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Assessing the Policy Impact of ‘Indicators’: A Process-Tracing Study of the Hunger And Nutrition Commitment Index (HANCI)

Dolf J.H. te Lintelo, Tamlyn Munslow, Rajith W.D. Lakshman and Kat Pittore

April 2016

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ASSESSING THE POLICY IMPACT OF 'INDICATORS': A PROCESS-TRACING STUDY OF THE HUNGER AND NUTRITION COMMITMENT INDEX (HANCI)

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Abbreviations

AAB	ActionAid Bangladesh
CAARMA	Africa Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health Coalition
CELAC	Community of Latin American and Caribbean States
CISANET	Civil Society Agriculture Network
CPIA	Country Policy and Institutional Assessment
CSANN	Civil Society Alliance for Nutrition in Nepal
CSO	civil society organisation
DG	Director General
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
GMF	global monitoring framework
GNR	Global Nutrition Report
HDI	Human Development Index
HANCI	Hunger And Nutrition Commitment Index
IEG	Independent Evaluation Group
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
INGO	international non-governmental organisation
KANCO	Kenya AIDS NGOs Consortium
MP	member of parliament
MSNP	Multi-sector Nutrition Plan
NGO	non-governmental organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PANITA	Partnership for Action on Nutrition in Tanzania
PFI	Political Freedom Index
PT	process tracing
RTF	Right to Food
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

Executive summary

In recent years, the global literature on reducing hunger and malnutrition has come to view progress as much an outcome of a political process as of (nutrition) technical interventions. Political commitment is now seen as an essential ingredient for bringing food and nutrition security higher up on public policy agendas (FAO, IFAD and WFP 2013, 2014; Foresight 2011; Gillespie, Haddad, Mannar, Menon and Nisbett 2013; IFPRI 2014; te Lintelo, Haddad, Leavy, Masset and Stanley 2011; te Lintelo, Haddad, Lakshman and Gatellier 2014; te Lintelo and Lakshman 2015). As a consequence, a range of new indicators and scorecard tools have proliferated seeking to promote accountability and transparency of policy, legal and spending efforts and outcomes in the battle to reduce hunger and malnutrition. While a literature on indicators is emerging and underlining their governance and knowledge effects (Merry 2011), relatively little is known about if and how indicators affect public policy (Kelley and Simmons 2015). Accordingly, the policy impact of well-established annual metrics such as the Global Hunger Index, the Access to Nutrition Index or *The Economist's* Global Food Security Index is often assumed but rarely explored.

This report innovatively applies a process-tracing approach to understand the policy impact of indicators and contributes to debates about assessing the impact of development research. It focuses on the case of the Hunger And Nutrition Commitment Index (HANCI). The HANCI project publishes annual indices of countries' political commitment to reduce hunger and undernutrition, as well as complementary knowledge products (e.g. expert surveys and community voices).

The authors develop a causal mechanism that connects the HANCI to its policy impact via two impact pathways. The first, general, pathway proposes that producing the metric and developing an effective communication strategy enhances uptake and use by elite and non-elite policy stakeholders. The second pathway centrally posits the role of partnerships between the indicator producers and in-country civil society users to support advocacy with policy elites. The report analyses such partnerships in four target countries: Bangladesh, Malawi, Nepal and Zambia.

Having carefully outlined and tested the evidence, the study concludes that the posited causal mechanism is plausible. The HANCI has contributed to international and national policy elites' framing of hunger and nutrition as issues of political commitment. Several donors and international development organisations have embraced the HANCI. Furthermore, hoop tests show that the partnership pathway functioned in Nepal, Malawi and Zambia, but less clearly so in Bangladesh. Civil society collectives in target countries advanced the adoption of framings of political commitment by policy elites, as part of but also beyond contracted project activities. Moreover, civil society organisations spontaneously employed HANCI evidence in advocacy and mobilising activities aimed at policy elites in countries where the project did not operate. Yet it is difficult to isolate the role of the HANCI in devising policy framings of political commitment, because of important co-founding factors.

The analysis of the partnership approach further suggests various ripostes to critiques of indicators in the global literature.

Finally, the report shows that a commitment index that produces sound evidence and effectively communicates this, and which establishes effective civil society partnerships in high-burden countries, can help to mobilise further commitment to end hunger and undernutrition. Since its first publication in 2013, the HANCI has been widely discussed by

national and international policy elites and is now considered the leading commitment index for hunger and undernutrition. The longer the track record of an indicator, the more influential it tends to become *vis-à-vis* others. And because policymakers have limited time, money and political capital they are likely to pay continued attention to the HANCI and anticipate future editions (Parks, Rice and Custer 2015).

1 Introduction

In recent years, the global literature on reducing hunger and malnutrition has come to view progress as much an outcome of a political process as of (nutrition) technical interventions. Growing international attention is devoted to understanding how political economy and the politics of policy processes are part of the underlying causes of malnutrition (Gillespie *et al.* 2013; Heaver 2005; Nisbett, Gillespie, Haddad and Harris 2014; Nisbett, Wach, Haddad and El-Arifeen 2015; Pelletier *et al.* 2011, 2012, 2013; Shiffman 2007). Political commitment is now seen as an essential ingredient for bringing food and nutrition security higher up on public policy agendas (FAO *et al.* 2013, 2014; Foresight 2011; Gillespie *et al.* 2013; IFPRI 2014; te Lintelo *et al.* 2011; te Lintelo, Haddad, Lakshman *et al.* 2014; te Lintelo and Lakshman 2015).

Whereas the notion of political commitment already featured in international policy discourse about hunger and food security in the early 2000s (e.g. FAO 2002), recent scholarly attention has focused on breaking down the underlying factors, and the ways in which analysis of commitment can proceed beyond single-case political economy analyses to numerical expressions in terms of rankings and scores. Indicators and scorecard tools have rapidly proliferated, for instance to comment on government qualities (e.g. political commitment); policies (e.g. having national nutrition policies); and social practices (e.g. the rates of six-month exclusive breastfeeding within a population) (see Kelley and Simmons 2015). Examples in relation to political commitment include the World Health Organization (WHO) Nutrition Landscape Analyses (Engesveen, Nishida, Prudhon and Shrimpton 2009), the HungerFree scorecard (ActionAid 2009, 2010), the Hunger Reduction Commitment Index (te Lintelo *et al.* 2011; te Lintelo, Haddad, Leavy and Lakshman 2014), the Nutrition Barometer (Save the Children and World Vision International 2012), the Hunger And Nutrition Commitment Index (te Lintelo, Haddad, Lakshman and Gatellier 2013, 2014), the Political Commitment Rapid Assessment Tool (Fox, Balarajan, Cheng and Reich 2014), the Global Nutrition Report's review of Nutrition 4 Growth Summit commitments (IFPRI 2014) and, most recently, ACTION's donor country scorecards (ACTION 2015).

The use of these metrics is widely viewed as enhancing accountability of governments, donors, civil society and private sector organisations for actions addressing, for instance, human rights and business environments as well as hunger and nutrition. International organisations and aid donors also use these tools to inform decisions on funding and programmatic action. Yet, so far, few efforts have been made to understand the effects and impact of these indicators on global, regional or in-country hunger and nutrition policy.

This report presents an analysis of the Hunger And Nutrition Commitment Index (HANCI) project, investigating if, and how, it has achieved policy impact. Since 2013, six HANCI evidence reports have been published by IDS. Annual Global HANCI reports set out rankings of the political commitment to reduce hunger and undernutrition for 45 developing countries with high burdens. A further report analyses political commitment within a subset of five countries: Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi, Bangladesh and Nepal, drawing on in-country expert surveys (te Lintelo and Lakshman 2015). A parallel donor index of 23 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries was presented in 2013 and 2014. Moreover, a range of partnership activities has taken place in six countries.

By analysing these, we investigate a major yet often implicit and untested assumption held by most indicators' producers and users in the area of hunger and nutrition: their ability to affect attitudes, behaviour and actions of governments. We further shine a light on the role of partnerships with civil society actors in achieving such impact.

In the remainder of this section we review an emerging global literature on metrics, indicators, indices and benchmarks¹ in the field of international development. This literature discusses the nature of indicators, considers what they do, and how they influence policy, and critically reflects on their effects. We next develop a model of a causal mechanism (Section 2) that breaks down how the HANCI may influence policy, employing a process-tracing methodology (Beach and Pedersen 2013). In Section 3 we look for evidence on the causal mechanism and put to the test the claim that HANCI evidence and project activities informed and inspired actors engaged in global and national policymaking processes. This is followed by a conclusion in Section 4.

1.1 Global indicators: uptake, impact and policy processes

The rapidly expanding production and use of global metrics, benchmarks, rankings, indices and indicators promotes a variety of social justice and reform strategies (Davis, Kingsbury and Merry 2012; Lerner and Le Heron 2004; Parks *et al.* 2015; Ravallion 2010). They are used – and contested – by governments, private sector organisations, trade unions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and international bodies. There is broad agreement that they are valuable to policymakers, researchers and reform-oriented civil society groups (Høyland, Moene and Willumsen 2012; Merry 2011). Indicators' information can be useful to domestic audiences for holding leaders accountable to international standards (Kelley and Simmons 2015; Rosga and Satterthwaite 2009). Supporters argue that indicators may be used to draw attention to social problems, are tools for rigorous analysis of the causes or consequences of policy interventions, and provide valuable inputs in decision making about matters ranging from allocation of foreign aid to selection of locations for foreign direct investment (Davis 2014). Yet some are far more influential than others (Parks *et al.* 2015).

In the field of governance and human rights in international development, examples of prominent indicators include: the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index and Worldwide Governance Indicators; the United Nations (UN) monitoring reports on the Millennium Development Goals; the Corruption Perceptions Index (Transparency International); the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP's) Human Development Index; the US State Department's Trafficking in Persons indicators; and Freedom House's Freedom in the World Indicators (Davis *et al.* 2012; Merry 2011). The International Development Association, the African Development Bank and the Asian Development Bank internally generate indicators drawing on the Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA) figures to develop algorithms used to allocate aid across countries (Davis 2014). The UN's International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) provides loans and grants to country programmes using an allocation system based on a formula that incorporates measures of country need and country performance (IFAD 2013). In the private sector, metrics are used in corporate social responsibility efforts (e.g. the UN Global Compact or the Access to Nutrition Index) and credit rating agencies use them to advise investors on political risks. Civil society groups increasingly use metrics as they are pressured by funders demanding demonstration of quantifiable and measurable evidence of their activities' impact (Merry 2011).

Indicators typically involve the selection, compilation, simplification, aggregation, filtering and naming of the resulting numeric product, which can then be used to evaluate performance of states, private sector actors, international bodies and so on (Davis *et al.* 2012). Some authors use the term 'benchmarking studies' (Lerner and Le Heron 2004), others 'external assessments' (Parks *et al.* 2015) or 'indicators' (e.g. Davis *et al.* 2012; Kelley and Simmons 2015; Merry 2011), defined as:

¹ Summarised by some under the banner of 'indicators' (Davis *et al.* 2012).

A named collection of rank-ordered data that purports to represent the past or projected performance of different units. The data are generated through a process that simplifies raw data about a complex social phenomenon. The data, in this simplified and processed form, are capable of being used to compare particular units of analysis (such as countries, institutions, or corporations), synchronically or over time, and to evaluate their performance by reference to one or more standards. (Davis *et al.* 2012: 73–74)

In this report we adopt the terminology ‘indicators’.²

The growing popularity of indicators has been linked to the increasing accessibility and quality of social and economic statistics, the declining cost of computing, and improvements to and dissemination of statistical techniques (Davis *et al.* 2012). Current debates on the use of ‘big data’ note the shift from a data-poor world to a data-rich world, with data seen as ‘the lifeblood of decision-making and the raw material for accountability’ (Independent Expert Advisory Group 2014: 2). Indicators are also perceived as instruments of soft power (Kelley and Simmons 2015).

As indicators are becoming commonplace, an emerging body of research now seeks to understand their normative, theoretical and practical implications. It asks, how do they influence attitudes, beliefs, social relationships and decisions, and what are the political and economic consequences? What social processes surround the creation and use of indicators? How do indicators influence the nature of standard setting and decision making? How do they affect the distribution of power between and among those who evaluate and those who are evaluated? What is the nature of responses to such exercise of power, including forms of contestation and attempts to regulate the production or use of indicators (Davis 2014; Davis *et al.* 2012; Kelley and Simmons 2015; Merry 2011)?

