the short run. It is through the combination of formal political and social mechanisms of democratic accountability that the provision of services can be ensured and maintained over time.

Recent research argues that one concrete approach to ensuring public accountability can take place through the budget process. The budget process is a specific policy arena in which citizens can directly take part in the formulation, allocation and effective distribution of

government rents to attend their policy priorities (Robinson 2008). As the Peruvian case correctly demonstrates, this participation of citizens in the budget formulation is an important tool to bring governments to account and ensure the continuity of government spending to fight malnutrition.

The proposed research offers a general framework to analyse the *previous* government efforts to respond to a social need, create the necessary funding schemes, coordinate the relevant stakeholders and effectively allocate government spending to social programmes during five years that were key to reducing chronic malnutrition in children under five. The successful strategy can be further understood in the context of a period of unprecedented economic bonanza in Peru, when the government benefitted from large additional revenues from the mining sector. But while the commodities boom may help explain the government's ability to invest in social spending, the remaining challenge is to analyse which factors can explain a sustained investment in the long run, more efficient spending patterns and a more comprehensive and egalitarian distribution of opportunities in the long run. To explore this *future challenge*, the research will look at the existing configuration of political actors, namely the relationship between the government and key social ministries, sub-national governments particularly mayors, as well as government and opposition political parties in the legislature. The purpose of the analysis is to understand which political coalitions are more receptive to the goals of the Advocacy Initiative and ensure the long term stability of the strategy.

4. Methodology

The proposed methodology is to combine case specific in-depth qualitative information with comparative and objective quantitative information to document existing dynamics and future trends in the government effort to fight chronic malnutrition. Qualitatively, the study proposes to interview key stakeholders in the Government (Ministry of the Presidency, Mesa de Concertación para Combatir la Pobreza, line ministries), donor agencies (USAID, GIZ, European Commission, World Bank), and other members of the Initiative including Civil Society organisations. In addition to this, a second round of interviews with stakeholders at the subnational level (proposed to be Ayacucho at regional level, and Tambillo at District level) will be carried out. The qualitative information will be verified and discussed with members of the academic community, especially researchers based at the Instituto de Estudios Peruanos (IEP) in Lima.

In addition to the qualitative information, the research will document and analyse secondary data on nutrition and food security, obtained from National Statistics Agency reports (INEI). Other sources of information include reports on national nutrition data, donor project documents, government strategy papers and reports, and systematisation studies from 2006–2008. The proposed travel to Peru and fieldwork will be carried out by Dr. Andrés Mejía Acosta (IDS) and it will take place during the first half of November 2010. The final design of the methodology and research protocol will be discussed with CARE-UK and the DFID Nutrition Team.

5. Deliverables

1. The IDS research report will be a 35 to 40 page document due at the end of January 2011, containing the following information:
 - a. Background of the child chronic malnutrition effort and summary of key government, donor and CS strategies to fight malnutrition in Peru.
 - b. Report and analysis of the evolution of key social, nutrition and food security indicators in Peru in the past five years.

- c. Analysis of key interactions and the making of reform coalitions between members of The Initiative and government actors, focusing on vertical interactions between the central government and sub-national authorities, and horizontal linkages between the central government, line ministries and donor agencies.
 - d. Analysis of critical conditions and key success factors both for the *adoption* of policies and their long term *sustainability*.
 - e. Country lessons and policy recommendations drawn for future work on nutrition for different key audiences, including other Southern governments, donor agencies (such as DFID) and NGOs (including CARE).
2. The authors will accompany the IDS research report with a four page executive summary and a one page abstract outlining the research lessons and policy recommendations outlined above.

As a separate effort to be discussed with CARE and DFID but not included as part of this Research Report, IDS is willing to provide strategic support in two additional areas:

1. It will contribute to the drafting of the Vote for Children Systematization Campaign, for the sub-national and national elections to be held in 2010 and 2011 respectively. The aim of the contribution is to influence the policy debate at the Poverty Fighting Roundtable by disseminating the relevant research lessons and policy recommendations from the study. While a preliminary discussion can be started in November 2010, IDS will not be able to design a proper influencing strategy until the final report is ready to be disseminated in Spring 2011. In this case, another visit to Peru may need to be scheduled and budgeted for.
2. Support other partners like PAHO and CARE in the production of learning documents featuring the Peru experience in the format of a regional publication that could be submitted to a regional Health or Nutrition journal (e.g. the Panamerican Health Journal). Another possible venue is to produce an IDS Policy Briefing which can effectively disseminate research findings and policy insights to a global audience of scholars, development practitioners, donors and southern partners.

