Big Goals – Small Island: Will Fiji achieve sustainable food security?

Comparing the plans and policies built by the Fijian government under the Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals

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List of abbreviations

SIDS – Small Island Developing States
PSIDS – Pacific Small Island Developing States
UN – United Nations
UNDP – United Nations Development Program
FAO – Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations
WFP – World Food Program
MDG – Millennium Development Goals
SDG – Sustainable Development Goals
MP – Ministry of Planning
MF – Ministry of Finance
ME – Ministry of Economy
FG – Fijian Government
MSME – Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
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1. Introduction

In recent years there has been increasing awareness that the analysis of food insecurity should be carried out in a dynamic context. It is essential to not just to look at the incidence of undernourishment or availability of food, but also to identify the nations, communities and individuals who are at risk of suffering due to poverty and vulnerability.

In 2000, world leaders signed the United Nations Millennium Declaration, with the aim to combat poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women by the year of 2015 (Ministry of Finance and National Planning (MFNP), 2004). This declaration developed into what was later known as the ‘Millennium Development Goals’ (MDG). These goals provided a stepping stone for national governments to implement specific goals and targets to their policy frameworks, in the hope of achieving them within the coming 15 years. The first of the eight Millennium Development Goal had the ambition to ‘eradicate extreme poverty and hunger’, and the seventh aimed at ‘ensuring environmental sustainability’ (MFNP, 2004). The goals targeted issues relating to undernourishment, income-levels and sustainable development (MFNP, 2004).

In 2015, 193 UN member states adopted 17 new ‘Sustainable Development Goals’ (SDG) to build on the targets set in the MDGs. The aim is now to achieve sustainable development by 2030 (Fiji High Commission, 2018). In comparison to the former goals, the SDGs include a vast amount of targets and indicators to point to a larger amount of global development issues. The first two SDGs have the ambition to ‘end poverty in all its forms everywhere’, and to ‘end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture’ (United Nations (UN), 2016). In comparison to the MDGs, the SDGs divided the goals of eradicating poverty and hunger into two separate goals, which allowed for the two ambitions to apply a larger amount of targets and indicators, in turn addressing a larger scope of development issues.

The Republic of Fiji (from now on Fiji), like most other developing states, were fast in applying the MDGs and SDGs in consistency with their national plans and policies (FG, 2002; MFNP, 2006; Ministry of Planning, 2009; Ministry of Economy, 2017). The island state has...
long experienced high levels of poverty and food insecurity as a consequence of political instability and natural disasters, and has therefore found itself in dire need to build policies to minimize these levels (Lowitt et al., 2015). Although the country has not experienced ‘absolute poverty’ during the past two decades, poverty is spread over both urban and rural regions, limiting the capacity for the Fijian population to access nutritious foods (Lowitt, 2015).

Food insecurity is recognised to be closely related to poverty and vulnerability, especially amongst farming households in rural areas (Deveroux, 2015). However, these realities are not only true for rural Fiji. Poverty and food insecurity is spread across urban and rural regions, and the entire island state suffers under social and environmental vulnerability. This has left the island in dire need of political influence and collective action to overcome the intrinsic causes of food insecurity (Lowitt, 2015).

Thus, a small island state such as Fiji, with its limited abilities, poses great challenge in reaching global goals. Due to its vulnerability and increasing poverty, the nation state needs to overcome a multitude of obstacles before reaching food security. Using the global goals is one way of using development tools and principles to pave the way towards sustainable development. Therefore, it is important to address the goals’ strength in this particularly vulnerable context, to understand if they are at all effective in focusing on combatting the main obstacles to achieve food security.

1.1 Purpose
The MDGs and SDGs have provided a pathway for nations to build their policies in line with the different goals to address pressing developmental issues. By addressing the goals’ capability to influence national plans and policies, their effectiveness and persistence can be addressed. Thus, this thesis aims to compare the national Fijian plans and policies built during the time of the MDGs and the early stages of the SDGs, to address the influence of global goals on national policy. The relevant goals that will be addressed in this study are MDG 1 and 7 and SDG 1 and 2. The idea is then to through a comparative case method, to compare the different sets of material, and examine how (and if) the nation addresses underlying causes of food security to ensure sustainable food security. What this study regards as the primary underlying causes to food insecurity will be addressed under the theoretical framework.
To motivate the reason for the selected cases of analysis and their chosen materials, a brief motivation will follow. The Millennium Development Goals revolutionized the framing of hunger and poverty in international and national political frameworks (Fukada-Parr and Orr, 2014). Its targets and indicators provided countries with consistent tools to monitor their progress within the different goals. However, MDG 1 and 7 are argued to lack in addressing the underlying causes of food insecurity and malnourishment, such as poverty due to a lack of domestic agricultural development (Fukada-Parr and Orr, 2014).

The Sustainable Development Goals, with the ambition to “pick up where the MDGs left off”, provided an increased amount of goals, targets and indicators to address causes of poverty, food insecurity and vulnerability. When assessing the different sets of goals, it becomes evident that the MDGs prove to have had little ambition to tackle long-term food security in comparison to the SDGs. These goals moved beyond the understanding that hunger is a result of poverty, by incorporating specific targets addressing the importance of agricultural development to alleviate poverty and increase food security. Thus, this thesis believes it is of interest to study how these different ambitions influenced the strategies on food security in Fijian plans and policies.

1.2 Research question
With the objective of making a valuable contribution to the discourse of food security in Fiji, this thesis will attempt to answer the following question: *Using comparative case analysis, do global goals prove to be effective in influencing Fijian plans and policies to better address the underlying causes of food insecurity?*

1.3 Definitions
In order for the reader to follow this thesis with ease and understanding, it is important to address the central definitions that are used in this thesis. The following definition of the concepts follow an international recognition of their understanding, therefore ensuring that the given definitions do not allude any interpretation of defined in a different manner;

*Food security*
Throughout this thesis the concept of food security will be discussed in reference to the internationally-recognised definition given by the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), and will therefore provide the basis for the understanding of the
concept; “Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”, and is most commonly discussed in relation to the four pillars of food security; availability, access, utilization and stability (FAO, 2009, p. 8)

Food insecurity
In likeness to the definition above, the understanding of food insecurity in this thesis will build on the definition provided by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. They state that; “Food insecurity exists when people do not have adequate physical, social or economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (FAO, 2009, p. 8).

Poverty
In regards to the purpose of this thesis, poverty will be defined in terms of relative poverty. The United Nations define relative poverty as; “poverty in relation to the economic status of other members of the society” (UNESCO, 2017). In this sense, people within a society are considered poor when they are unable to reach the minimum accepted standard of food to meet their needs.

Vulnerability
The concept of vulnerability, in its entirety, will be obtain the same understanding as the definition given by Robert Chambers (1989);

“Vulnerability though it is not the same as poverty. It means not lack or want, but defencelessness, insecurity, and exposure to risk, shocks and stress ... Vulnerability here refers to exposure to contingencies and stress, and the difficulty in coping with them. Vulnerability has thus two sides: an external side of risks, shocks, and stress to which an individual or household is subject: and an internal side which is defencelessness, meaning a lack of means to cope without damaging loss” (Chambers, 1989, p. 1).