1.2 Influencing decision making: the difficulty of establishing impact

Prima facie evidence of their influence can be found in their contestation (Hansen and Muehlen-Schulte 2012: 458). The fact that ratings are cited, discussed, and sometimes excoriated indicates their power to draw attention and to set the terms of the policy debate. (Kelley and Simmons 2015: 59)

Evidence strongly suggests that indicators can be influential in terms of affecting government decision making (Parks *et al.* 2015),³ yet conclusive proof is often hard to establish (Davis 2014: 46–47).

Naturally, there are limits to the influence that indicators can reasonably be expected to have; for example, capacity-building measures are more easily achieved in low-income countries than deep institutional change and governance reforms (Parks *et al.* 2015). Moreover, regardless of (qualitative or quantitative) methodology employed, there are inherent difficulties in observing causal connections between research findings in general, and indicators in particular, and their effects on policy stakeholders. First, there is no observable counterfactual where the metric did not exist and policy stakeholders could rely solely on other sources of information. Second, it is hard to observe causality between a metric and beliefs and attitudes and social interactions. So even in cases where indicators

² Even though in HANCI reports ‘indicators’ denote index variables.

³ This survey of 6,750 policymakers and practitioners from across 126 low- and middle-income countries appears to be the first large-scale exploration of factors and effects of a range of tools seeking to instigate government reforms. This survey looked not only at metrics but also at a broader set of instruments, including conditional aid and debt relief programmes.

are cited in prominent media outlets, we do not know if their audiences' beliefs or attitudes change as a consequence. Similarly, when political leaders or agencies claim to use indicators as criteria for making important decisions or as reasons for undertaking reforms, it can be a challenge to determine their veracity. One further source of difficulty is that actors often use diverse types and sources of data in the course of deciding whether and how to address a social problem, and 'they do not necessarily understand, record, or disclose the elements of their decision-making processes' (Davis 2014: 46–47). Another difficulty is that even if policymakers refer to a metric, this does not mean that subsequent behaviour is affected by it. In fact, decision-makers may present data to justify a decision after the fact or to display a symbolic commitment to evidence-based decision making.

Davis *et al.* (2012) hence conclude that while decisions by governing entities are influenced by indicators, few rely entirely and mechanically on them. They argue that indicators can have influence on government behaviour in various ways (*ibid.*: 84–88). First, organisations that produce these tools, use them for aid allocation decisions or for influencing behaviour. This is, for instance, the case with the World Bank's World Governance and the Ease of Doing Business Indicators.⁴ In contrast, the UNDP has produced the intellectually influential (Sehnbruch, Burchell, Agloni and Piasna 2015) Human Development Index (HDI), but lacks the mandate to systematically tie aid decisions to HDI rankings, or urge governments to adopt policies that will maximise their performance on the HDI (Davis *et al.* 2012: 97).⁵ Second, indicators are adopted by other aid organisations; for example, the Millennium Challenge Corporation and USAID use the World Governance Indicators. Third, local political constituencies or prospective foreign investors employ the indicators in their lobbying efforts to governments, and actors within states, policy elites, professionals and the general public come to view indicators as guides to appropriate (policy) conduct (Davis *et al.* 2012). Others argue that external assessments can help establish shared diagnoses of policy problems and bridge the gap between policy priority agendas of aid donors and recipient countries (Parks *et al.* 2015).

Indicators can particularly 'influence state policy outputs, especially when they are based on systematic monitoring, are comparative (and especially quantitative), are wielded by a respected actor or group/organization of actors, and are widely disseminated' (Kelley and Simmons 2015: 55). For instance, Davis (2014) notes that the World Bank claims that it has prompted many countries to reform their legal systems simply by promoting its country-level indicators on the Ease of Doing Business Index. Various states have advertised their achievements climbing rankings of the Ease of Doing Business Index in *The Economist* newspaper. There are also cases of policy reform motivated by the objective of raising countries' rankings on the Corruption Perceptions Index (Galtung 2006) and the Doing Business indicators (Schueth 2011). The US State Department's Trafficking in Persons Report also claims that it has fostered national anti-trafficking legislation in many developing countries (Davis *et al.* 2012). Kelley and Simmons (2015) scrutinised this claim and innovatively used factor analysis⁶ to find statistically significant correlations between countries' performance in annual reports and subsequent government criminalisation of human trafficking. They notice that states are sensitive to monitoring, respond faster to harsher 'grades', and react when their grade first drops below a socially significant threshold.

⁴ For example, the World Bank conducts Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA) as a key determinant of aid allocations. It consists of 16 indicators. One of these (on 'Business Regulatory Environment') draws on five of the ten Doing Business indicators as 'guideposts'.

⁵ The HDI has inspired the creation of national-level human development reports. Only the European Union's European Development Fund appears to take countries' HDI scores into account for the purposes of allocating aid (Davis *et al.* 2012).

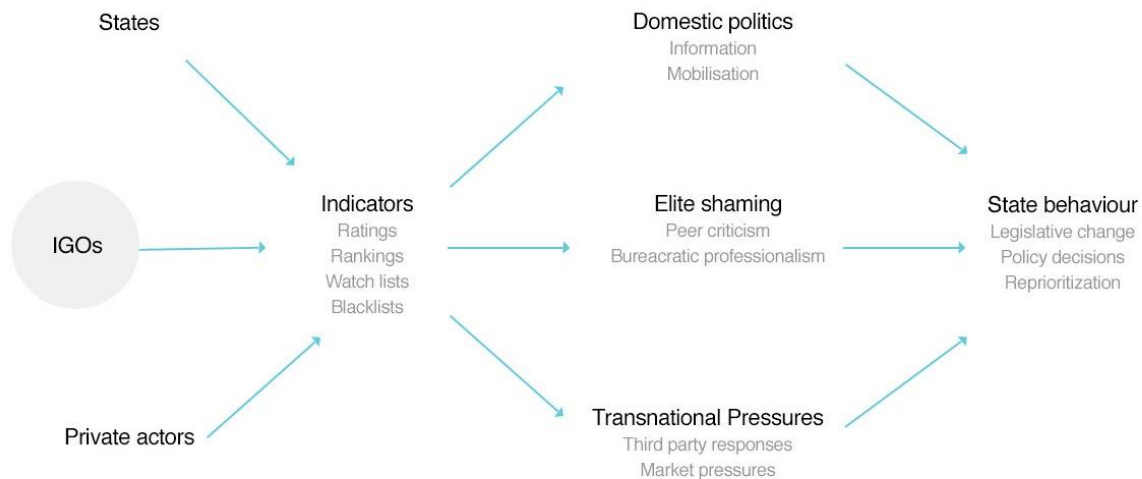
⁶ Most studies use a qualitative case study approach. Quantitative approaches to assessing the policy impact of metrics are rare in the absence of ready large data sets.

Yet indicators' findings are also subject to considerable contestation (see section on critiques below). While those who are monitored often shift their behaviour in ways designed to improve their score, they may do so in ways not desired by the producer of the indicator (Merry 2011). Moreover, actors may resist the pressure to change behaviour, for example, by lobbying, litigation, refusal to participate in data collection, challenges to scientific validity and creation of alternative indicators (Davis *et al.* 2012). These authors point to a history of opposition by a series of countries to high/medium/low categorisations in a Political Freedom Index (PFI) in the early 2000s,⁷ and in 2010 on the inclusion of the Multidimensional Poverty Index within the Human Development Report. Similarly, while the Food and Agricultural Organization of the UN has a strategic objective to monitor political commitment, and has developed a set of dashboard indicators, comparative country rankings are seen as too political to publish (Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) staff, pers. comm. February 2014).

Although policy actors recognise that indicators may be superficial, misleading or wrong, they still decide to use them (Merry 2011). Policymakers may focus efforts on rankings because popular and political debates interpret index rankings as accurate, despite high levels of underlying uncertainty (Høyland *et al.* 2012). Indicators are also attractive because decision-making processes that rely on indicators can be presented as efficient, consistent, legitimate, transparent, scientific and impartial (Davis 2014; Davis *et al.* 2012: 84).

Kelley and Simmons (2015) present a heuristic for how indicators influence public policy (Figure 1.1). They identify three complementing mechanisms: domestic politics, elite shaming and international pressures. Each mechanism insinuates political, reputational or material consequences to weak performance, inciting policymakers to respond.

Figure 1.1 Mechanisms: indicators and policy change



Notes: IGOs: international government organisations.
Source: Adapted from Kelley and Simmons (2015).

First, indicators may impact policy indirectly through international pressure. For instance, governments follow credit-rating agencies, who in turn may for instance respond to a

⁷ The PFI assessed personal security, rule of law, freedom of expression, political participation and equality of opportunity for 102 countries. It did not rank countries but provided aggregates for 'high', 'medium', and 'low' countries by HDI, income and industrialisation as compared to developing countries. It 'generated a huge political backlash during which the continuity of the Report was perceived to be in jeopardy' (Klugman, Rodriguez and Choi 2011: 17) and was ignominiously aborted the next year.

country's performance in Transparency International's Corruption Index (Kelley and Simmons 2015). Second, indicators can influence policymakers to the extent that they inform and influence domestic politics. Mobilisation can strengthen vocal domestic political coalitions who are inspired by the rating to demand official attention to the matter. Such demands can in some cases raise the costs of not responding for politicians. Even the anticipation of publicity and negative domestic reactions could in some cases prompt pre-emptive policy review by government officials (Kelley and Simmons 2015: 58). Third, performance indicators can work through elite peer shaming. The idea is that ratings and rankings can have reputational effects for an individual (e.g. a government minister) or a collective of decision-makers, such as a department or the bureaucracy at large. Whereas this logic is appealing, a recent survey of global decision-makers did not find empirical evidence that reputational effects are the prime reason for external assessments' influence (Parks *et al.* 2015).

Policymaker responses rest on their subjective regard for the rating body and the need or desire to maintain a good professional reputation (Kelley and Simmons 2015). Responses to unsatisfactory rankings may involve seeking to avoid their reoccurrence and introduce policy changes or changes in organisational routines before the next 'grading period'. Government officials dislike low ratings, but also respond positively to them and then take credit, sometimes publicly, for improving their grade. Moreover, positive ratings may stimulate efforts to maintain these (Kelley and Simmons 2015: 68), and bureaucrats will seek to learn strategically how to improve their state's scores by consulting policy advice in reports and monitoring summaries. Furthermore, the collection, processing and dissemination of indicators' information may shape the cognitive framework of policymakers (Bogdandy and Goldmann 2008: 242).

Arguably, the diagram in Figure 1.1 underplays the interactions between the three mechanisms. For instance, civil society mobilisation may involve engagement with parliamentarians, for whom peer criticism is a key incentive to influence state behaviour. Moreover, the arrows between the indicators and the three mechanisms assume that producers of indicators do not actively connect with the three mechanisms. This is a fair assumption, being the case for most indicators in the field of hunger and nutrition. However, one of HANCI's innovations is its active support for metric users to critically understand its functioning, strengths and limits. This report hence considers what role there may be for partnerships between producers and users.

In this report, we build on these theoretical insights and elaborate on the process of mobilisation, peer shaming and international pressures. We show how partnerships between indicators producers and domestic civil society actors can support a mobilisation process that employs a politics of reputation grounded in local conditions. Moreover, we suggest that indicators that can be easily deconstructed in component parts offer flexibility, such that local users can make them work for domestic advocacy agendas. We also note, however, that particularly in contexts where political space for the free expression of opinion may be constrained, mobilisation involves praising as well as shaming tactics, with the latter best lodged in government's own data and declared strategies and policies.

1.3 Global indicators: key critiques

In recent years, a growing body of critique of indicators has emerged, focusing on, first, technical design and, second, power relationships and political implications. The former focus on the validity and reliability of the design of indicators, and question whether they help us to understand the phenomena they seek to measure. Do they validly measure the concepts that their names would suggest? In ways that are useful for either testing theories or guiding policy? Do measurement errors occur (Davis 2014)? For example, Høyland *et al.* (2012) argue that rankings that constitute one number per country can be highly misleading

when that number's inherent uncertainty goes unreported. These debates are inevitable, because the concepts that indicators report on are often inherently controversial and difficult to measure, such as the rule of law, ease of doing business, freedom or, indeed, political commitment. Other critiques focusing on the technical aspects of metrics challenge the lack of transparency in their construction and calculation (Decancq and Lugo 2010; Merry 2011). The production of the HANCI knowledge products engaged with several of the technical and methodological critiques on indicators and indices (te Lintelo, Haddad, Lakshman *et al.* 2014).