5.2 Research protocol and survey questions (in Spanish)

Estudio sobre la iniciativa de la lucha contra la desnutrición infantil en Peru

Entrevistas

Lima and Ayacucho, Peru.

November 8–12, 2010

CARE Peru.

“El propósito de este estudio es documentar y analizar la reciente experiencia del Perú en reducir la desnutrición infantil, identificando los factores que contribuyeron a su éxito, identificando las dinámicas y coaliciones más favorables entre los actores relevantes, y extrayendo lecciones y recomendaciones de políticas para compartirlo con otros gobiernos de países en desarrollo, agencias de cooperación y organizaciones de la sociedad civil”.

- I. Experiencia en reducir las tasas de malnutrición infantil en Peru (28–23 and 47–40):
 - a. Está de acuerdo con la **magnitud** de este cambio? Datos sobre desnutrición crónica muestran una reducción (ENDES 2009), pero datos sobre consumo calorífico no corroboran la historia (información poco confiable)

- b. En su opinión, que tan **importante es la magnitud** de este cambio? (en términos de evolución histórica, o cobertura geográfica por ejemplo)?
- c. Por qué este cambio **ocurre ahora** y no hace 5 o 10 años?
- d.Cuál cree usted que fueron las **intervenciones de políticas clave** que contribuyeron con esta reducción?
- e. Cree usted que hubo **innovaciones técnicas/tecnológicas** que ayuden a comprender esta reducción?
- f. Cree usted que hubo un cambio en la cantidad de recursos financieros destinados para el combate a la desnutrición? Fueron más públicos o privados?
- g. Cómo cree usted que el **contexto político** contribuyó con esta reducción?
- h. Existen otras condiciones de **contexto favorable** que hayan contribuido en el combate a la desnutrición?

II. Analizando el proceso de cambio (para reducir la desnutrición en Peru)

- a. Tradicionalmente, cuáles han sido las **políticas gubernamentales** para reducir la desnutrición? Por qué funcionaron o no?
- b. En su opinión, cual fue el agente o grupo de agentes clave **que iniciaron el proceso de cambio** para combatir la desnutrición? (el mismo Gobierno, las ONG's, agencias de cooperación y donantes)
- c. Existió un discurso predominante, en torno a la desnutrición, que cambió en la agenda pública?
- d. Estuvo este proceso de cambio abierto a la influencia o interferencia de nuevos actores sociales? Actores marginales?
- e. En qué momento la elite política tomó decidido interés en apoyar la campaña para reducir la desnutrición? Por que?

III. La iniciativa para la reducción de la desnutrición infantil (RDI) [y el papel de CARE]

- a. Cree usted que la RDI aparece como **una alternativa o complemento** a las diferentes políticas gubernamentales para la reducción de la desnutrición?
- b. Como se juntaron las **diferentes agencias de cooperación** en torno a la RDI?
- c. En qué momento el **gobierno decidió sumarse** a la iniciativa (o bloquearla)?
- d. Cómo funciona (formal e informal) la RDI? Existe una **estructura formal de gobierno**? Cada cuánto tiempo se reúnen las agencias?
- e. Quién **toma las decisiones** clave? Hay alguna agencia que tenga mayor influencia para introducir o bloquear alguna iniciativa en particular?
- f. Cómo o quién **financia** la RDI?
- g. Hay una asignación o pedido de asignación de **recursos fiscales** para combatir la desnutrición?
- h. Con qué agencia o **agencias del gobierno** interactúa la RDI? Existe igualdad de apertura?
- i. Se han involucrado a **legisladores** para apoyar o legislar en materias claves para el combate a la desnutrición? (por ejemplo comercialización de alimentos complementarios, subsidios, etc.)
- j. Cómo se han involucrado los **gobiernos locales** en el proceso? Qué capacidades o limitaciones tienen los alcaldes? Qué capacidades o limitaciones tienen los presidentes regionales?
- k. Han habido esfuerzos de **coordinación (vertical)** explícita entre diferentes agencias de gobierno en diferentes niveles territoriales?
- l. Existen otros **beneficios no esperados** de la configuración de la RDI (mayor coordinación entre el sistema UN, ONG's fomentar otras campañas como *Vota por la Niñez*).

IV. Motivación política y sustentabilidad

- a. En el lado gubernamental, quiénes cree usted fueron los **más importantes defensores** de esta iniciativa?
 - i. Hubo un interés particular por parte de los partidos políticos (electorales)?
Hubo diferencias entre políticos de gobierno y oposición? Entre políticos de Lima o del interior?
- b. En su opinion, porqué piensa usted que **a los políticos les interesó** apoyar los planteamientos de la RDI?
- c. Usted piensa que el actual compromiso es **sustentable** más allá del proceso electoral? Cuáles son las reacciones o apertura de los nuevos candidatos electos?
- d. Cuáles han sido las **lecciones más importantes** de esta experiencia?