1.4 Structure of thesis
The structure and analytical process of this thesis will determine its reliability, as Esaiasson et al. (2012), emphasise the importance of reliability to perform a consistent study with an absence of systematic measurement errors (Esaiasson et al., 2012). Thus, this thesis will be structured and performed in the following matter: Firstly, to gain a deeper understanding of the objective of this thesis, a summary of relevant previous research on food security and PSIDS
will be provided. Secondly, grounds and descriptions of the chosen theory, methodology, material and cases are presented. Lastly, the chapter that follows will contain the main part of this thesis – the analytical process and discussion. Lastly, a discussion and brief conclusion will be provided.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Previous research

Previous research on food security on Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) is here examined to motivate the choice of the selected unit of analysis, as well as providing an understanding of the complexities of studying food security on these islands within the field of political science.

Food security is part of a broad and complex system. It revolves within a multiplicity of spheres, as it is determined by social, economic and ecological factors. For PSIDS, the complexities of food security become evident when it is viewed in relation to the global market. This entanglement makes these island states particularly vulnerable to economic as well as environmental change, leaving their food systems in dire distress (Lowitt, 2015).

PSIDS are known to be reliant on imported foods in order to feed their populations, and has thus experienced great decrease in domestic food production over the past two decades (Connell, 2014). This reliance has proven to be destructive, as populations in PSIDS have experienced an immense increase in non-communicable diseases, such as cancer and diabetes (Connell, 2014). The reliance on imported foods has affected domestic food production in the different island states, as mass-produced foods have become a preference their traditional crops. The reason for this preference is purely economic. The current food systems in PSDIS are based on short-term approaches to food security, as the imported foods are low in cost as well as nutrition. Thus, scholars are starting to recognize the need for empirical and participatory studies on food security that go beyond their political and economic systems (Lowitt, 2015).

Before continuing, it is also crucial to point out that PSIDS do not experience food insecurity due to a lack of availability of food, but rather due to the social and socio-economic inequalities, and high reliance on imported foods that resolve in their insecurity (Lowitt, 2015).
Additionally, their vulnerability to natural hazards and climate change, and small land area, further reduces the possibility for domesticise food production (Connell, 2014; Lowitt, 2015).

Campbell argued that; “…pacific islands, and their inhabitants, are not essentially or inherently vulnerable. They were traditionally sites of resilience. Colonialism, development and globalisation have set in place processes by which the resilience has been reduced and exposure increased” (Allen, 2014, p. 1345). Hence, scholars from different disciplines argue that there is a pressing need to build frameworks that focus on developing agricultural practices which can endure climate change, as well as political and economic pressure (Lowitt, 2015). As Lowitt et al. (2015) state in their extensive analysis of previous research on SIDS; “…there is a pressing need for food system innovation in different SIDS contexts, to promote equitable and resilient food and nutrition security” (Lowitt, 2015, p. 1259).

Connell (2014) argues that the decrease in local agricultural food production in PSIDS over the past decades is connected to changes in global trading systems, a negative view of local foods due to modernity and status, increasing populations and urbanization, changing production practices and easy access to imported foods (Connell, 2014). Furthermore, Barnett (2011) stated that;

“The problem is that the attempted shifts toward modern agricultural economies…have failed to deliver the kinds of resilient agricultural and food systems that developed countries enjoy, while at the same time undermining the resilience associated with traditional agricultural systems. Vulnerability is then manifested in the seemingly permanent transitional nature of Pacific societies” (Barnett, 2011, p. 232).

Additionally, climate change, centralised power structures, and increased poverty have played a substantial role in increasing the vulnerability of food systems in this region (Lowitt, 2015). The mentioned studies do not explicitly study Fiji. The island state has rather been part of several clustered analysis on PSDIS and their past and current food security situation. Shortly after the global establishment of the MDGs, an in-depth study on the realities of Fijis food security situation was published. The study recognised the challenges of Fiji’s reliance on imported foods to meet availability and access of food to feed its population, as well as its opportunity to strengthen domestic food production through rural agricultural practises to decrease poverty and vulnerability (Foraete, 2001). The main concern on the island state is to provide its nation with foods of quality, as the nation has experienced high increase in non-communicable diseases due to malnutrition (Foraete, 2001). However, land tenure laws, climate vulnerability and a growing urban population has resulted in an increase in poverty in
rural areas, as agricultural practices are limited by law and climate change. Thus, the study argued for the need to establish policies with a greater focus on overcoming such issues.

2.2 Theory
Food security is a multifaceted concept, with multiple factors required to explain its complexity. Theory can be used as a framework with the intention of understanding how the aspects of reality can be explained. Thus, the given theories are outlined to provide the reader with a structured understanding of some of the underlying causes of food insecurity discussed within social and environmental disciplines today.

When addressing the underlying causes of food insecurity, scholars often discuss the concepts of poverty and vulnerability to be direct and indirect causes of food insecurity. Therefore, empirical and theoretical assessments show that in order for developing nations to reach food security, the underlying causes must be dominant in national strategic development plans. The objective is therefore not to test a specific theory onto the given study, but rather to use the framework as a tool to analyse and interpret how Fiji addressed these underlying causes in policies built in coherence with global goals. Do the different sets of global goals provide Fiji with a better understanding of the need to alleviate poverty and decrease vulnerabilities to achieve food security? This theoretical framework therefore has the intention of addressing theoretical assessments of previous scholars on poverty alleviation and vulnerability, in order to gain a greater understanding of the findings and results given within this thesis.

2.2.1 Poverty
Poverty and food insecurity have proven to be intrinsically linked in national, regional and household levels (Foraete, 2001). This interconnection is understood when addressing how limited access to income deprive people of the possibility to obtain commodities necessary for human-wellbeing. Food is a necessity for survival; however, it is yet to be internationally recognized as a human right. Thus, rising inequalities and rural/urban division exacerbates the realities of food insecurity, leaving limited capability for further development in the global south.

The objective of addressing poverty in this theoretical framework is to recognise the link between poverty alleviation and agricultural development that have been found. An increase in agricultural development is argued to lead to alleviation of poverty through economic growth (Anríquez and Stamoulis, 2007). With agriculture being the back-bone to most rural
economies, it is important to establish the connection between agricultural development and poverty alleviation, in order to examine whether this is taken into consideration in national policy addressing rural development and food security.

In *Rural development and poverty reduction: is agriculture still the key*, Anríquez and Stamoulis (2007) study the connection between poverty alleviation and rural agriculture. Rural poverty is a reality in developing nations, a reality that has proven to be challenging to move away from. Yet, the scholars argue for a positive connection between poverty and agriculture. They state that rural agriculture can be a way to increase domestic production of foods, strengthening the rural communities, thus levitating them from poverty (Anríquez and Stamoulis, 2007).

These findings were discovered after conducting an historical review, concluding that; “There is ample theoretical support and empirical evidence that suggests that agriculture is pro-poor, and that growth based on the expansion of the sector is pro-poor growth” (Anríquez and Stamoulis, 2007, p. 26). The countries addressed in this study stretched across Latin America, Africa and parts of Southern Europe, representing a vast variety of socio-economic, political and environmental background (Anríquez and Stamoulis, 2007). They identified four main “channels” for the outcome, arguing that an increase in rural agriculture provides poverty alleviation through; (1) Directly increasing the income/own consumption of small farmers, (2) Indirectly by reducing food prices, (3) Indirectly by increasing the income generated by the non-farm rural economy, and (4), Indirectly by raising employment and wages of the unskilled (Anríquez and Stamoulis, 2007, p. 26-27).