Political critiques of indicators take a very different approach.⁸ They assert that these tools homogenise, as they are typically intended to be convenient and easy to understand and use for policymakers. This simplification involves a trade-off between usage and stripping of meaning of complex, context-specific phenomena (Davis *et al.* 2012; Merry 2011). Larner and Le Heron (2004: 214) argue that indicators make the 'incommensurable commensurable' and dismiss the idea that quantitative measures of performance can be used to compare spatially and organisationally discrete systems, activities and individuals. Moreover, relatively few people may have the technical expertise and resources to understand how indicator scores are determined, concentrating power among technocrats and depoliticising debate (Merry 2011). Furthermore, indicators are typically designed and labelled in the global North (Merry 2011), involving the risk that global indicators reflect relatively limited information about local conditions (Davis 2014). However, where transparency is ensured, civil society groups may use indicators to hold governments to account (Rosga and Satterthwaite 2009) and the process of criticising indicators and contesting decisions based upon them can mobilise and empower critics (Davis 2014: 48).

Merry (2011: S84) draws on a governmentality⁹ perspective to question the work indicators do, to underline knowledge and governance effects. Their production and propagation is a political act, as it asserts power to produce knowledge and to define or shape the way the world is understood. Numerical measures give the appearance of certainty and objectivity. The constituent units can be compared and ranked according to some criteria across contexts and countries. This knowledge is presented as objective and scientific, and indicators convert complicated contextually variable phenomena into unambiguous, clear and impersonal measures. However, indicators may reflect unstated ideological biases of their creators, and 'interpretations lurk behind the numbers but are rarely presented explicitly' (Merry 2011: S84). For instance, the World Bank's Doing Business Index has been accused of neoliberal bias in its use of indicators promoting flexible labour markets by NGOs, but also by states such as Brazil and China (Manuel *et al.* 2013, cited, in Davis 2014: 38). How indicators are named and who decides what they represent are hence fundamental to the way an indicator produces knowledge (Merry 2011: S84).

The second is a governance effect, which emphasises that indicators are not simply a neutral tool of measurement providing sources of knowledge about societies, states and actors but also a means of governing them. Indicators express who governs and who is governed, and in what ways; how standards are set and decisions made; and the ways in which contestation of governance occurs (Davis *et al.* 2012). They are 'technologies of governance' (Davis 2014) that bring their own spaces and subjects into existence, and create new fields of competition made up of 'best practice' peers that others seek to emulate (Larner and Le Heron 2004: 215, 219). While some argue that indicators have negative unintended consequences, and divert governments away from higher priority issues, limit

⁸ The technical and political critiques sometimes look at metrics to arrive at very different conclusions. Thus, whereas Merry (2011: S86) wonders '[But] does the number bury the messiness of difference and allow equivalence?', statistically minded analysts note that rankings appear 'precise, but often end up emphasising differences where similarity is the dominant feature' (Hoyland *et al.* 2012: 1).

⁹ Governmentality studies seek to understand the (regulatory) conduct of (human) conduct (Dean 2010).

domestic autonomy and create incentives to 'game the system', relatively little evidence supports such claims (Parks *et al.* 2015).

Whereas the production of indicators constitutes an exercise of power, not all producers do so evenly. Typically, actors involved in producing these are not motivated by the prospect of financial gains but seek to exercise influence and attract attention to their causes (Büthe and Mattli 2011). However, the higher the monitor's status, the more focal the metric is likely to become, raising its perceived validity and reducing its deniability among a broad range of actors (Kelley and Simmons 2015: 59). Moreover, the process of creating and producing a metric can shape the reputation, credibility and prestige of an organisation, as Bradley (2014) shows for Freedom House. However, power is not only exercised by ('expert') producers, but also by users and sponsoring organisations (Merry 2011; Davis *et al.* 2012).

Indicators exercise power in part through their ability 'to name, to define and to describe certain people and places as being different from others and in a way that excludes other definitions' (Larner and Le Heron 2002, cited in Larner and Le Heron 2004: 219). Cross-country comparisons can be powerful, because once they have struck roots they are difficult to dislodge from public discourse (Andreas and Greenhill 2010, cited in Kelley and Simmons 2015). Policy actors are often more sensitive to rankings and numbers than to words alone (Hansen and Muehlen-Schulte 2012: 457) and indicators hence involve a 'politics by numbers', by facilitating comparisons among units and over time, and by establishing 'standards' against which comparisons are made (Davis *et al.* 2012: 77). These standards then prepare the ground for 'scripts for action' (Hansen and Muehlen-Schulte 2012: 460). Indicators are thus centrally involved in constituting global economic spaces (Larner and Le Heron 2004: 212) and spaces of global governance (Merry 2011; Hansen and Muehlen-Schulte 2012).

Indicators have potential to become naturalised and hegemonic (Merry 2011). Typically, intergovernmental organisations with a global reach produce more influential assessments. Those organisations that invest in marketing, communications and branding and have a strong presence on the ground in low- and middle-income countries and local expertise are likely to be more influential.¹⁰ However, as indicators proliferate and competition for the attention of policy elites increases, familiarity is critical for achieving influence (Parks *et al.* 2015).

Davis *et al.* (2012) analysed how three major US and UK opinion-shaping newspapers and magazines reported on the UNDP's Human Development Index, Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index, Freedom House's Freedom in the World indicator, and the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index. They find that:

in the first year or two after an indicator is released, there are discussion and debate about the indicator itself, but after a few years, the indicator is presented in these news media largely as a fact that describes a country's situation, with virtually no discussion about the source of the data or the nature of the indicator itself.
(Davis *et al.* 2012: 88)

These authors hence argue that once the metric is established with wide scientific support, a process of wider public acceptance occurs, as networks of actors and institutions adopt the indicator and consequently increase its credibility and legitimacy. Intriguingly, even the process of criticism and debate, which may for instance focus on the methodological rigour, gives indicators materiality (Larner and Le Heron 2004) and thus contributes to the process of naturalisation.

¹⁰ In this respect, partnerships may replace on-the-ground presence for smaller organisations such as IDS.

Most indicators involve some form of monitoring: routinely observing and checking the progress or quality of a policy, practice or condition over a period of time. This routine may make policymakers as well as organisations internalise the monitoring regime and potentially self-regulate, partially because monitoring enables the shaming of those who are revealed to 'underperform' (Kelley and Simmons 2015). Typically, indicators make individuals and countries responsible for their own behaviour as they seek to comply with the measures of performance articulated. They thus promote governance by self-management (Merry 2011: S85). In the process, compliance becomes subject to technical rules of measurement, rather than political judgement.

An indicator provides a transition from ambiguity to certainty; from theory to fact; and from complex variation and context to truthful, comparable numbers. In other words, the political process of judging and evaluating is transformed into a technical issue of measurement and counting by the diligent work of experts.
(Merry 2011: S88)

Several of the political critiques levelled at indices were also addressed in the project. At a fundamental level, the production and propagation of indicators such as the HANCI is a political act having knowledge and governance effects. Indicators assert power by producing knowledge and by defining or shaping the way the world is understood (Merry 2011). Indeed, the HANCI was specifically and openly devised to do so, in order to bring hunger and undernutrition higher up on policy agendas (te Lintelo, Haddad, Lakshman *et al.* 2013). HANCI country commitment scorecards also offered 'areas of strength' and 'areas of improvement', which could perhaps be interpreted as 'scripts for action' (Hansen and Muehlen-Schulte 2012: 460).

Yet, the HANCI's partnership approach to uptake and policy impact offers a potent means of managing the risks of indicators. Partnership activities in many ways addressed critiques (see Davis 2014; Merry 2011) regarding the technocratic, elite-driven, power-hogging, context-insensitive and essentially depoliticising nature of indicators. Workshops were devised to reduce the imbalance of technical understanding between indicator producers and users. Participants broke down the index into constituent elements, discussed data and data sources, and debated strengths and limitations of the evidence. Having gained such insight, in-country organisations decided whether or not, and which particular evidence on political commitment to use, to underline local advocacy priorities.

Another critique levelled at indicators is that they homogenise and simplify complex, context-specific phenomena (Davis *et al.* 2012; Merry 2011). Although this is a reasonable observation, we disagree with the suggestion that this recognition is beyond index users and the targeted policy elites. In the case of the HANCI, evidence on political commitment rankings was recognised as valuable, but not seen as conclusive to shut down avenues for discussion; rather, many civil society collectives instrumentally used such evidence to open up spaces for discussion on those topics that they felt required attention. So, rather than depoliticising, HANCI evidence enabled the politicisation of debates on hunger and nutrition.

2 Methodology

Many recent analyses have focused on indicators as dependent variables. There is, however, a distinct need to treat 'metrics as explanatory variables and look for their impact on specific policy innovations' (Kelley and Simmons 2015: 68). The remainder of this report hence investigates the relationship between the production of the HANCI and its policy impact. We first present the HANCI's theory of change and then apply a process-tracing methodology to develop a causal mechanism to show how the metric produces policy impact. We subsequently set out the criteria used to test the causal mechanism. The mechanism will then be put to the test in Sections 3 and 4.

2.1 The HANCI theory of change

Whereas indicators 'typically conceal their political and theoretical origins and underlying theories of social change and activism' (Merry 2011: S84), the first HANCI 2012 report clearly set out its theory of change:

(a) by credibly measuring commitment it will strengthen our ability to hold governments to account for their efforts in reducing undernutrition and hunger; (b) if civil society is better able to hold governments to account, it can apply pressure and ensure that hunger and undernutrition are put high on development agendas; (c) governments can hold themselves to account in their efforts to keep hunger and undernutrition high on the agenda: the index can help them to track and prioritise their efforts because the index is constructed on the basis of performance in different areas (legal, policy and expenditure); and (d) commitment can be linked to outcomes, to allow all to assess the 'value added' of different commitments and effort. (te Lintelo, Haddad, Lakshman *et al.* 2013: 2)

In this section, we explore aspects a, b and c of this theory of change (aspect d is beyond the scope of this report). We particularly assess the ways in which HANCI evidence has been taken up by policy stakeholders and has had policy impact. This requires us to clarify what we mean by uptake and policy impact, and to develop a model of a causal mechanism that outlines step by step how a contribution could be made.

By producing high-quality evidence on political commitment in the shape of a metric and supporting primary data, and by devising an effective process of working with policy stakeholders, the HANCI project sought to enhance accountability and accelerate further commitment to address hunger and undernutrition. It assumed that policy stakeholders such as civil society, academics, politicians and bureaucrats consider HANCI evidence on political commitment to add value, demonstrated by its use. For instance, civil society advocacy groups (themselves not part of policy elites) may use HANCI evidence in their efforts to influence policy elites such as members of parliament (MPs), senior bureaucrats or cabinet ministers to put in additional efforts in combating undernutrition.¹¹ This in turn may lead to policy impact, which can be assessed in terms of (1) a change in the framing of the policy problem; (2) a change in agenda-setting processes; (3) a change in policy content; (4) a change to resource allocation; and (5) a change to policy implementation (Sumner, Crichton, Theobald, Zulu and Parkhurst 2011).

While most analyses of substantive policy change such as new policies, laws or budgets offer *ex post facto* explanations, no such impacts are as yet observed relating to the HANCI.

¹¹ Policy elites are a subgroup within the policy stakeholders group, typically including senior bureaucrats, MPs, (vice) presidents, and other political leaders.

Some reports now argue that the influence of indicators and external assessments is greatest at the agenda-setting stage of the policy process (Parks *et al.* 2015). Our focus is hence on impact in terms of (1) framing and (2) agenda-setting processes. We hypothesised that HANCI evidence and project activities may influence how policy stakeholders frame hunger and nutrition as *issues of political commitment*. We further hypothesised that adoption of HANCI evidence in targeted policy advocacy will influence policy elites, who in turn may adopt their framings and/or set new policy agendas.