5.3 Directory of interviewees

Date	Name	Position	Institution	Sector
8 Nov 2010	Luis Miguel León García	Director de Atención Integral de Salud	Ministerio de Salud	Central Government
8 Nov 2010	Hamilton Alejandro García Díaz	Director General de Promoción de la Salud	Ministerio de Salud	Central Government
12 Nov 2010	Zoila Zegarra Montes	Viceministra de Desarrollo Social	Ministerio de la Mujer y Desarrollo Social	Central Government
15 Nov 2010	Iván Hidalgo Romero	Presidente del Consejo Directivo	Programa Nacional de Apoyo Directo a los Más pobres JUNTOS	Central Government
9 Nov 2010	Jorge Gobitz Morales	Director Ejecutivo Adjunto	Programa Nacional de Apoyo Directo a los Más pobres JUNTOS	Central Government
9 Nov 2010	Elizabeth Linda Castillo Altez	Unidad Gerencial de Planeamiento, Presupuesto y Evaluación	Programa Nacional de Apoyo Directo a los Más pobres JUNTOS	Central Government
11 Nov 2010	Elizabeth León Minaya	Congresista	Congreso de la República del Perú	Government
10 Nov 2010	Guido Lombardi Elías	Congresista	Congreso de la República del Perú	Government
11 Nov 2010	Arturo Quispe Solorzano	Alcalde	Municipalidad Distrital de Tambillo	Local Government
11 Nov 2010	Walter Bedriñana Carrasco	Director Regional de Salud	Gobierno Regional de Ayacucho	Local Government
11 Nov 2010	Marcos Cabrera Pimentel	Gerente Regional de Desarrollo Social	Gobierno Regional de Ayacucho	Local Government
8 Nov 2010	Delia Haustein Van Ginhoven	Directora Ejecutiva	PRISMA	Non Governmental Organization

12 Nov 2010	María Elena Ugaz	Oficial de Nutrición y Desarrollo Infantil	UNICEF	Non Governmental Organization
9 Nov 2010	Milo Stanojevich	Director Nacional	CARE Perú	Non Governmental Organization
15 Feb 2011	Carlos Rojas Dávila	Senior Advisor Evaluation, Monitoring and Advocacy	CARE USA	Non Governmental Organization
10 Nov 2010	Erick Janowsky	Jefe – Oficina de Salud	USAID	Non Governmental Organization
11 Nov 2010	Lía García León	Coordinadora Regional Ayacucho – Proyecto Ventana de Oportunidad	CARE Perú	Non Governmental Organization
8 Nov 2010	Jay Goulden	Director de Programas	CARE Perú	Non Governmental Organization
9 Nov 2010	Walter Vilchez	Coordinador del Programa de Nutrición y Seguridad Alimentaria	CARE Perú	Non Governmental Organization
10 Nov 2010	Luis Seminario	Oficial de Programas	USAID	Non Governmental Organization
9 Nov 2010	Elías Wilfredo Salinas Castro	Director General	Centro Nacional de Alimentación y Nutrición – CENAN	Research
12 Nov 2010	Mary Penny	Directora General	Instituto de Investigación Nutricional	Research
12 Nov 2010	Carolina Trivelli	Investigadora	Instituto de Estudios Peruanos – IEP	Research
11 Nov 2010	Jesús Ospina Salinas	Secretario Técnico	Mesa de Concertación Para la Lucha contra la Pobreza – Ayacucho	Mixed
10 Nov 2010	Max Hernández Camarero	Secretario Técnico	Acuerdo Nacional	Mixed
10 Nov 2010	Federico Arnillas Lafert	Presidente	Mesa de Concertación Para la Lucha contra la Pobreza	Mixed

References

Aguiar *et al.* (2007) *An Analysis of Malnutrition Programming and Policies in Peru*, report prepared for Gerald R. Ford School of International Development, University of Michigan, www.mef.gob.pe/contenidos/pol_econ/documentos/An_Analysis_of_Malnutrition_Programming_and_Policies_in_Peru.pdf (accessed 20 May 2011)

Alcázar, L. (2009) *El Gasto Público Social Frente a la Infancia: Análisis del Programa JUNTOS y de la Oferta y Demanda de Servicios Asociadas a sus Condiciones*, Lima: GRADE/Niños del Milenio