Agriculture is considered to be the back-bone of many developing nations economy. Thus, the scholars argue that the theoretical and empirical evidence that proves the link between poverty and agriculture, will only encourage policy interventions to place greater importance on rural agricultural development. If the subsidies provided by governmental sectors increase to rural small-holder farms, a rise in local production will occur, as well as the income level of the rural communities (Anríquez and Stamoulis, 2007). Thus, support of agricultural practices in rural regions proves to relieve poverty, lowering national food prices, and providing nations with nutritious and domestic foods that increase well-being (Anríquez and Stamoulis, 2007). Furthermore, the scholars establish that “the promotion of the rural economy in a sustainable way has the potential of increasing employment opportunities in rural areas, reducing regional
income disparities, stemming pre-mature rural-urban migration, and ultimately reducing poverty at its very source” (Anríquez and Stamoulis, 2007, p. 6).

Mahendra Dev concurs with the understandings provided by the scholars above. In *Poverty and Employment: Roles of Agriculture and Non-agriculture*, the scholar argues, based on theoretical and empirical evidence, that agricultural development provides excellent opportunity for economic growth, and;

“...is in contrast to the dominant view that urbanization is the key to growth and elimination of extreme poverty;...there is a case for drastic shift away from rural–urban migration and urbanization as main drivers of elimination of extreme poverty and move towards revival of agriculture in the policy discourse” (Mahendra Dev, 2017, p. 61).

This is argued, as the agricultural sector is the largest provider of livelihood (Mahendra Dev, 2017). An additional prerequisite for alleviating poverty through agricultural development is to ensure that marginalised farmers are provided with increased income (Mahendra Dev, 2017). The scholar establishes the argument that by increasing the income of small-holder farmers and farmers in general, in alignment with the increase of agricultural development in rural areas, is crucial in order to alleviate inequalities, “...particularly across sectors” (Mahendra Dev, 2017, p. 64). This assessment is not only a relevant reality for the context of India which the scholars studied, but an assessment important to apply on all contexts where farmers are marginalised and vulnerable.

These theoretical assessments will therefore be used in this thesis to address whether the Fijian government has acknowledged the importance of agricultural production for poverty alleviation and strengthening of rural regions through increased income for farmers. This part of the theoretical framework will align with the given research question, as the objective will be to address if the relevant MDGs, compared to the relevant SDGs, have shown a difference in the strategies addressing agricultural development and poverty alleviation through increasing income of farmers, as these are argued to be some factors of underlying causes of food insecurity. The second part of this theoretical framework will address another underlying factor for food insecurity, being vulnerability.
2.2.2 Vulnerability

Vulnerability has traditionally been analysed in accordance to poverty; yet, modern research has begun applying the concept to food security as a way to assess the future state of its existence.

In, *Theorizing food insecurity: building a livelihood vulnerability framework for researching food insecurity*, Yaro provides three basic coordinates for identifying vulnerability in a given context; (1) The risk of exposure to crises, stress and shocks, (2) The risk of inadequate capacities to cope with stress, crises and shocks, and (3) The risk of severe consequences of, and the attendant risks of slow or limited poverty (resiliency) from, crises, risk and shocks (Yaro, 2006, p. 31). The scholar builds on Chambers understanding of vulnerability, an understanding which is considered suitable in the context of this thesis;

“Vulnerability... means not lack or want, but defencelessness, insecurity, and exposure to risk, shocks and stress... Vulnerability here refers to exposure to contingencies and stress, and the difficulty in coping with them. Vulnerability has thus two sides: an external side of risks, shocks, and stress to which an individual or household is subject: and an internal side which is defencelessness, meaning a lack of means to cope without damaging loss” (Yaro, 2006, p. 31).

This understanding of vulnerability is effective in providing a “middle ground” between all different definitions and understandings of vulnerability that exist (Yaro, 2006). It is important to denotate that aspects such as poverty or food security are outcomes of the state of vulnerability that a household, community or region is under. Vulnerability is the state of insecurity or defencelessness that is experienced when a shock hits. This shock can be anything from a violent conflict to a cyclone. Thus, resilience is described by Yaro as the mechanism to decrease or overcome vulnerability, or to simply avoid it (Yaro, 2006). However, it is important to recognise that everyone is always in a state of vulnerability due to the unforeseen nature of many shocks and stresses (Yaro, 2006). The scholar further establishes an understanding of vulnerability and resilience, when he states that “these terminologies, even though initially applied to the physical environment, are methodologically convenient for understanding the capacities of peasants, degree of endurance, ability to bounce back after a calamity, and general characteristics of peasants that makes them vulnerable” (Yaro, 2006, p. 33). This understanding also applies to household, individual and community levels. Vulnerability in the context of food security therefore refers to the risk that a community, household or an individual’s entitlements (in this context food), fail to sustain due to conflict, famine or natural hazards. If a natural disaster results in great loss and lasting distress to a region or community, the regions
state of vulnerability has been determined.

Yaro (2006) argues that vulnerability is intrinsically connected to the socio-economic circumstances of a given context, which in relevance to regional vulnerability applies to the poorest and most vulnerable (Yaro, 2006). In the case of household levels, vulnerability is discovered when funds, aids or social security provided by governmental or non-governmental bodies are unable to provide sustainable livelihoods in the aftermaths of shocks. Thus, the scholars of vulnerability argue for the need of governmental policies to be designed in order to mirror the rights of individuals in a state of vulnerability. Yaro (2006) argues that in the case of food security, such policies need to address the specific vulnerabilities of both urban and rural regions, as well as inclusion of these populations and their local knowledge. Good policy can therefore only exist once governments understands the connection and interdependence between “political, social, economic and cultural aspects of development” in the presence of vulnerability (Yaro, 2006).

In order to answer the chosen research question, this thesis will examine how the underlying causes of poverty and vulnerability affect food insecurity. The theoretical assessments mentioned above will function as tools to obtain the necessary information from the two case studies, as the concepts will be addressed in their relation to the chosen case studies (MDGs and SDGs) and the chosen unit of analysis (Fiji).

3. Material and method

3.1 Material
The selected materials are based on documents written by the Fijian government and its ministries. Other materials, such as those collected to build the theoretical framework, where chosen with care in terms of their theoretical outlook on food security, poverty and vulnerability. Additional information about the global goals have been gathered from different web sites, mainly consisting of UN, FAO and Fijian government websites. The chosen material will be analysed using a qualitative text analysis, described by Esaiasson et al. (2012) as a method used to bring out the essential parts of the chosen literature that are relevant to the chosen cases that are being studied (Esaiasson et al. 2012, p. 211).
The chosen materials have been systematically selected. All chosen material intended for analytical purpose has been selected due to their motivation of being in consistency with the different global goals. The materials therefore consist of different policies and plans built by the Fijian government during the time of the MDGs and the SDGs. As the materials intended for analysis are primarily collected from the Fijian governmental website and online portal, genuineness and centrality of the sources can be established, which Esaiasson et al. (2012) argue to be of importance when selecting material for a study of such a structure (Esaiasson, 2012).

For case 1 (MDG 1 and 7), the collected information was gathered from four separate plans and policies produced by the Fijian government and its ministries between 2002 and 2014. There documents were selected with the intention of only examining plans and policies that were explicitly built in coherence with the MDGs. As the SDGs are still in the early stages of implementation in national plans and policies, the amount of materials for case 2 (SDG 1 and 2) are of a lesser amount. Additionally, the chosen material for this case is under a different structure than the previous policies built under the MDGs. The national policy under the SDGs consist of one 5 and 20-year strategic plan, instead of the previous 3-year approaches.

Although this material has been chosen with caution to uphold reliability as well as validity, it is to be acknowledged that important information could go astray. This as the chosen materials are simply those built by the Fijian government and its ministries, not including policies and plans which have been constructed by NGOs or other actors of relevance to Fiji and their work on food security.