Sumner *et al.* described shifts in policy framing as ‘changes in the way that policy makers understand a problem or the possible responses to it’ (2011: 8). Whether a frame is effective may in part be determined by the number and type of competing voices – and frames or positions – operating within the same environment. According to Pollard and Court (2005: 14) ‘whether sparking a trend or creating a vantage point within a long-running discussion, the key is to coin phrases and ideas which have resonance within a particular social context’. This is the essence of reframing. Repackaging or reframing a problem can lead to different policy solutions or actions being highlighted and prioritised (Chong and Druckman 2007). A change in framing can be detected in the language used by policymakers, in the media and/or among the wider public (Shiffman 2007).¹²

Agenda-setting studies examine how social problems become policy issues and enter the agendas of policy elites, for instance in the shape of political party manifestos, white papers or advocacy campaigns. Collectives of actors, for instance in the shape of advocacy coalitions, issue networks or epistemic communities, can play an important role in agenda setting and in framing policy debates. They can build coalitions and cohesive policy communities through leadership and political entrepreneurship, appeal to social values and offer credible evidence of a problem and its solutions (Gillespie *et al.* 2013; Shiffman 2007). Social movement literatures show that civil society organisations (CSOs) play a key role in democratic mediation efforts connecting marginalised citizens with public authorities and policy debates (Piper and von Lieres 2011). Collective action of community members who work on changing problems affecting their lives can also help drive policy change (Alinsky 2010; Biklen 1983). The role of civil society advocacy in driving policy change has been noted, for instance, in the case of the Nutrition Partners Group in Nigeria and the Africa Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health Coalition (CAARMA) (Harris, Domingo, Sianga, Chengullah and Kavishe 2011; Pelletier *et al.* 2013), and the Peruvian Child Malnutrition Initiative (Mejia Acosta and Haddad 2014). One reason for its influence is that these groups can gain deep insight into local systems of government, enabling them to pay attention to the nuts and bolts of government. Such attention often results in greater agenda-setting influence (Parks *et al.* 2015).

2.2 Process-tracing methodology

The HANCI is an intervention with ‘complicated aspects’ (Forss, Marra and Schwartz 2011). The HANCI has multiple components (e.g. rankings, scorecards, expert survey evidence), multiple implementing agencies (within country and international), incorporates multiple causal processes, and works differently in different contexts. In order to assess HANCI uptake and policy impact, the study adopts a process-tracing (PT) methodology as advocated by Beach and Pedersen (2013). PT is a systematic qualitative method of enquiry that can be applied to complex contexts with competing causal explanations. PT methods posit a causal mechanism that connects an independent variable X and a dependent variable Y, and employ inferential logic to enhance confidence in the validity of the mechanism. A causal mechanism can be defined as ‘a complex system which produces an

¹² CSOs can devise policy framings targeting policy elites, with high levels of specificity, and more generic framings for general audiences (Shiffman 2007).

outcome by the interaction of a number of parts' (Glennan 1996: 52, cited in Beach and Pedersen 2013).

Beach and Pedersen identify three types of PT: case-explanation, theory building and theory testing. We employ a *theory testing* PT approach within a single-case research design. Drawing on the literature review discussed in Section 1, we postulate the general causal mechanism for how indicators (independent variable X) influence policy elites (dependent variable Y). We propose that the causal mechanism is broadly applicable across a range of policy contexts and a range of indicators. We then apply and test the theory, using the case of the HANCI, assessing whether the theorised mechanism is actually present, and whether it functions as expected.

PT inherently involves a degree of subjectiveness, in the way that reviewers propose causal mechanisms and suitable evidence. Beach and Pedersen, however, point out that subjectivity is not unique to PT (it applies to all positivist social sciences) and PT's Bayesian logic of inference is an advancement in terms of establishing causality in traditional qualitative case studies.

It must be noted also that most of the authors of this report have also been involved in delivering the HANCI programme of activities (Annex 1 sets out their respective roles). Hence, this report is a self-evaluation, implying a risk of bias in over-reporting success and under-reporting failure of the project activities to achieve policy impact. We aim to contain such risk by employing a process-tracing approach in which we identify anticipated and actual findings, and by critically investigating the strength of the evidence that we present in terms of its uniqueness and sufficiency to explain the observed policy impact. We conservatively interpret evidence of impact and are open where impact has not been achieved as would be expected. We have received independent peer review comments from a seasoned evaluation expert and IDS visiting fellow on the report and consider that further external peer review may further scrutinise the risk of bias. While the authors have tried to be as objective as possible, full verification through an independent evaluation at a later stage may draw out further learning.

2.3 Developing a causal mechanism

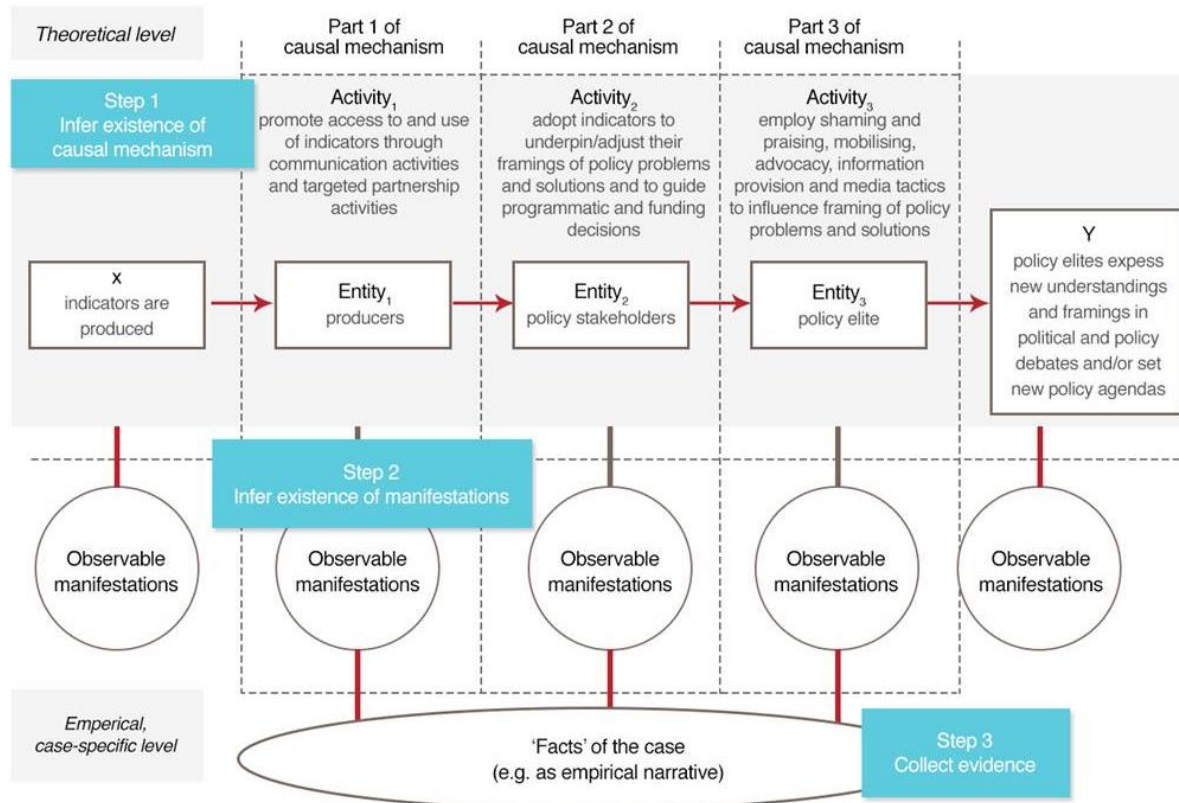
Mechanisms are composed of individually necessary 'parts' composed of 'entities' (objects/actors/institutions) that engage in 'activities' to jointly transmit causal forces.

Part 1 of the mechanism references the efforts that are required to enable (non-elite) policy stakeholders' access to indicators. The literature notes the importance of effective and strategic communication of metrics to policy stakeholders. Usage is enhanced by communications products that are relatively simple, free of charge, presented in user-friendly formats, claim originality and innovation, and for which complementary products such as online analytical tools are readily available. We additionally posit the central importance of partnership approaches to support uptake and to influence policy reforms. Civil society groups need solid evidence to underpin claims to policy elites (Gillespie *et al.* 2013). Given the HANCI's complicated aspects, partnership activities were envisaged to enhance users' grasp and adoption of the metric in policy advocacy, matching user priorities.

Part 2 of the mechanism builds on Part 1. It proposes that (non-elite) policy stakeholders adopt indicators to underpin and/or adjust their framings of policy problems and solutions, and/or to guide programmatic and funding decisions. We consider policymaking and agenda setting as dynamic processes, involving a variety of policy stakeholders from within and without government (civil society actors, private sector, academia, donors, government departments, local governments, etc.) that contest and bargain over the shape and substance of policy and its governing institutions. Each will bring diverse ideas and interests

to these contestations. We assumed that indicators are likely to be used by policy actors if they align with their specific interests and ideas and existing policy framings of social problems and solutions (Davis 2014). Indicators can, however, also inspire new framings and guide programmatic and funding decisions of, for instance, aid donors.

Figure 2.1 A causal mechanism explaining how indicators influence policy elites

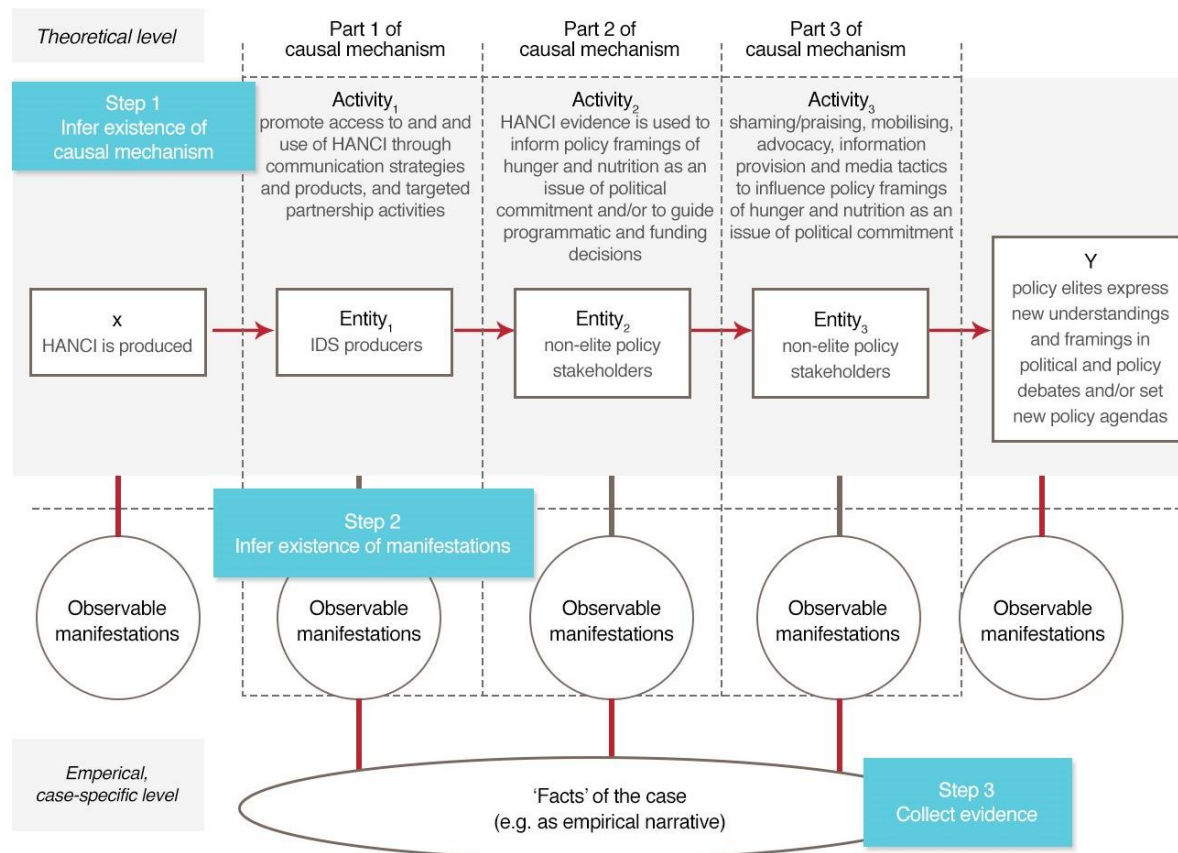


Source: Adapted from Beach and Pedersen (2013).

Part 3 is the consequence of parts 1 and 2: (non-elite) policy stakeholders will employ various approaches and tactics to influence policy elite understandings and framings of social problems and preferred solutions. This involves, for instance, shaming and praising, mobilising, advocacy, information provision and media tactics. As a consequence of the interrelated functioning of parts 1, 2 and 3, policy elites obtain new understandings and change their framings of social problems and solutions, express these in political and policy debates and/or use them to devise new policy agendas.

Having set out the general causal mechanism, we apply this to the HANCI case (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2 A causal mechanism for how the HANCI affects policy elites' framing of hunger and nutrition in terms of political commitment



Source: Adapted from Beach and Pedersen (2013).