Child Nutrition Initiative (2007) *Balance de las Acciones del Gobierno en la Lucha Contra la Desnutrición Infantil*, first annual review by Iniciativa contra la Desnutrición Infantil, July 2007

Government of Peru (2011) JUNTOS program website, www.JUNTOS.gob.pe (accessed 9 February 11)

Larrea *et al.* (2005) www.cepis.org.pe/texcom/nutricion/495.pdf

Martorell, R.; Stein, A. and Schroeder, D. (2001) 'Early Nutrition and Later Adiposity', *American Journal for Nutrition*. Presented as part of the symposium 'Obesity in Developing Countries: Biological and Ecological Factors', given at the Experimental Biology 2000 meeting held in San Diego, CA on 15–19 April 2000

Mejía Acosta, A. (2009) *Informal Coalitions and Policymaking in Latin America: Ecuador in Comparative Perspective*, New York: Routledge

—— (2008) *Do Legislatures – and Legislators – Matter for Poverty Reduction?*, Peru Country Report for International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)

MIMDES (2010) 'Articulation of Inter-sectoral Policies and Actions in Social Protection and Employment', presentation at seminar on Inter-sectoral Public Policies: Social Protection and Employment', 30 November –1 December 2010, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

ODI (2007) *The JUNTOS Programme in Peru: An Innovative Approach to Tackling Childhood Poverty and Vulnerability?*, http://lac.civiblog.org/blog/_archives/2007/3/16/2811170.html (accessed 20 May 2011)

Organización Panamericana de la Salud (2010) *Estrategia y Plan de Acción para la Reducción de la Desnutrición Crónica*, Resolution CD50.R11, 30 September 2010

Perova, E. and Vakis, R. (2009) *Welfare Impacts of the 'JUNTOS' Program in Peru: Evidence from a Non-experimental Evaluation*, World Bank, http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPERU/SPANISH/Resources/Perova_Vakis_JUNTOS_IE.pdf (accessed 6 January 2011)

Rogers B.; Rajabiun, S.; Levinson, J. and Tucker, K. (2002) *Reducing Malnutrition in Peru: A Proposed Strategy*, Discussion Paper 2, Tufts University, http://nutrition.tufts.edu/docs/pdf/fpan/wp02-malnutrition_peru.pdf (accessed 07 Jan 2011)

Tanaka, M. and Vera Rojas, S. (2010) 'La Dinámica "Neodualista" de una Democracia sin Sistema de Partidos: La Situación de la Democracia en el Perú', *Revista de Ciencia Política* 30.1: 87–114

The Economist (2011) 'The Risk of Throwing it all Away: Peru's Presidential Election', 31 March 2011

—— (2008) 'Poverty amid Progress: A Revolution in South America's Fastest-growing Economy is not Reaching Everyone', 8 May 2008

Tsebelis (2002) *Veto Players*, Princeton: Princeton University Press

UNICEF (2009) *The State of the World's Children 2009*, New York: UNICEF

—— (2006) *Conditional Cash Transfers in Peru: Tackling the Multi-Dimensionality of Poverty and Vulnerability*, www.unicef.org/files/Conditional_Cash_Transfers_In_Peru_-_Tackling_The_Multi-Dimensionality_Of_Poverty_And_Vulnerability.pdf (accessed 7 January 2011)

USAID (2000) *Audit of USAID/Peru's P.L. 480 Title II Program Results*, www.usaid.gov/oig/public/fy00rpts/1-527-00-002-p.pdf (accessed 7 January 2011)

—— (1999) *Improving the Use of Food Rations in Title II Maternal/Child Health and Nutrition Programs*, www.pronutrition.org/files/Improving%20the%20Use%20of%20Food%20Rations%20in%20MCH%20Nutrition%20Program.PDF (accessed 6 January 2011)

—— (1997) 'Congressional Presentation on Title II', www.usaid.gov/pubs/cp97/countries/pe.htm (accessed 07 Jan 2011)

Valente, R.V. (2010) *Gender Risk, Poverty and Vulnerability in Peru: A Case Study of the JUNTOS Programme*, ODI

WHO (2011) 'Analyses of DHS or Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Surveys', *Bull. World Health Organ.* 2011; 89: 22–30

World Bank (2009) *Peru: The Role of Civil Society*, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTSOCIALDEV/Resources/3177394-1168615404141/3328201-1192042053459/Peru.pdf?resourceurlname=Peru.pdf> (accessed 7 January 2011)

—— (2007) *Protección Social en el Perú. ¿Cómo Mejorar Los Resultados para los Pobres?*, Lima: IBRD/World Bank