3.2 Method
This thesis is located within the discipline of Development Studies, and explores the areas of food security, poverty and vulnerability, reflecting on the developing Pacific Island State of Fiji. The research will build on a qualititative comparative case study, which Esaiasson et al. (2012) describes to be of relevance when studying few yet correlating cases (Esaiasson, 2012). A comparative case study is conducted over time and emphasises on comparing cases within and across different contexts (Esaiasson, 2012). Thus, a comparative case study is the chosen methodology for this thesis as it allows for an understanding of how global goals influence the structures and strategies of national policy building.
To analyse the chosen case studies in a consistent and systematic manner, a structured focused comparison will be applied (George and Bennet, 2004). This research method is rather straightforward and simple in its logic (George and Bennet, 2004). The method has the ability to compare two or more cases that are set under an established set of factors (or variables), in order to examine whether the outcome of the analysis can be explained by the similarities or the differences between the two cases. George and Bennet (2004) state that “the cases in a given study must all be instances of only one phenomenon”, which in this thesis is the impact of global goals on national policymaking (George and Bennet, 2004, p. 69). The method allows the researcher to construct an amount of carefully developed questions that “reflect the research objective and the theoretical focus” of the thesis (George and Bennet, 2004, p. 67). The selected questions for this given thesis are provided under the analytical framework.

A comparison is made in order to examine if different approaches within global goals on hunger and poverty affect policy strategies needed to increase food security. The methodological design of the study thus applies three methods to the chosen research question, as it builds on a comparative case study through a structured, focused comparison analysis, where the chosen materials will be analysed by the use of a qualitative text analysis.

This thesis recognises the importance of also establishing a high degree of reliability and validity, as the degree of reliability is in part determined by the degree of validity. A detailed description of the analytical framework is therefore provided below, with the objective of producing a structured analysis of the material with consistent results.

3.3 Analytical framework

The analytical framework builds on the theoretical perspectives that have been established. Anríquez and Stamoulis’ (2007) findings on the relationship between poverty alleviation and strengthening of agriculture provides a base for the structured questions that will address agricultural development within the Fijian policies. Their understanding that an increase in domestic agriculture in developing nations directly increases the income of small farmers, indirectly reduces national food prices and indirectly increases the income generated by the non-farm rural economies will be taken into consideration. Mahendra Dev’s (2017) understanding of the importance to increase employment and income for farmers, will also be of importance under the questions on poverty (Mahendra Dev, 2017). These understandings are of relevance when performing the analysis, as the objective of this study is to examine how
global goals such as poverty and hunger influence national policies, in order to address whether food security can be reached.

Yaro’s (2006) understandings of vulnerability in relation to food security will provide a base for the questions addressing strategies related to vulnerability in Fijian policies. As the scholar gives evidence that vulnerability needs to be addressed in policy to enhance well-being of poor and vulnerable populations, the structured questions will address both vulnerability at household level, through access to social security (social protection), and vulnerability due to contextual conditions such as climate change, which are managed through risk management (Yaro, 2006).

Each theoretical assumption will build on two questions. This is in order to increase the amount of possible findings in the selected materials. Each question will function as a measurement tool, which allows for conclusions and assumptions to be drawn throughout the analysis. However, it is recognised that there is a challenge in formulating questions that reflect the purpose of the global goals, as well as formulating questions that do not overlap or conflict with one another.

Poverty is recognised as a complex multilevel concept that has shifted in meaning over time. However, the definition provided in the early stage of this thesis will function as the dominate understanding of poverty throughout the analysis, meaning “poverty in relation to the economic status of other members of the society” (UNESCO, 2017). In this sense, people within a society are considered poor when they are unable to reach the minimum accepted standard of food to meet their needs. Thus, the operationalization of poverty will be addressed in the following manner. Poverty will be examined by measuring the amounts of strategies and programs that address the importance of domestic agricultural development to alleviate poverty. It will also be addressed in relevance to strategies that encourage rural employment and income of marginalised farmers.

This thesis also recognises the complexities in operationalising the concept of vulnerability due to its extensive nature within interdisciplinary fields. However, for the purpose of this thesis, vulnerability will be defined and operationalized in the following manner. The definition of vulnerability will follow the understanding given by Chambers, as concurred by Yaro. With this understanding in mind, the given operationalization follows; when examining the different
plans and policies built by the Fijian government, vulnerability will be addressed in terms of the strategies on risk management in terms of climate change, as well as strategies focusing on social security strategies and social protection for the vulnerable populations. Thus, drawing on the given theoretical framework, and in relation to the chosen case studies and their capabilities, the analytical framework seeks to analyse the chosen materials and cases using the strategically determined questions provided in the data-matrix below.

In order to provide a structured and coherent understanding of the results of the analysis, the following data-matrix will function as a summary and comparison of the results at the end of the analytical process:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poverty:</th>
<th>Case 1: Fijian plans and policies in consistency with MDG 1 &amp; 7</th>
<th>Case 2: Fijian plans and policies in consistency with SDG 1 &amp; 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1 Any evidence of strategies or intentions to strengthen domestic agricultural production in rural regions?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2 Any evidence of strategies to increase income of marginalised farmers?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerability:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q1 Any evidence of strategies or intentions to increase risk management in rural regions?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerability:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2 Any evidence of strategies that provide social security to rural and vulnerable populations?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Framework of data-matrix for summary of analysis

Thus, the analysis will be structured under four separate after these four questions, in order to keep in line with the objective of this study, as well as providing a systematic understanding of the given research question.
4. The units of analysis

4.1 Fiji

Fiji is one of the largest out of 14 island states situated in the South Pacific Ocean (FAO, 2012). In land area, the island state stretches over 18.333 square kilometres, consisting of 330 islands, with a population of approximately 900 000 (FAO, 2012). The rural parts of Fiji account for approximately half its population; however, the country has experienced increasing urbanization over the past two decades, putting pressure on its urban areas as well as the country’s ability to provide nutritious foods for all (FAO, 2012). As has previously been addressed, Fiji is largely reliant on imported foods for food availability, and has experienced a decrease in domestic agricultural development over the past two decades (FAO, 2012). Thus, the increase in food demand combined with degradation of land, as well as loss in soil quality and biodiversity, has made the nation unable to provide nutritious and sustainable foods for its population (FAO, 2012). This has forced governmental sectors to develop several plans, policies and programs to address the issues they face. The Fijian government has constructed several frameworks during the past two decades, many of them built with the assistance of food security organisations such as FAO and WFP (FAO, 2012). However, successes have been limited. The island nation finds itself in a vicious circle, as international and national influences have intensified the fragility of its food systems. Hence, the country is in dire need for sustainable agricultural development to sustain the domestic food production levels that meet the demands of its population (FAO, 2012). Thus, by addressing sustainable agricultural practices as a fundamental factor to achieve food security, it is argued that Fiji would be able to provide its population with nutritious foods, preserve ecosystems, increase income opportunities for rural populations and avoid further soil erosion and degradation (Foraete, 2001; FAO, 2012). Additionally, an increase in such practices will decrease the reliance on food imports, which in turn leaves the region less vulnerable to food insecurity.