2.4 Testing the causal mechanism

In order to make plausible claims about the validity of the mechanism we need to observe for each part (a) whether the mechanism is present or absent in the case, and (b) whether the mechanism functioned as expected; that is, whether the parts of the postulated mechanism were present or absent. However, this does not allow us to make logical claims about whether the mechanism is sufficient, or necessary to explain Y (Beach and Pedersen 2013: 15–18). We therefore hypothesise each part of the causal mechanism and identify evidence that we expect to see if the part is valid, which is then tested for. However, not all evidence is of equal relevance and we need to test for its inferential strength along two dimensions. We are looking for evidence that maximises certainty and uniqueness or, to put it another way, that is necessary and sufficient. Barnett and Munslow (2014: 19) review the literature to summarise these dimensions as follows: uniqueness involves empirical predictions that cannot be explained by other theories/mechanisms. Hence, if such evidence is found, this has confirmatory power for that part of the causal mechanism. Uniqueness corresponds to a low likelihood ratio. Certainty, on the other hand, seeks to establish what kind of evidence is expected to be observed if the causal mechanism is true. What evidence has to be necessarily present in the case for the theory to be correct? Hence, if such evidence is not found, the test will disconfirm the existence of that part of the causal mechanism. When testing causal mechanisms we thus seek evidence that would (be minimally needed to) confirm the hypothesis (providing certainty) and which kind of evidence would disconfirm it, and then identify tests for uniqueness. Consequently, the two dimensions of 'uniqueness' and 'certainty' offer four types of strength tests (Barnett and Munslow (2014: 18):

1. Straw-in-the-wind tests (low uniqueness, low certainty). Conducting such types of tests can be pointless since they do little to update our confidence in a hypothesis, as both passed and failed tests have little if any inferential strength.
2. Hoop tests (low uniqueness, high certainty). This test sets a more demanding standard, as the hypothesis must 'jump through the hoop' to remain under consideration. However, passing the test does not by itself validate the hypothesis; in other words, it is necessary but not sufficient.
3. Smoking gun tests: (high uniqueness, low certainty). This metaphor conveys the idea that a suspect who is caught holding the smoking gun is guilty, although those with no smoking gun may not be innocent. As such, passing a smoking gun test is sufficient but not necessary for the validity of a given hypothesis. It has strong confirmatory power but a low degree of certainty.
4. Doubly decisive tests (high uniqueness, high certainty). This provides a strong inference test, as it confirms the hypothesis while eliminating all others. In other words, it meets both the necessary and sufficient standard for establishing causation.

Figure 2.3 sets four types of test, with different properties.

Figure 2.3 Process-tracing tests for causal inference

		Sufficient for affirming causal inference	
		No	Yes
Necessary for affirming causal inference	No	<p>1. Straw-in-the-Wind</p> <p>a. Passing: Affirms relevance of hypothesis, but does not confirm it.</p> <p>b. Failing: Hypothesis is not eliminated, but is slightly weakened.</p> <p>c. Implications for rival hypotheses: Passing <i>slightly</i> weakens them. Failing <i>slightly</i> strengthens them.</p>	<p>3. Smoking-Gun</p> <p>a. Passing: Confirms hypothesis.</p> <p>b. Failing: Hypothesis is not eliminated, but is somewhat weakened.</p> <p>c. Implications for rival hypotheses: Passing <i>substantially</i> weakens them. Failing <i>somewhat</i> strengthens them.</p>
	Yes	<p>2. Hoop</p> <p>a. Passing: Affirms relevance of hypothesis, but does not confirm it.</p> <p>b. Failing: Eliminates hypothesis.</p> <p>c. Implications for rival hypotheses: Passing <i>somewhat</i> weakens them. Failing <i>somewhat</i> strengthens them.</p>	<p>4. Doubly Decisive</p> <p>a. Passing: Confirms hypothesis and eliminates others.</p> <p>b. Failing: Eliminates hypothesis.</p> <p>c. Implications for rival hypotheses: Passing <i>eliminates</i> them. Failing <i>substantially</i> strengthens them.</p>

Source: Bennett (2010: 210) and Van Evera (1997: 31–32) cited and adapted in Barnett and Munslow (2014: 20).

Following this discussion of the PT methodology, we present evidence of the functioning of the causal mechanism in Section 3 across four HANCI target countries and at the global level.

3 Findings

In this section we analyse the proposed causal mechanism for how HANCI evidence influences policy elites. For each part of the mechanism we reference the literature on indicators to identify what evidence to expect, set out the causal inferential strength of observed and non-observed evidence, to conclude on the validity of (part of) the causal mechanism. All evidence presented covers the period since the inception of HANCI: from April 2012 until November 2015.

3.1 Independent variable X

Before analysing the mechanism, we first set out the independent variable X. Since project inception in 2012, various HANCI evidence products (X) have been developed (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 HANCI evidence and communications products

Programme year	Achievements ¹³
2012–2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hunger And Nutrition Commitment Index (HANCI 2012) – Evidence Report 25 (downloads 2,082) • HANCI scorecards and associated web materials • The HANCI Donor Index 2012 report – Evidence Report 26 (downloads 1,011)
2013–2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hunger And Nutrition Commitment Index (HANCI 2013) Evidence Report 78 (downloads 1,464) • The HANCI Donor Index 2013 report – Evidence Report 99 (downloads 1,082) • Country scorecards for 12 countries, translated into local languages such as Bangla, Nepali and Swahili • An animated film to explain HANCI findings for NGO partners in-country advocacy (5,332 views on YouTube) • Slideshows/videos narrating community perspectives on political commitment in Tanzania (slideshow viewed 97 times), in Zambia (slideshow viewed 58 times), Malawi (slideshow 1 viewed 251 times and slideshow 2 viewed 130 times) and in Bangladesh (video viewed 108 times) • Live-streamed podcasts and interviews with researchers/NGO partners on HANCI research findings • Lead news stories on the IDS website • Social media activities including blogs, Twitter¹⁴ • A HANCI website including downloadable access to all of the above products, and with interactive tools for visitors (www.hancindex.org)
2014–2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hunger And Nutrition Commitment Index (HANCI 2014) Evidence Report 150 (downloads 3,017) • Learning partnerships report (October 2015) • Journal article in <i>World Development</i> (December 2015)

¹³ All download figures as per 30 November 2015.

¹⁴ For example, we participated in a live Twitter chat hosted by the International Food Policy Research Institute around the launch of the first Global Nutrition Report in September 2014.

3.2 Part 1 of the causal mechanism

Part 1 sets out that:

IDS producers promote policy stakeholder access to and usage of HANCI through communication strategies and products, and targeted partnership activities.

The literature on indicators identifies various uptake factors. Decision-makers weigh costs and benefits of accessing the information contained in indicators (Davis and Kingsbury 2012). Those with broader coverage, among both targets and users, are more valuable: for example, the more countries an indicator covers, the more useful it is as a tool for ranking. The longer the track record of a publication, the more influential it becomes *vis-à-vis* others. Policymakers with limited time, money and political capital will pay greater attention to well-established indicators and to those with anticipated future editions (Parks *et al.* 2015).

Effective communication products and strategies can greatly facilitate the acceptance of indicators. These are likely to be taken up when they are: communicated clearly, relatively simple, free of charge, and presented in user-friendly formats;¹⁵ original, offering different information from other sources; perceived to be valid and reliable; and actionable¹⁶ (Davis and Kingsbury 2012). Indicators can also be made more appealing when they are presented in an interactive manner, for example, when online analytical tools enable users to impose their own methodological preferences and show their effects. Communication strategies, as well as collaborations between metrics producers and users, can also support managing the risk that a theory or idea embedded in indicators may be developed or reframed by users or other actors in ways that differ from the intentions of its producers (Davis *et al.* 2012).

Network and learning effects and herd behaviour may also affect the uptake of indicators. For instance, endorsement by influential journalists, politicians and economists enhances their weight for policy elites (Davis *et al.* 2012). Davis (2014) adds that uptake is not just based on a rational calculation of benefits and costs but is also affected by users' sympathy for the mission or ideals, or even the general style, of the producer. Furthermore, 'external sources of analysis and advice rarely help to neutralise opposition to reform or build coalitions in support of policy change' (Parks *et al.* 2015: 13).

We build on these arguments to posit that effective partnerships between indicator producers and local end-users offer not only a route for enhanced uptake and policy impact but also overcome some criticisms levelled at indicators.

Given the discussion above, if Part 1 of the causal mechanism is valid, we anticipate three hoop tests, shown in Figure 2.3:

- observing a HANCI communications strategy that identifies policy stakeholder audiences;
- finding communications products that are relatively simple, free of charge and presented in user-friendly formats, that claim originality and innovation, and for which complementary products such as online analytical tools are readily available;
- witnessing targeted partnership activities.

The validity of Part 1 would be fatally undermined if we found there were no communications strategy or communication products that facilitated access to the metric, or if partnerships

¹⁵ The World Bank's Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) evaluation of the Doing Business indicators concludes that their simplicity (and the language in the associated reports), combined with the fact that they were used to produce rankings, were crucial components of their influence (Davis *et al.* 2012).

¹⁶ The extent to which outcomes measured by the metric are caused by factors within the control of a single decision-maker. Note, this is rarely the case with hunger and nutrition due to its multi-sectoral nature.

were not developed or activities with partners were not clearly supporting their uptake of the metric.

3.2.1 Evidence for Part 1 of the causal mechanism

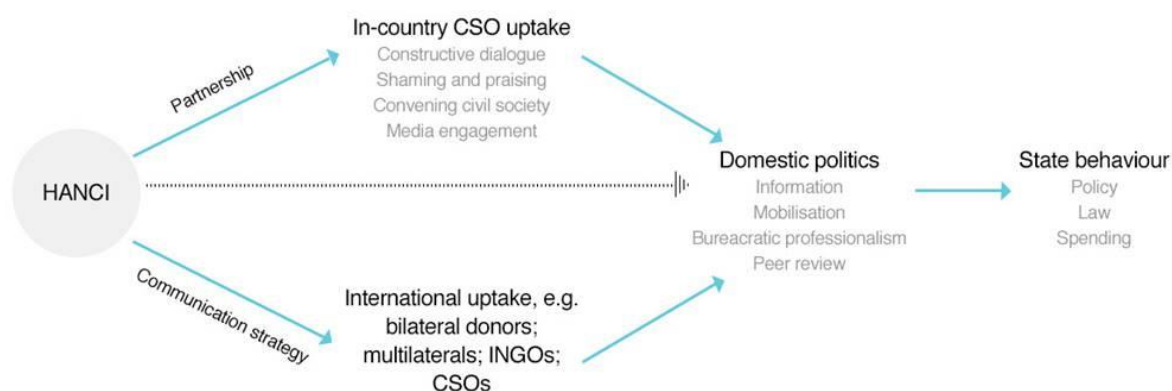
From the early stages, the HANCI project identified a series of policy stakeholders operating at international, regional and in-country levels who might have an interest in its research products, such as partner organisations in target countries, collectives of CSOs, international NGOs (INGOs), government policymakers, political leaders and bi- and multilateral development agencies. To reach these stakeholders, a communications strategy was devised in 2013. Dissemination activities targeted two uptake routes (Figure 3.1). The first aimed at international audiences. Stakeholders with advocacy or research agendas in the area of hunger and nutrition were identified and connected with. For instance, INGO advocacy departments engaged in global campaigns such as: Save the Children's Everyone Campaign; Oxfam's GROW campaign; the IF campaign of a collective of 240 British INGOs; and Generation Nutrition, an international campaign led by Action Against Hunger, and international networks such as the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) campaign.

The second uptake route focused on five target countries located in global hunger and undernutrition hotspots in East Africa and South Asia. In Bangladesh, Nepal, Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia partnerships were developed with in-country civil society organisations and collectives who were already involved in policy advocacy regarding hunger and nutrition. This report documents the findings for all but Tanzania, which warrants a separate report. Civil society collectives as compared to individual organisations offer critical mass for engagement with governments and opportunities for greater spread and speed of dissemination of research evidence, through federated members. Moreover, country-specific diagnostics exert greater influence in shaping policy reform priorities than cross-country benchmarking efforts¹⁷ (Parks *et al.* 2015). This impact pathway envisages that effective producer–user partnerships can effectively connect with relevant priorities of local political leadership. Recent research affirms this approach, in that it finds that the primary reason for external assessments to have policy influence is because they align with the priorities of policy elites: 'senior-level decision-makers are selective and strategic about the assessments they use, paying more attention to assessments that align with pre-existing government interests, policies and programs' (Parks *et al.* 2015: 9).

A range of communication products and activities were devised (Table 3.1) to cater to distinct uptake and impact pathways (Figure 3.1).

¹⁷ However, when deep-rooted problems are the object of reform, policymakers may prefer benchmarking, possibly because it opens up policy space to challenge existing ways of doing things and finding appropriate local policy solutions (Parks *et al.* 2015: 8).

Figure 3.1 HANCI uptake and impact pathways



Source: Adapted from Kelley and Simmons (2015).

International press releases were developed to announce key findings for each of the annual developing country and donor reports. These were launched at strategic moments such that evidence could inform policy debates and carry media appeal. For instance, shortly before the Irish government chaired the European Union and hosted a conference on climate justice, food security and nutrition in Dublin in April 2013; before the British government hosted the G8 and organised a London ‘Hunger Summit’ in June 2013; and prior to the *Lancet* Series on Nutrition launch in May 2013, where HANCI findings featured in a paper by Gillespie *et al.* (2013). Furthermore, country-specific launches of the HANCI were led by CSO partners and joint press releases were developed with partners in Bangladesh (twice) and Zambia.

The press releases and the reports triggered substantial attention in global and local media outlets including two televised interviews on Al Jazeera and various radio interviews with the lead HANCI researcher (e.g. BBC, Radio Moscow, Radio Netherlands). A substantial number of newspaper articles (e.g. in *The Guardian*), web-based news services (AllAfrica, Reuters, etc.) and development bloggers reported on the HANCI (see Annex 2 for full details). IDS communications and knowledge specialists further promoted the HANCI at the 2nd International Conference on Nutrition in Rome in November 2014 and at the Cartagena Data Festival in March 2015.

3.2.2 Targeted partnerships

The project set up targeted partnerships in five countries with local civil society collectives: umbrella groups with federated CSO members from across the country (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2 Partners in HANCI target countries

Country	Partner	Federated members
Bangladesh	ActionAid Bangladesh	None
Nepal	Civil Society Alliance for Nutrition in Nepal (CSANN)	22
Malawi	Civil Society Agriculture Network (CISANET)	22 (Nutrition and Food security working group)
Tanzania	Partnership for Action on Nutrition in Tanzania (PANITA)	300
Zambia	Scaling Up Nutrition Civil Society Alliance Zambia (SUN-CSO)	80

The nature of partnership varied, depending on local country context, partner interest and capacities, and funding. Research was undertaken by local consultants, with partners and IDS. Table 3.3 sets out the activities undertaken. As partnerships were developed over time, learning occurred incrementally and across countries, based on the principle that activities would be demand-led, using flexible formats.¹⁸ In target countries, sequenced workshops initiated critical deliberation of HANCI findings with professionals from across agriculture, sanitation, health, nutrition, social protection, women’s development, education, finance and other sectors. A first workshop engaged CSO partners and federated members to explore the (appeal of) HANCI evidence such as the country scorecards,¹⁹ the index rankings and the expert survey findings. A subsequent workshop developed three or four priority advocacy messages underpinned by HANCI evidence, rooted in partners’ existing advocacy strategies and current priorities.

Table 3.3 Partnership activities

Type of engagement	Programme year	Bangladesh	Nepal	Malawi	Zambia
Commissioning in-country research on political commitment complementing global rankings: community focus groups and structured expert surveys	2012–2013	√	-	√	√
Mutual capacity-building exercises aiming to enhance understanding of strengths and limitations of evidence products (global index, expert surveys, community voices) for advocacy purposes. Validation of in-country research findings with partners’ federated members and expert panels	2013–2014	√	√	√	√
Joint development and outreach of priority advocacy messages supported by HANCI evidence to government officials, senior political leaders and MPs	2013–2014–2015	√	√	√	√
Reflective learning on partnership	-	-	-	-	-
Policy dialogue on hunger and undernutrition, gender inequality and climate change	-	-	-	√	-
Engagement with the local media	-	√	√	-	√
Media training for journalists on nutrition and understanding and using HANCI data	-	-	-	-	-
Partners showcase lessons on advocacy at side-event of the SUN Global Gathering in Milan in October 2015	-	-	√	-	√

¹⁸ For example, workshops generated insightful debate about how to present data on political commitment. So for instance, one of the participants in a workshop in Nepal suggested that we change the way in which we present findings from the expert survey. Up to that point we had expressed answers to a series of structured questions on political commitment on a five-point Likert scale where a score of 1 meant very strong commitment, 3 of moderate commitment and 5 of very weak commitment. As we average the scores over up to 55 respondents, we used 2-digit average scores, e.g. 2.31 on the question whether government spends sufficient budgets on nutrition. Respondents understood the scale but the scores were not intuitive. The workshop participant then suggested we express the scores as simple percentages, which we adopted, and this expressed a simple ‘student exam score’, where 2.31 translated as 72 per cent out of 100 per cent commitment. Moreover, following participants’ recommendation, country scorecards incorporated reference years or all data in the country scorecards.

¹⁹ For an example, see www.hancindex.org/files/2014/HANCI_Global_2014_NG.pdf.

Seven workshops were evaluated by participants in terms of their usefulness and applicability to partners' ongoing work. One-page anonymous evaluations sheets with five questions were administered. Overall 75 per cent of workshop participants in Tanzania, Nepal and Zambia in 2013–14 rated these as useful or very useful. Scorecards were appreciated for their brevity, and clarity presenting country rankings and data for all of its indicators. They incited discussion. For instance, in Nepal, workshop participants debated vitamin A supplementation services. The scorecard showed 91 per cent coverage, and this was initially deemed a good result, until people noticed that Nepal ranked 24th on this indicator. They then realised that many other high-burden countries outperformed Nepal and concluded that there was scope for improvement. In Malawi, respondents in a September 2013 workshop gave mixed feedback. While some participants noted that the workshop had 'enlightened their understanding of what HANCI is all about' and that it 'is a good tool to start advocacy work especially if used with other evidence', others were less convinced. Concerns were expressed about the lack of translation of high levels of political commitment into action on the ground. One participant said only 60 per cent of his expectations were fulfilled. He was 'not confident that government would accept this'. Others were of the view that 'HANCI is very subjective and can be easily criticised based on lack of proper criteria for assessment.' Another feared that praising the government on currently high levels of political commitment could be detrimental in achieving improved implementation. In Bangladesh, participants underlined that HANCI would be useful for ActionAid's work on a Right to Food Campaign, since political commitment is usually not monitored. HANCI scorecards exemplified how a multi-sectoral approach to ensuring the Right to Food could take shape (ActionAid Bangladesh 2014a). Moreover, youth volunteers affiliated to ActionAid also largely considered HANCI materials relevant to local-level advocacy (see Box 3.1).

Box 3.1 Bangladesh grassroots volunteers' perspectives on HANCI

ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB) organised a day-long orientation programme for youth on its Right to Food Campaign on 12 June 2014. Around 19 participants from Activista and Kendrio Krishok Moyitree volunteer networks from different parts of Bangladesh participated. Three HANCI products were shared: the community voices video, the animated film, and the Bangla scorecard. Five of the 19 participants found HANCI data 'somewhat useful' and the rest found it 'very useful'. All of them responded that they would use HANCI data in their local Right to Food Campaign. They particularly preferred using information on share of public spending, women's economic and agricultural property rights, birth registration and its implication in accessing services. Besides, participants found the idea of measuring political commitment to address hunger and nutrition significant.

Eleven participants considered the rankings to be very useful, two found it somewhat useful. Four of the participants declined to comment and one thought rankings would not be useful but did not explain why. Thirteen participants reflected that HANCI materials improved their understanding of the role that political commitment could play in tackling hunger and undernutrition. Facilitators observed that video evidence appealed less, possibly because many volunteers lack regular access to computers. In some cases, simpler language would facilitate easier access.

The partnership approach enabled the project to overcome four critiques levelled at indicators in the literature. First of all, debating findings with partners and other policy stakeholders allowed the HANCI, though North-led, to be sensitive to country contexts. Partners emphasised that advocacy 'asks' directly reference government policies and strategies to underline their policy relevance and to enable leverage. Second, indicators are said to often 'rely on practices of measurement and counting that are themselves opaque' (Merry 2011: S84). The HANCI has from the start provided detailed reports on its data, data sources, methodology, implicit assumptions (for instance, regarding weighting schemes) and limitations (e.g. the logical inability to substitute performance on one indicator with another). An interactive slider mechanism on the HANCI website allows visitors to play with and visualise the impact of the weighing mechanisms on countries' overall rankings.

Scorecards also transparently show data, data sources and reference years. Third, partnership activities were designed to overcome the critique that relatively few people have technical expertise and resources to understand how scores on indicators are determined. HANCI workshops sought to demystify the research evidence and to break down barriers between (academic) producers and (practitioner) users. Interactive exercises and group discussions interrogated the validity and usefulness of each of the 22 indicators in the global index (using the scorecards), and the key findings from expert surveys and community voices for advocacy purposes. They actively opened up political debate and connected people across disciplines and departments and sectors. Fourth, Høyland *et al.* (2012) warn that policymakers are attracted to index rankings because popular and political debates often (erroneously) interpret these as accurate. Whereas HANCI rankings²⁰ did attract policymaker attention in workshops, they were used as a means to an end. Rankings generated debate but were not envisaged as a goal on their own. They rather offered a hook to talk about a country's performance on underlying indicators and on complementary evidence, for example, coming from expert surveys. However, partners' credibility in engaging domestic policymakers rests on having up-to-date data at their disposal, ideally data already published by governments. Upon receiving this feedback, a consultation process was set up for the metric producer to consult in-country partners about the data used in international rankings, before its finalisation.

Table 3.4 Component 1 of the causal mechanism: passed and failed hoop tests

Hoop test	International	Bangladesh	Malawi	Nepal	Zambia
HANCI communications strategy	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Simple, free, original, user-friendly communications products	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Targeted partnership activities	n.a.	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass

We thus conclude that hoop tests (see Table 3.4) were passed in all targeted countries and also internationally, with sufficient evidence for Part 1 of the causal mechanism to be in place. A general communications strategy was devised, and within target countries workshops identified target audiences. Communications products such as scorecards were made available for all target countries and translated into languages such as Bangla and KiSwahili.

3.3 Part 2 of the causal mechanism

Part 2 sets out that:

Non-elite policy stakeholders *adopt HANCI evidence (rankings, scores, expert surveys, community voices) to underpin and/or adjust their policy framings of hunger and nutrition in terms of political commitment and/or to guide programmatic and funding decisions.*

Part 2 of the causal mechanism asserts that non-elite stakeholders have sufficient interest to adopt HANCI evidence to underline existing or build new policy framings of hunger and nutrition in terms of political commitment.²¹ Where non-elite policy stakeholders already talk about hunger and nutrition as being about political commitment rather than, for example, merely an issue of inadequate food production, growing populations or inadequate access,

²⁰ We devised shortened overviews of the global HANCI rankings of countries within a region such as South Asia or Southern and Eastern Africa, as policymakers preferred making comparisons to neighbours than to distant countries of divergent socioeconomic and cultural ilk.

²¹ Moreover, HANCI evidence may be used for framing messages targeting popular audiences.

diets, caring practices, sanitation or food utilisation, HANCI evidence may support existing policy framings. In other cases, HANCI evidence may inspire new policy framings, for example, where non-elite policy stakeholders start adopting the language of political commitment. This would need to be demonstrated not only by showing how framings changed, but also by relating these to a time series of HANCI activities, such as workshops and meetings, that drove such changes. Alternatively, HANCI evidence could be adopted to guide stakeholder organisations' programmatic action and funding decisions. For instance, donors may use HANCI analysis to assess aid investment decisions.

If Part 2 of the causal mechanism is valid, we anticipate observing the following evidence:

- Non-elite policy stakeholders, including partners, have used HANCI evidence to: (a) underpin and/or adjust their policy framings of hunger and nutrition in terms of political commitment; and/or (b) to guide programmatic action, including through monitoring commitment levels, and to make funding decisions.
- Partners use the HANCI to develop new or adjust existing policy advocacy messages regarding hunger and nutrition.
- Partners' documents, videos, blogs and other advocacy products incorporate HANCI references and findings.
- HANCI registers on the radar of international bodies, agencies and practice and thought leaders active in the field of hunger and nutrition.
- INGOs campaigning on hunger and nutrition take notice of HANCI evidence, for instance in blogs, newsletters, or expressions of collaboration.
- Donors (such as aid agencies, philanthropists) express an interest in funding HANCI applications, for instance, in additional target countries.
- Print and social media report on the HANCI.