Political instability has been a reality on Fiji for decades (Fraenkel, 2009). Since gaining independence from colonial British rule in 1970, the island nation has lived through multiple political coups (Fraenkel, 2009). The last coup occurred in 2006, led by marine officer Bainimarama, who is currently holding the title of PM (Fraenkel, 2009). Such political
instability has exacerbated the countries vulnerable state, as holding consistency in
development goals and strategies have proven to be challenging. Poverty has become of
consequence of such instabilities, and exists across nationalities as well as urban and rural
regions, thus becoming “an issue of sustainable human development as well as income
insecurity” (Kaitani, 2007, p. 269). Attempts of implementing social protection programs and
policies have often failed, argued to occur due to selective bias of ethnic Fijians over other
nationalities, “resulting in ever widening poverty gap amongst all groups” (Kaitani, 2007, p.
264).

In the aftermath of the Millennium Development Goals, the Food and Agricultural
Organisation of the United Nations still recognized Fiji’s many challenges in reaching
sustainable food security. The most pressing concerns were; (1) inadequate domestic food
production and productivity to meet food security and market demands for quality, consistency
and market competitiveness, (2) inadequate agricultural extension services and the lack of
technologies responsive to local conditions, (3) an aging farmer population and need to build
appropriate skills for younger farmers, and (4) high rates of soil erosion and soil degradation
(FAO, 2012, p. 47). It is recognized that development is an enduring process, where multiple
non-linear factors need to align to reach sustainability. Fiji has a long way to go to reach food
security; yet, the way they are striving to get there still remains to be answered.

4.2 Case studies
The selected case studies are structured and explain so as to provide the reader with a greater
understanding of their relevance to this study, as well as their influence of national policy. By
comparing national plans and policies built in consistency with global goals, it gives the
possibility to examine whether the structure of global goals have intrinsic influence on national
policy.

4.2.1 United Nations Millennium Development Goal 1 and 7

Goal 1
The MDGs were established with the intent of existing under national ownership, where
countries had the responsibility of including these goals within their plans and policies.
The first of the eight MDGs set out to ‘eliminate extreme poverty and hunger’, with three
underlying targets to emphasise the most pressing issues in relation to poverty and food
security (United Nations Development Program (UNDP, 2015, p. 4). The goals were structured with targets and indicators with the intent of monitoring the progression of the different goals, applying 1990 as the baseline year (Fukada-Parr and Orr, 2014). The relevant targets and indicators for this thesis are provided below. Although Fiji has experienced a high degree of malnutrition during the past decades, the degree of undernutrition has been rather low (Foraete, 2001). Thus, the first indicator is of less relevance than the second given the specific context they are studied under (FAO, 2012).

The goal has been accused of falling short, as it failed to adequately address development issues other than poverty in relevance to food security. Thus, the goal has been met with criticism, as it is argued to have applied a short-term approach to eliminating hunger, rather than addressing the complex economic, social and ecological factors that hinder sustainable food security (Fukada-Parr and Orr, 2014). Additionally, it has been known to fail in addressing other aspects such as “…vulnerability, nutritional quality, and long-term stability of access” (Fukada-Parr and Orr, 2014, p. 157).

MDG 1, along with the seven remaining goals, was first implemented in Fiji’s ‘2003-2005 Strategic Development Plan’ (Fijian government (FG), 2002). The plan was based on the ambition to build a policy that was consistent with the MDGs, and intended to “…guide government decision-making and budget preparation over the next three years” (FG, 2002, p. 5). In 2006, the Fijian government built on the existing plan, as they developed their ‘2007-2011 Strategic Development Plan’ (FG, 2006). This development plan was argued to be the ‘back-bone’ of Fijis efforts to achieve the MDGs by 2015. Additionally, the ‘Roadmap for democracy and sustainable socio-economic development’ continued to build on the latter, both explicitly stating to be in consistency with MDG 1 (Ministry of Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics, 2014).

**Goal 7**

Due to the lack of a sustainable perspectives on food security within MDG 1, the seventh MDG is included in this chosen case (case 1) to lift the ecological aspects of food security that were lacking in the former goal. Thus, it is important to regard these goals as interdependent in this context, as the efforts made to achieve them are both multidimensional as well as multisectoral.
MDG 7 raised the need to ‘ensure environmental sustainability’, as “…ecosystems must be managed sustainably to meet people’s food requirements” as climate change, land degradation and loss of biodiversity pose challenges to sustainable food security” (FAO, 2018). The goal consists of four targets; yet, the first and second targets are of most relevance to this study. In likeness to the goal above, targets and indicators of relevance to this study are provided in the data-matrix below. Thus, MDG 7, its given targets and indicators are of importance when studying the chosen materials, as the Fiji policies are argued to require long-term approaches in order to reach sustainability within its food systems. As natural disasters along with political, economic and social instabilities affects Fiji’s chance of reaching quality and productivity in domestic and sustainable food security, this thesis has made sure that the chosen materials address MDG 1 and MDG 7 in equal manner, due to the interdependence of the two goals.

The targets and indicators of relevance to the objective of this study are provided below. This is done in order to construct a more comprehensible understanding of what the goals entail, and what aspects that influence food security strategies within national policy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The MDGs</th>
<th>The goal</th>
<th>Targets</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MDG 1</td>
<td>Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger</td>
<td>1. C.; between 1990 and 2015, halve the proportion of people who suffer from hunger</td>
<td>1.9 proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.B Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDG 7</td>
<td>Ensure environmental sustainability</td>
<td>7. A.; Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources</td>
<td>*Indicators not provided</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Summary of relevant targets and indicators for MDG 1 and 7 (United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), 2008).

4.2.2 United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 1 and 2

Goal 1

In comparison to the MDGs, the resolution provided greater depth and understanding of the underlying causes of unsustainability. The goals are argued to be highly synergetic, largely outweighing trade-offs, indicating that a vast congeniality of measurement mechanism serve great influence on one another (Pradhan et al., 2017). The first of the 17 SDGs addresses one of
the most central issues that hinder development, by holding the ambition to ‘end poverty in all its forms everywhere’ (UN, 2017) The mechanisms addressed the right to land, by magnifying the need to change restrictive policies on land tenure, as well as reducing inequitable government and increasing social protection (UN, 2017). It is of high importance that the results provide evidence that the Fijian government addresses such mechanisms within their national policy, as they are argued to provide great alleviation in poverty.

**Goal 2**

The second goal has the intention to ‘end hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture’ (UN, 2017). In comparison to the chosen MDGs, SDG 2 acknowledges sustainable agriculture as a mode to achieve food security. Thus, in the context of food security, the goal challenges nutrition professionals and policy makers to think broadly about potential solutions that encompass non-traditional approaches to achieve food security. In comparison to the national plans and policies built in consistency with the MDGs, the Fijian government took a different direction in constructing the latest national policy. Instead of building a strategic 3-year approach to reach development, the policy constructed in consistency with the SDGs is multifaceted, as it provides a 5 and 20-year policy plan to ensure future development on the Fijian islands. Additionally, Prime Minister Bainimarama regards this resolution to be the cornerstone of their national policy (FG, 2017).

In likeness to the structure above, the targets and indicators of relevance to the objective of this study are provided below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The SDG and goal</th>
<th>Targets</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SDG 1 “End poverty in all its forms everywhere”</strong></td>
<td>1.2 By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions 1.3 Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable 1.4 By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance</td>
<td>1.2.1 Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by sex and age 1.2.2 Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions 1.3.1 Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable 1.4.2 Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, with legally recognized documentation and who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and by type of tenure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.5 By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters

1.5.3 Number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SDG 2 “End hunger; achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.3; “By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4; “By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.1; “Volume of production per labour unit by classes of farming/pastoral/forestry enterprise size”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2; “Average income of small-scale food producers, by sex and indigenous status”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1; “Proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Summary of relevant targets and indicators for SDG 1 and 2 (UN, 2016).

5. Analysis

The analysis is divided into two sub-chapters where case one and two will be analysed separately under the different questions that were provided under the analytical framework. Following this analysis, a data-matrix consisting of a summary of the separate findings is provided. This is done for the reader to easily retrieve and assess the analysed results. The following material is of interest when analysing case 1; Strategic Development Plan 2003-2005, Strategic Development Plan 2006-2011, and The Roadmap for Democracy and Sustainable Socio-Economic Development 2010-2014. As has previously been addressed, the amount of national policy built in coherence with the SDGs is currently limited, as the goals are in their early years of implementation. Additionally, the Fijian government has shifted the structure of the current national policy framework, as it provides a strategic plan for the next 5 and 20 years, rather than the previous short-term approaches to development. It is here important to emphasise that the chosen materials for this study were selected with the intent of representing Fiji’s national plans and policies, not those solely constructed by specific sectors. The global goals are multifaceted and interdependent. Thus, this thesis believes that a review of national policies will provide a greater understanding of the effect global goals have on policymaking, rather than addressing single sector policies. The following stages will provide an in-depth analysis of the selected national plans and policies built in coherence with the relevant global goals, specifically targeting the strategies towards alleviating poverty and vulnerability, as this thesis argues for them to be the main drivers of food insecurity.
5.1 MDG 1 and 7 in Fijian plans and policies

5.1.1 Poverty

Q1. Any evidence of strategies or intentions to strengthen domestic agricultural production in rural regions?

The 2003-2005 Strategic Development Plan (SDP) recognized the nation’s state of poverty, stating that “the vicious cycle of poverty can easily be inherited by subsequent generations. Breaking that cycle is a challenge for Government” (FG, 2002, p. 11). However, the plan argued for the rural areas to be “the hidden strength of the nation’s economy due to the abundance of traditional food crops” (FG, 2006, p. 12). According to Anríques and Stamoulis’ (2007) argument that poverty can be alleviated through investment in agricultural practices, it is important to examine the degree to which this is valued within the different plans (Anríques and Stamoulis, 2007). The first SDP recognized the importance of agriculture to alleviate poverty. However, it was very clear in its limitations to implement ambitious strategies at this point, as the policy stated to “The challenge for Government is in implementing comprehensive agricultural sector reforms to stimulate agricultural production through infrastructure development and to encourage commercialization of a range of agriculture commodities for export” (FG, 2002, p. 12). Nonetheless, a few strategies were found that aimed at increasing domestic agricultural production: “increase production of traditional food crops” (FG, 2002, p. 56), “accelerate agricultural diversification into areas of competitive advantage” (FG, 2002, p. 74) and “ensure sustainable development in non-sugar agriculture, through adoption and enforcement of Rural Land Use Policy and Sustainable Development Act” (FG, 2002, p. 74).

The 2007-2011 SDP, in much likeness to the first SDP, discussed the importance of sustaining the agricultural sector and increasing the possibility for export of food crops such as fruits and vegetables for economic growth (MFNP, 2006). It further argued that “the agriculture sector, as the principle source of rural livelihoods, has a vital contribution in terms of the Strategic Priorities of rural and outer island development, raising export earning, raising investment for jobs and growth, resolving the agricultural land lease issue, implementing affirmative action and alleviating poverty” (MFNP, 2006, p. 150). Through the ‘Alternative Livelihood Project’ (ALP), government intended to assist “on improving farm management, promoting investment in the agricultural sector, commercialization and strengthening industry organizations and agribusiness networks, and recognition by government of industry priorities” (MFNP, 2006, p. 53).
This project is a clear example of government subsidies for rural regions in agriculture in order to ensure local production, which, linking to Anríques and Stamoulis (2007), is a prerequisite for local production to occur. However, constraints and challenges were still existing to a large degree, as the policy stated that “Significant challenges are to sustain domestic food production to meet food security and market demands; to identify crops which can generate earnings equal to sugar; the maintenance of quality and continuity of supply; the uncertainty over Land Leasing Arrangements which serves to constrain the move to a more commercial focus” (MFNP, 2006, p. 54).

The three-year Roadmap for Democracy and Sustainable Economic Development (from now on Roadmap), built on the strategies established within the former plans. Although Fiji had intended to increase agricultural practices for 10 years, the Roadmap recognised the lack of success in development of agricultural practices in rural areas. The plan stated that; “Potentials in rural and outer islands still remain largely untapped. Production in these areas remains largely subsistence due to lack of infrastructure, adequate transport services, long distances to markets and the non-availability of incentives in the agriculture sector to induce greater agricultural production” (MP, 2009, p. 61). Thus, the plan implemented a strategy to “Build capacity at community level for commercial agriculture” (MP, 2009, p. 84). This would be done by “harmonizing all rural development initiatives to ensure equitable distribution of resources to less developed areas and the opening up of possibilities for commercial agriculture in remote rural areas” (MP, 2009, 61).

In summary, it becomes evident that the strategies established in the first plan proved to be ineffective in developing domestic agricultural production in rural areas, as the Roadmap still emphasised the lack of agricultural production. A vast number of factors were yet to be recognized, and many policy objectives on agricultural development acknowledged the importance of food export to a larger degree than domestic. Thus, although the global goals were seen in coherence with the constructed policies, they provided a limited effect for the government to implement strategies that supported rural agriculture.

Q2. Any evidence of strategies to increase income of marginalised farmers?

Linking back to Mahendra Dev’s (2017) causal understanding of increased income for rural and marginalised farmers with agricultural development, the SDPs and Roadmap described several efforts made to support and assist farmers (FG, 2002). In the first SDP (2002), one
example was the ‘Farming Assistance Scheme’ (FG, 2002, p. 71). This scheme would assist newly established sugar-cane farmers in training and development of skill (FG, 2002). However, the plan recognized constraints in “...the future viability of the industry” (2002), and therefore additionally implemented strategies to reconstruct the industry approach to increase sugar-cane production (FG, 2002). Furthermore, the plan recognised the importance of increasing incomes for the most vulnerable populations in Fiji. The plan stated that the Fijian government would continue to promote the MDGs (1 and 7) in order to “…raise rural living standards and alleviate rural poverty” (FG, 2002, p. 31). Strategies to increase farmer income is never explicitly mentioned within this plan, nor are there any specific strategies in place. Additionally, a food and income security program is discussed within this plan, yet, it is within the following SDP.

In the second SDP, the government provided discussion on a “grant assistance on farm inputs for farmers earning less than 3,000 dollars per annum”, which held the objective to assist with management and marketing of produce and meats by farmers (MFNP, 2006, p. 53). Decision-makers were also more direct in terms of acknowledging agriculture as a means to ensure domestic food security. Their goal under ‘Agriculture and Livestock’ explicitly stated that it wished to keep in line with MDG 1 and 7 in order to achieve “sustainable community livelihood through competitive exports and efficient food security” (MFNP, 2006, p. 150). However, beyond these strategies and intentions, no strategies or policies were found on specifically increasing farmer income.