Financial and technical aspects of partnerships make it easier and more likely for project partners to adopt HANCI evidence than for non-project partners. Hence, if non-partner policy stakeholders adopt HANCI evidence, we consider this a tighter hoop test than if partners do. Other hoop tests would be:

- HANCI evidence is spontaneously used by policy stakeholders who do not have a direct link to the HANCI project.
- Few or no strategic or programme documents of non-elite stakeholders focus on hunger and nutrition as issues of political commitment prior to HANCI activities, and emerge afterwards.
- There are no alternative actors talking about the need to understand hunger and undernutrition in terms of political commitment. If the reverse is the case, it may challenge the uniqueness of HANCI's contribution.

The validity of Part 2 of the causal mechanism would be fatally undermined if we found there were no policy stakeholders that used HANCI evidence to underpin current or to adjust new policy framings regarding hunger and nutrition or to support programmatic or funding decisions. Other disconfirming evidence could include:

- explicit statements that partners are not interested in evidence on political commitment;
- no change in partners' interest in political commitment evidence before and after HANCI activities;
- no media reports on HANCI despite press releases.

3.3.1 Evidence for Part 2 of the causal mechanism

International stakeholders

At various stages during the HANCI project, representatives of the following organisations have expressed an interest in using its evidence products: Save the Children; ONE; Concern; Oxfam GB; Oxfam India; Oxfam Intermon; the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; ActionAid; and Trocaire. Save the Children's interest facilitated developing new collaborations in Nepal, Tanzania and Zambia, where local CSO-SUN partners were initially closely affiliated with the organisation. Attempts to develop more strategic communications partnerships with ONE and Save the Children did not succeed, but these organisations shared HANCI findings in their networks. For instance, the HANCI 2012 press release was incorporated in a Save the Children email bulletin sent to all staff worldwide. As Save the Children hosted the vice presidency of the global Scaling Up Nutrition campaign and civil society network (SUN-CSN), HANCI was also connected to the SUN-CSN global coordinator, who expressed an interest in having 'HANCI-style' partnerships in more SUN countries (Claire Blanchard pers. comm. 2014).

Save the Children and World Vision (2012) developed a Nutrition Barometer report that discusses its complementarity to the HANCI. It strongly frames action on hunger and nutrition in terms of political commitment, echoing the structure of the prototype of HANCI: the Hunger Reduction Commitment Index, which had been devised by IDS in collaboration with Save the Children, Trocaire and ActionAid (2010–12). The HANCI lead researcher reviewed a draft of the Nutrition Barometer report.

Aid agencies and philanthropists also expressed an interest in funding HANCI applications in additional target countries. This led first to Oxfam GB funding the development of an Indian Hunger Reduction Commitment Index (2013). The Child Investment Fund Foundation also provided financial support to develop an African HANCI (2014–ongoing); the New African Partnership for Development affiliated with the African Union has since expressed an interest in collaborating on this effort. AusAid (2014) and the InterAmerican Development Bank (2013) also made enquiries about rolling out HANCI primary research in selected countries, and FAO West Africa offered data collection support for countries currently excluded from the HANCI.

HANCI evidence on political commitment has informed international policymakers through contributions in several influential journal articles and reports. Boxes on HANCI findings were presented in a paper by Gillespie *et al.* (2013) in the influential *Lancet* 2013 Series on Nutrition and also to the first Global Nutrition Report (IFPRI 2014). HANCI also featured in the World Economic and Social Survey of the United Nations on Millennium Development Goals lessons for post-2015 (UN-DESA 2014). The HANCI lead author was a member of the Data Access Group of the first Global Nutrition Report, reviewed a methodology for a political commitment survey tool developed by the FAO and was invited to join the editorial review group for the FAO's flagship *State of Food Insecurity Report 2014*. Lawrence Haddad, initiator of the Global Nutrition Report and co-author of the first two HANCI reports, has championed the HANCI in global arenas. HANCI staff were also invited to comment on the Brookings Institute's Ending Hunger project.

Consequently, several hoop tests have been passed affirming that HANCI evidence on political commitment has registered on the radar of international bodies, agencies and practice and thought leaders active in the field of hunger and nutrition. These provide necessary but not sufficient evidence that Part 2 of the proposed causal mechanism works.

Partners in target countries

Finally, we assess evidence as to whether or not, and in what ways, partners have used the HANCI to develop new or adjust existing policy advocacy messages regarding hunger and nutrition. We assess temporal changes in CSO partners' policy framings used in advocacy by collating and comparing advocacy statements before and after introduction to HANCI evidence and joint capacity-building events. Framings can be witnessed in internal as well as external documents, for instance, annual or multi-year work plans, annual reports, strategic plans, advocacy and media strategies, press releases, campaign materials, or presentations at high-level policy forums. We further use testimonial evidence obtained through a limited number of key informant interviews conducted in 2014 and 2015 with government officials and civil society and political leaders to complement the analysis and to seek to explain findings.

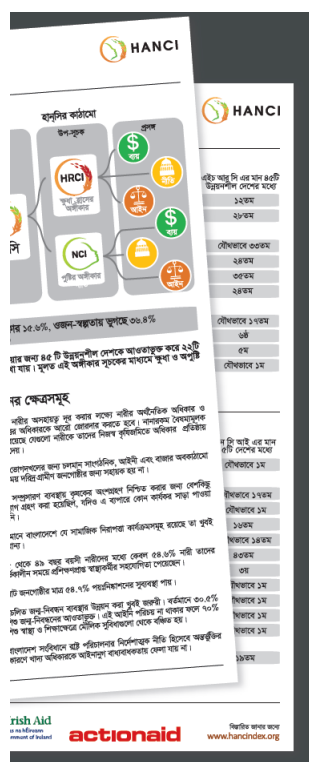
In **Malawi**, most activities were conducted in 2013 with CISANET and Save the Children Malawi. As such, limited evidence on the functioning of Part 2 of the mechanism is available (and none for Part 3). Testimonial evidence suggests that HANCI use in advocacy was set out in annual and mid-term programming and planning documents (J. Nyirende, Head of Programmes, Save the Children Malawi, pers.comm. 2013).

In **Bangladesh**, ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB) has promoted a Right to Food (RTF) since the early 2000s, for instance through the HungerFree campaign led by ActionAid International (from 2008) and a 'Dhaka Declaration' of the 1st National Women Farmers Convention (in 2012). AAB's Operational Plan for 2013–17 sets out food rights and sustainable livelihoods as a strategic priority. It identifies as key activities developing a position paper on food rights and sustainable livelihoods, dialogue with CSOs and national media on food rights, and capacity building of grassroots and civil society organisations to demand an RTF bill (ActionAid Bangladesh 2013a). The campaign aimed to draft a framework RTF bill for introduction in parliament via a group of MPs. The campaign conducted a Strategic Workshop on the Right to Food Campaign (2013); its report declares that 'AAB and IDS jointly developed the HANSI [sic] database which will be used for our campaign work' (ActionAid Bangladesh 2013b: 11)

ActionAid also developed a Bangla language HANCI scorecard for Bangladesh (Figure 3.2) and a two-page RTF brochure. The latter frames hunger as a matter of political commitment, referencing HANCI evidence. It asked:

What is the government doing well, and where can it do better? The Hunger and Nutrition Commitment Index (HANCI) 2013 measures and compares the commitment of 45 developing countries' with high burdens of hunger and nutrition, using 22 indicators. Bangladesh ranks 8th in terms of nutrition commitment, yet only 27th in terms of hunger commitment, so more can be done. The government shows good commitment in terms of spending increases in the agriculture sector (8.9% of the total annual budget, 2009) and improved land tenure security (2012 data). Yet, greater commitment to reduce hunger is needed by strengthening rudimentary social safety nets; enhancing coverage rates of the civil registration system; improving women's economic rights and agricultural property rights; and further strengthening marginal farmers' access to agricultural extension. Effective implementation of government policies using adequate monitoring mechanism is also a serious concern.
(ActionAid Bangladesh 2014b)

Figure 3.2 HANCI scorecard for Bangladesh, in Bengali



The RTF brochure also included visual images of the HANCI Bangladesh scorecards. Furthermore, in 2014 AAB organised a workshop with youth volunteers from across the country to discuss the potential of HANCI evidence to support RTF policy advocacy at the subnational level.

However, not all of AAB's internal documents frame hunger and nutrition in terms of political commitment. This is, for instance, absent from a brief *Position Paper on Food Rights and Sustainable Livelihoods* (ActionAid Bangladesh 2014c), the Operational Plan (ActionAid Bangladesh 2013a), and a document entitled the Design of the RTF campaign. We conclude that while several hoop tests have been passed, the HANCI has been chiefly valuable for supporting existing framings of policy problems and solutions by ActionAid Bangladesh.

In **Nepal**, IDS partnered with Save the Children Nepal and the Civil Society Alliance for Nutrition in Nepal (CSANN). The latter is the first civil society network specifically working on nutrition in the country. It was set up in March 2014 with the support of the Scaling Up Nutrition movement. Within two weeks of its start, a first joint HANCI workshop was organised in Kathmandu. CSANN members recognised Nepal ranking 6th on the Nutrition Commitment Index and considered the Government of Nepal to show strong political commitment, especially testified by its acclaimed Multi-sector Nutrition Plan (MSNP) (2013–17).

Ideas discussed in this workshop are likely to have substantially informed the CSANN Advocacy and Communications Strategy, which was drafted six weeks later in a workshop that included at least seven people who had attended the HANCI workshop. CSANN's Advocacy and Communications Strategy includes 16 mentions of political commitment/will. For instance, 'To address the serious problem of malnutrition that persistently exists in large portion of population in different forms, degrees and magnitudes, the government of Nepal has shown its concern and is strongly committed to improving the existing scenario' (CSANN 2014: 11). CSANN further considers that civil society must advocate to raise resources and 'political/social commitment for positive change in nutrition' (2014: 18). Policymakers are

identified as a key target group with the objective: 'To increase commitments from relevant government and political bodies to accept nutrition as development and political agenda'. It considers that:

policy makers which includes NPC members, Secretaries of Ministries, Nutrition Focal person, Head of Departments, Head of Programs, Parliament, Election Commission and political parties needs [sic] to be capacitated with recent advances (positive and negative) in the area of nutrition to ensure commitments from them. They have a powerful role to play for legislation and enforcement of law to advocate on nutrition. Thus, their commitments could play a vital role to scale up nutritional interventions.

Another objective identified in the strategy is 'To increase commitments and understanding from government bodies at different levels for effective implementation of MSNP and SUN movement in Nepal'. An activity chart in the CSANN Advocacy and Communications Strategy also suggests that few other advocacy-related activities took place in April/May 2014 that could have promoted the framing of hunger and nutrition in terms of political commitment.²²

Further testimonial evidence shows that various member organisations of CSANN have adopted and used HANCI evidence in their advocacy, including Suahaara, FIAN and Action Against Hunger (U. Koirala pers. comm. December 2015).

As such we conclude that there is strong pattern evidence and a tight hoop test that CSANN's Advocacy and Communications Strategy frames hunger and nutrition in terms of political commitment because of HANCI engagement, and accordingly that Part 2 of the causal mechanism is valid. However, it should be noted that being part of the SUN movement, CSANN's strategy was also clearly influenced by its international strategy, which includes references to the need for enhanced political commitment.

In **Malawi**, testimonial evidence suggests that HANCI advocacy messages developed with CISANET in an August 2014 workshop were independently adopted by the local CSO-SUN Alliance and used in their policy advocacy, who attended the meeting.

In **Zambia**, IDS initially partnered with RuralNet Associates Ltd and the Civil Society network for Poverty Reduction, who recommended the collaboration to shift to the Zambian CSO-SUN Alliance, founded in October 2012. In November 2013, an introductory workshop was held with the latter and a range of CSO representatives. It discussed HANCI evidence and developed four advocacy messages on political will, coordination, budgets and data. These were closely aligned with the CSO-SUN Alliance's set of ten key asks, the first of which talks about the need for top-level leadership to 'Build political will to tackle under-nutrition'. By March 2014, the CSO-SUN Alliance had developed a second revised draft Advocacy and Communications Strategy drafted, drawing on a generic Scaling Up Nutrition format. The document contains six references to political commitment/will and elaborates on the key ask to 'Build political will to tackle under-nutrition'.²³ We hence conclude that HANCI evidence

²² The monthly timeline of activities includes, for April: mapping of CSOs and consultation meeting at all levels; District chapter and secretariat establishment; District chapter terms of reference finalisation; and orientation to CSANN members on the Government's Multi Sector Nutrition Programme, SUN and HANCI. Further activities for May include meetings to share information about nutrition status, implementation of nutrition interventions and progress; meetings to discuss current nutritional status, experiences and lessons learned; conduct advocacy campaigns at district and community levels to raise awareness about nutrition; school awareness campaign with students and teachers for prohibition of junk food within school premises; collection of signatory commitments from policymakers, schoolchildren, teachers, etc.; Nutrition Act – draft team formation; workshop with different stakeholders to share the Nutrition Act.