Not only does increased income of farmers increase food security on livelihood levels, it also establishes opportunity for government to further expand the agricultural sector, thus moving faster out of rural poverty. Therefore, it becomes increasingly important that evidence of increasing farmer income is evident within the Roadmap. Compared to the previous SDP’s, the Roadmap provided an increased discussion on income distribution and the challenges to provide equitable income levels for all. The plan stated that “Income redistribution is the most difficult challenge facing Fiji and its people and the greatest obstacle to pursuit of sustainable socio-economic growth” (FG, 2009, p. 15), arguing that the main reason for this challenge is the lack of political commitment to do so. However, the plan addressed the governments’ process of implementing a wage-setting framework that could increase income in labour markets (FG, 2009). Furthermore, diversification projects were introduced in this plan, created with the intent of ensuring a broader income standard for sugar cane farmers (MP, 2009). The
plan stated that:

“There is a growing lack of confidence amongst farmers within the cane belt to plant cane. This has seen a mass exodus of people from the cane farming belts to the towns and cities in search of a more secure income, education, and livelihood. This presents a major challenge for the Industry, with an ageing population left to tend the farms. The solution to this is to make sugarcane farming attractive again” (MP, 2009, p. 59).

Thus, Mahendra Dev’s (2017) theoretical assessment proves to be of high relevance to this statement, as the policy argues for the lack of focusing on income redistribution during the first decade of the millennium (MP, 2009). In sum, it is very clear that the focus on equitable income distribution, especially for farmers, was rather untouched during the first two SDPs. However, the Roadmap provided much greater focus to the issues with neglecting policies on increasing rural income, providing a positive outlook for future policy on these matters.

5.1.2 Vulnerability

Q1. Any evidence of strategies or intentions to increase risk management in rural regions?

All plans and policies built in consistency with the MDGs proved to discuss the importance of risk management to reduce vulnerability of both human and social systems (FG, 2002; MFNP, 2006; MP, 2009). Although risk management is not targeted within the MDGs, MDG 7 aims to ensure environmental sustainability. Thus, the Fijian government motivates its efforts to reduce risks in alignment with reaching this goal (FG, 2002; MFNP, 2006; MP, 2009). Reflecting on the theoretical assessments provided Yaro (2006), vulnerabilities need to be identified by addressing the risk of exposure to crises, stress and shocks, the risk of inadequate capacities to cope with stress, crises and shocks, and the risk of severe consequences of, and the attendant risks of slow or limited poverty (Yaro, 2006, p. 31). Yaro argued further that these factors need to be identified in order to implement policy that tackles such stresses, in order to increase resilience within a given community to ensure food security (Yaro, 2006). Thus, in linking back to the SDP’s and Roadmap, it needs to be evident that the Fijian government identified these aspects in order for sustainable risk management to exist.

The first SDP recognized the importance of risk management to increase food availability. A key target for the SDP was to require risk management and environmental impact assessments for rural development projects, with the objective to ensure food and income security for rural populations (FG, 2002). However, the SDP lacked in providing explicit strategies or intentions
beyond this target. This shifted in 2006, when the renewed SDP paved the way for risk management development over the next three years. The plan discussed the Hazard and Risk Management (CHARM) approach, which the government argued would make “... a significant contribution towards disaster and risk reduction” and “...place strong emphasis in the analysis and evaluation of hazards, vulnerabilities and elements at risk” (MFNP, 2006, p. 35). The plan encompassed a greater understanding of human and environmental vulnerabilities, and the importance of strengthening their policies for future preparedness, response and recovery of hazards (MFNP, 2006). A strategy introduced under this SDP was to strengthen food security through enhanced community based disaster reduction initiatives and reduction of underlying risk factors to vulnerability (MFNP, 2006). The Roadmap provides little additional strategies or intentions than those provided under the second SDP.

A common denominator between the three is that they all discuss the importance of establishing disaster reduction approaches. However, limited strategies are provided apart from CHARM, leaving the impression that economic restraint limited the capacity for Fiji to implement further strategies on ensuring food security. It is therefore argued that striving to achieve environmental sustainability through MDG 7 could mean a lack of the necessary focus needed to apply more specific strategies.

Q2. Any evidence of strategies that provide social security to rural and vulnerable populations?

The relevant MDGs do not emphasise the importance of integrating social protection or insurances to alleviate social vulnerability in case of shock or stresses. Yet, as argued by Yaro (2006), good policy can only exist once governments understand the connection and interdependence between “political, social, economic and cultural aspects of development” in the presence of vulnerability (Yaro, 2006). Due to Fiji’s high level of vulnerability, such policy needs to be in place.

The first SDP built on a strategic approach to poverty alleviation, with the aim to provide income-earnings, capacity building and social safety nets for the poor and vulnerable, arguing for it to be consistent with MDG 1 (FG, 2002). Although the importance of social safety nets were discussed within this plan, it only reffered to social safety nets in assisting the unemployed or those unable to work (FG, 2002, p. 36). There was also prove of very limited development in implementing other social protection programs in assisting vulnerable
populations, especially rural populations.

However, the second SDP provided greater focus on the importance of social security and insurance in order for “all categories of the poor to meet their basic needs” (MFNP, 2006, p. 109). The plan additionally stated that “Government remains committed to funding ongoing poverty alleviation programmes such as assistance for housing and squatter upgrading, microfinance, education assistance and safety net programmes” (MFNP, 2006, p. 9). However, the plan did not provide additional strategies or policy on decreasing social vulnerabilities through such approaches. The Roadmap provided no additional strategies, intentions or policy than the second SDP. In sum, it could be assumed that the MDGs in part influenced the little attention that was given to ensuring social protection programs in order to reduce vulnerability.

5.2 SDG 1 and 2 in Fijian plans and policies

5.2.1 Poverty

Q1. Any evidence of strategies or intentions to strengthen domestic agricultural production in rural regions?

The 5-Year and 20-Year plan built by the Fijian government in 2017 stated confidence in its country’s capability for the future, arguing for the SDGs to be their guiding principles;

“At no time in our history have Fijians held greater confidence in the direction of our nation or in the future we are working together to build. Our income levels are steadily increasing, we have moved up the ladder to become an upper middle-income country, and our living standards are the highest they have ever been, as Fijians enjoy the benefits of eight consecutive years of economic growth” (Ministry of Economy (ME), 2017, p. 3).

One of the main intentions for domestic agriculture under this policy plan is to ensure domestic agriculture for food and nutrition security (ME, 2017). The plan proves additional intentions on building an overarching framework to assess the capacity of domestic agriculture to meet the demand of the population to access sustainable and nutritional foods. Not only does this plan introduce great intentions to increase production, it also discusses the importance of practicing sustainable agricultural, by extending strategies on ensuring more organic farming of traditional and diversified crops (ME, 2017). However, what becomes evident in this plan is that the country has been yet to build a national food and nutrition security policy, yet strategies to ensure such policy are in place (ME, 2017, p. 32). Furthermore, the plan includes specific
intentions to increase rural economy through increased domestic agricultural production, a strategy which provides high hopes for lower income inequalities between rural and urban areas. Additional policy and strategies on non-sugar agriculture is provided within this plan, with the policy objective aiming to; “Continue broad-based support to agriculture as a key driver to economic growth and poverty alleviation” (ME, 2017, p. 109).

Linking back to the causal relationship between agricultural development and poverty alleviation in Anríques and Stamoulis (2007) theoretical assessment, the findings in this plan are argued to further strengthen this relationship. Not only does an increase in agricultural development cultivate opportunities for rural populations to rise from poverty, it also proves to improve food and nutrition security, as long as strong political will and realistic policies are put in place.

Q2. Any evidence of strategies to increase income of marginalised farmers?
Consistent with the theoretical assessment provided by Mahendra Dev (2017), the plan establishes a strategy to develop “tailor-made incentives and financial packages for smallholder farmers and incentivise investment into value addition and larger commercial agriculture ventures”, under the policy to “Continue broad-based support to agriculture as a key driver to economic growth and poverty alleviation” (ME, 2017, p. 109). Although not explicitly stated, this would mean increasing income opportunities for small-holder as well as commercial farmers. In addition, strategies aim to also encourage increasing efforts to move small-holder from substance levels onto commercial farming (ME, 2017). These actions prove a direct causal relationship between increasing domestic agricultural development and alleviation of poverty.

5.2.2 Vulnerability

Q1. Any evidence of strategies or intentions to increase risk management in rural regions?
In order to fulfil Yaro’s (2006) requirements to alleviate vulnerability, increasing efforts on risk management need to be integrated into national policy. The presence of building strategies based on SDG 2 becomes evident when addressing policy on risk management. The policy to “Improve and integrate services targeting communicable diseases, environmental health, and emergency preparedness, response and climate change resilience”, integrates a rather holistic perspective on risk management as it wishes to improve multi-sectoral approaches to risk
management and resilience (ME, 2017, 40). These strategies could in turn directly decrease vulnerability on food security, as the risk management approach would incorporate larger investments to domestic food production to decrease non-communicable diseases and ensure environmental health (ME, 2017). Thus, the approach, to a certain extent, fulfils the holistic understanding of vulnerability.

**Q2. Any evidence of strategies that provide social security to rural and vulnerable populations?**

Chamber’s (1989) definition of vulnerability incorporates the understanding that an individual, a livelihood or a community is vulnerable when defencelessness, insecurity and exposure occurs in the incident of shock (Chambers, 1989). Building on this understanding, Yaro (2006) argues for good policy to exist when governments understand the connection and interdependence between “political, social, economic and cultural aspects of development” in the presence of vulnerability (Yaro, 2006). Under the 5-year plan, the Fijian government aims to;

“...support micro, small and medium enterprises and other self-employment initiatives to ensure all Fijians have a stable source of income. Major government initiatives will ensure that the guarantee of socio economic rights in the Constitution is realised. This will empower Fijians to become self-reliant. Government will ensure that prosperity is shared and all development is inclusive” (ME, 2017, p. 49).

**5.3 Summary of analytical results**

What has become evident when performing the analytical process above is that global goals play an importance in influencing direction and effectiveness on national policy building. All plans and policies examined provided integrated understanding of the importance of reaching these goals within their nation. By focusing on vulnerability and poverty alleviation among rural populations, it has been made possible to address several different aspects that explain food insecurity on Fiji.

A final data-matrix is here provided to conclude the analytical results. By structuring the given result in this table, it becomes provides a structured overlook of the analytical results;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poverty: Q1 Any evidence of strategies or intentions to strengthen domestic agricultural production in rural regions?</th>
<th>Case 1: Fijian plans and policies in consistency with MDG 1 &amp; 7</th>
<th>Case 2: Fijian plans and policies in consistency with SDG 1 &amp; 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategies and intentions found in all three plans and policies, however, mostly motivated for export purposes.</td>
<td>Several policies and strategies in place, with large emphasise on the promoting sustainable agriculture and food security.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty:</td>
<td>No strategies or intentions found in first SDP. A few examples found on intentions in second SDP and Roadmap, yet limited in explicit strategies.</td>
<td>Specific policy and several strategies are present. Although not explicit in increasing income for farmers, the given policy and strategies indirectly benefit farmers income-levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2 Any evidence of strategies to increase income of marginalised farmers?</td>
<td>Recognised in all three plans, yet they provided a limited amount of strategies. Only the CHARM approach was mentioned in the second SDP and Roadmap.</td>
<td>Several strategies and intentions to increase risk management to achieve resilience. The policy and strategies provide holistic approach that could help ensure food security.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerability:</td>
<td>Importance of social safety nets for vulnerable people was recognized by all plans. However, only the second SDP and Roadmap provided few strategies.</td>
<td>MSME approach in place in 5-year plan to ensure social protection and poverty alleviation of poor and vulnerable populations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q1 Any evidence of strategies or intentions to increase risk management in rural regions?</td>
<td>Goals unsuccessful in targeting food security</td>
<td>Goals successful in targeting food security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerability:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2 Any evidence of strategies that provide social security to rural populations?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Framework of data-matrix for summary of analysis

6. Discussion

Development is a process over time that seeks to reach outcomes where all populations are equal and secure, environmental resources are stable, and political stability is ensured. After examining the different plans and policies built under and in consistency with the relevant MDGs and SDGs, it becomes evident that there are both positive and negative correlations between integrating global goals in national policy building. A positive aspect that is easily observed within the plans and policies written in consistency with the SDGs, is that increasing amounts of targets and indicators in global goals allow for policy-makers to ensure clear objectives and more inclusive strategies within policies. A negative aspect, or rather, a downside to integrating global goals in policy building, is that when goals do not hold a vast amount of indicators or targets, they become less ambitious and rather normative in nature. Thus, it becomes clear that the positive and negative aspects become direct opposites of one another.

Vulnerability and poverty have been treated as underlying causes of food insecurity in the specific context of Fiji. However, it needs to be acknowledged that several other factors determine the possibility for, and the outcome of, food security. Vulnerability and poverty are two mechanisms that dominate social and environmental disciplines within the food security discourse. Thus, these two aspects were considered to be of relevance when conducting the specific study. Looking back at another aspect that was mentioned rather early in this study, is Fiji’s longstanding reliance on food imports for food security. This factor was not addressed as
an underlying cause for food insecurity, as poverty and vulnerability are argued to overshadow this factor. However, what food imports have proved to show is that it continuously increases unsustainable outcomes. Fiji has for several years experienced a vast increase in non-communicable diseases due to lack of nutritious foods, and vast decrease in agricultural development due to domination of mass-produced foods. Food imports are therefore important to address when examining different angles of food security. It is also important to recognise that a large reason for Fijis state of vulnerability is caused by global human actions. Human induced climate change is argued to be one of the main causes of the nation’s vulnerability. There is a limit to the amount of resilience that can be applied to the nation, as it will be vulnerable to the actions of humanity for as long as those actions are harmful. Nevertheless, the given results show that by addressing issues of poverty and vulnerability within national policy frameworks, several other underlying causes of food security or insecurity can be addressed. Some of the explanatory factors have proven to be increase or decrease in domestic agriculture, poverty alleviation strategies, increasing income for farmers and rural populations and increase in risk management strategies.

7. Conclusion

This thesis has attempted to answer the following question; Using comparative case analysis, do global goals prove to be effective in influencing Fijian plans and policies to better address the underlying causes of food insecurity?

Thus, the aim of this thesis was not to evaluate the effective outcomes of specific plans and policies in Fiji, nor was it to examine how food security can be reached. The aim was to study some of the underlying causes of food security that this thesis found to be of relevance, to address whether integration of global goals in national policy building would have an effect on the focusing on these underlying causes. One set of the global goals encapsulated the concept of food security, the other one did not. What the study proved to show is that global goals need to incorporate a vast amount of targets and indicators serving as holistic approaches, in order to be successful within national policies attempting to achieve food security.

What has been established throughout this body of work is that actions on ensuring food security are complex and multidimensional. This is the classic example of ‘no one-size fits all’. However, what this thesis has been able shed a light on is that increased focus needs to be on
vulnerability and poverty in order to establish policies and strategies that could help in reducing stresses and shocks to food security.
8. Reference list