²³ As follows (Zambia CSO-SUN 2014: 18):

(a) 'The Alliance therefore calls for political will at the highest level possible in driving the nutrition agenda forward'. This should be demonstrated through action in the area of policy reform and other areas articulated in the recommendations below.

provided some support for existing policy framings regarding political commitment, but did not inspire new policy framings by the CSO-SUN Alliance in Zambia.

Table 3.5 Component 2 of the causal mechanism: passed and failed hoop tests

Hoop test	International	Bangladesh	Malawi	Nepal	Zambia
Non-elite policy stakeholders use HANCI to underpin and/or adjust policy framings	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Non-elite policy stakeholders use HANCI to guide programmatic action and/or to make funding decisions	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Partners use HANCI to develop new or adjust existing policy advocacy messages	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Partners' advocacy products incorporate HANCI references and findings	n.a.	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
HANCI registers on the radar of international agencies, practice and thought leaders	Pass	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
INGOs campaigning on hunger and nutrition take notice of HANCI evidence	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Donors (such as aid agencies, philanthropists) express an interest in funding HANCI	Pass	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Print and social media report on HANCI	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Non-partner policy stakeholders adopt HANCI evidence	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Fail*
Strategic/programme documents of non-elite stakeholders do not frame hunger and nutrition as issues of political commitment prior to HANCI	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail
No actors other than HANCI talk about framing hunger and undernutrition in terms of political commitment	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail

Note: * as this was not investigated we conservatively assume it has not occurred.

Accordingly, we conclude that several hoop tests have been passed providing evidence that Part 2 of the causal mechanism functions (Table 3.5). We find that HANCI evidence has been adopted by partner organisations across countries, although in different ways. In Zambia, the HANCI provides new evidence to support an existing policy framing of hunger and undernutrition as being about political commitment. In Nepal, a similar policy framing of

(b) The Alliance further calls for the establishment of a National Food and Nutrition Steering Committee at Cabinet level to respond to nutrition problems – to oversee all governance issues in relation to the National Food and Nutrition Policy and the implementation of the National Food and Nutrition Strategic Plan.

(c) We also call for creation of an enabling environment in the way of political and policy processes that build and sustain momentum for the effective implementation of actions that reduce undernutrition.

political commitment has been adopted, and it is plausible that HANCI activities and evidence contributed to this framing. In Bangladesh, the HANCI approach was seen as a valuable example of how to structure multi-sectoral evidence that could contribute to the Right to Food Campaign; however, policy framings were not consistently expressed in terms of political commitment. However, we also conclude that the evidence suggests that HANCI was not singularly responsible for non-elite policy stakeholders' adoption of political commitment framings.

3.4 Part 3 of the causal mechanism

Non-elite policy stakeholders employ shaming/praising, mobilising, advocacy, information provision, and/or media tactics to *influence policy elites' understandings and policy framings* of hunger and nutrition in terms of political commitment.

If Part 3 of the causal mechanism is valid, we anticipate the following evidence:

- Observing that partner organisations as well as non-partners, such as INGOs, employ HANCI evidence for shaming/praising, mobilising, advocacy, information provision, and/or media engagement, seeking to influence policy debates and policy elites' thinking

Where we find evidence that project partners use the HANCI, this provides a fairly easy-to-pass hoop test. Even though the monetary value of most partnership contracts was small (<£10k p.a.), some may argue that employing the HANCI in various activities only happened because of the contractual relation. A tighter hoop test would thus show partners using HANCI beyond contracted activities, or for third parties to use HANCI for shaming/praising, mobilising, advocacy, information provision, and/or media engagement activities.

3.4.1 Evidence for Part 3 of the causal mechanism

In **Bangladesh**, ActionAid organised two workshops in 2013 to launch the HANCI findings: first with NGOs and separately with government officials. Further, in September 2014 a Multi-stakeholder Consultation on Right to Food: Policy and Grassroots Reality was organised. IDS and AAB developed a joint press release to promote the Right to Food with popular and policy audiences, and presented HANCI evidence to a target audience of senior government officials, civil society and the donor community. Six newspaper reports resulted, including in the Bangla news daily *Shomoka!*. The English language *New Age* national daily newspaper reported on the multi-stakeholder consultation event and explicitly mentioned the HANCI. Furthermore, two TV features reported on the event; one was broadcast on World Food Day and included an interview with the HANCI lead author (www.youtube.com/watch?v=Na6SOj-ZluQ&feature=youtu.be, limited access).

In **Nepal**, CSANN members and IDS jointly presented HANCI findings and three advocacy messages underpinned by HANCI evidence to a small group of government representatives and bilateral donors, including from the National Planning Commission, in July 2014. As an outcome, Professor Uma Koirala was interviewed by a local TV station about the HANCI and its findings. CSANN further independently organised a meeting with ten MPs on 26 September 2014 to present the nutrition scenario of the nation and seek MP commitment to nutrition as a political, social and development agenda. The three nutrition advocacy messages developed in the July HANCI workshop were shared with the government officials and parliamentarians who were involved in drafting the new constitution. CSANN also presented the HANCI scorecard data.

In October 2015, the HANCI project hosted a side-event at the SUN Global Gathering in Milan, where SUN-CSOs exchanged experiences of using HANCI for policy advocacy.²⁴ Professor Koirala said that it was sometimes hard to reach policymakers in Nepal because they are often unaware of the importance of nutrition.

CSANN was only just set up when they started engaging with IDS. Though the HANCI ranking was quite good for Nepal, it made me look deeper into the underlying data and evidence. Using evidence collated by IDS meant that we were better able to convince policymakers. We also worked together with IDS to create wonderful [advocacy] messages showing issues, supported by evidence, so we can engage effectively with policymakers. During our work with IDS we found it much easier to connect evidence to our advocacy asks, which was really important for us in terms of establishing credibility as an alliance. It really, really mattered for us.
(pers. comm. U. Koirala, CSANN, October 2015)

In **Zambia**, since its inception in 2012, the CSO-SUN Alliance has played an active role promoting nutrition with the country's political leadership aiming to ensure that national plans and strategies include nutrition priorities (Chilufya, Smit-Mwanamwenge and Phiri 2014). Advocacy messages²⁵ jointly prepared in a HANCI project workshop were presented on two occasions, one with government officials and another with eight MPs in August 2014. Next, a follow-up meeting with the MPs and one traditional chief was conducted by the CSO-SUN Alliance in October 2014 to assess progress towards achieving recommendations since the August meeting. The latter meeting was not part of the contracted project activities. In all meetings the HANCI scorecard for Zambia formed the starting point for discussions, making reference to Zambia's low international rankings.

However, the Alliance did not consistently frame issues in terms of political commitment or reference the HANCI findings in its various advocacy materials.

National coordinator William Chilufya noted that for the CSO-SUN Alliance, 'HANCI evidence has been a yardstick for advocacy around nutrition in Zambia' (pers. comm. September 2015). Its rankings give an indication of the country's progress and/or challenges in addressing nutrition issues. The CSO-SUN Alliance has cited the HANCI rankings to engage with policymakers regarding the draft National Agriculture Policy 2014. 'The HANCI was cited to show the extent to which we need policy reforms in Zambia to ensure nutrition sensitivity. HANCI rankings were instrumental in providing a rationale' for making a set of recommendations for making the agriculture sector more responsive to nutrition outcomes. The Alliance reported that these recommendations have since been adopted by the Government of Zambia and will form part of the National Agriculture Policy.

Chilufya also narrated to other CSOs at the SUN Global Gathering in Milan in October 2015 that Zambia ranked quite poorly in the HANCI index (30th in both 2013 and 2014 rankings). The ranking 'has been a useful tool to provoke government, and to create an appetite to talk about issues of hunger and nutrition in the country. Sometimes things a bit painful result in something.' The responses to the index have included questioning its approach, as well as the data it uses.

²⁴ This meeting hosted SUN-CSO representatives from, among others, Cameroon, DR Congo, Cambodia, Nepal, Zambia, Guinea and Tanzania.

²⁵ The advocacy messages focused on:

- (a) improved inter-sectoral coordination for nutrition;
- (b) increased human resource for nutrition;
- (c) increased resources for nutrition, with increased visibility by having nutrition budget lines clearly visible in sectoral budgets;
- (d) need for the government to be collecting and making available routine nutrition data.

One challenge that has come up in using the index is that people will wonder why you are comparing apples with mangos, for example comparing political commitment to addressing hunger and undernutrition in Bangladesh to Zambia. We think that the new African HANCI will be useful to combat this challenge, but even then distractors are likely using the same argument e.g. for comparing Tunisia with Zambia.

In terms of data employed, Chilufya noted that:

advocacy requires evidence: policymakers ask you who is telling you this? So you need to be equipped. You need to have documents. It is particularly important also to use, where possible, data and evidence published by the government itself. So for us one of the documents has been HANCI, to support our recommendations. E.g. coming up with recommendations for the governments' new social protection policy, which has a very strong component of nutrition. The Government asked: how to improve our ranking? We then put in examples on which indicators the government can improve. We used HANCI evidence to justify specific calls that the CSO-SUN has made for greater political commitment.

The Alliance uses a careful and constructive approach when presenting HANCI findings to the Government of Zambia. The latter had responded angrily to the first HANCI 2012 report's findings. To avoid this in future, the Alliance's board of trustees now reviews the draft HANCI report and data sources for Zambia, to ensure the most up-to-date government sources are used, and Alliance officers discuss findings with government before they are published.

Moreover, the CSO-SUN Alliance used HANCI evidence when appearing before national parliamentary committees. As such, the Committee on Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, and the Health and Community and Social Development Committee debated why Zambia's HANCI ranking is so low in comparison with other countries. The CSO-SUN Alliance has also supported a group of MPs to found an All Party Parliamentary Caucus on Nutrition. Chilufya recalled (pers. comm., September 2015) 'We showed them HANCI – we think politics is very important to nutrition and HANCI was a useful tool to present to parliament to start a conversation about the importance of political commitment to ensure that nutrition is prioritised.' The Caucus devised its own constitution, to identify six objectives, one of which seeks 'to enhance political will and accountability to address the burden of malnutrition'. Additionally, the CSO-SUN country coordinator published a research article on the topic of nutrition in Zambia, which referenced HANCI and framed hunger and nutrition in terms of political commitment (Chilufya *et al.* 2014).

However, other CSO-SUN Alliance documents that advocated change, such as a set of recommendations for a national agricultural policy and a memorandum for the newly elected president (2014), set out key nutrition challenges, and solutions, but neither framed these in terms of political commitment nor referenced the HANCI. The CSO-SUN Alliance also embarked on a flurry of media engagement in the run-up to presidential elections. One show on Radio Phoenix News on 12 September 2014 discussed the importance of financial resources, capacity building and political commitment; however, out of seven radio show slots, none referenced the HANCI.

Finally, several organisations have spontaneously employed the HANCI in advocacy efforts. CSO-SUN platforms in **Uganda** and **Kenya** first learned about the HANCI through advocacy training conducted in Lusaka, Zambia, in November 2013 by ACTION (M. Mumma, KANCO Kenya, and C. Muyama, CSO-SUN Alliance Uganda, pers. comm. June and October 2015). Additionally, the Uganda Civil Society Coalition on Scaling Up Nutrition employed the HANCI scorecards in an advocacy event in November 2015 to discuss the implications of the Global Nutrition Report, Global Hunger Index and the HANCI reports for post-2015 Uganda. One of the organisers noted 'we shall focus on the key messages on the pager [HANCI scorecard]

as these are clearly in line with much of the advocacy that we do. They are clear and elaborate and will in themselves stir debate.’ For instance, ‘we are trying to push for increased domestic funding for nutrition, and [the scorecard] clearly shows that funding to agriculture and health are below the government commitments; this may stir discussion, questions and actions on how to push for increased funding’ (K.K. Peterson, UCCO-SUN, pers. comm. November 2015).

In **Kenya**, the Kenya AIDS NGOs Consortium (KANCO) and the national CSO-SUN platform spontaneously employed the HANCI in advocacy efforts. Manaan Mumma, the nutrition programme manager of KANCO gave testimony (pers. comm. June 2015), noting that she first got wind of the HANCI during an advocacy training session conducted by ACTION in November 2013 in Lusaka. At that point there was no country scorecard for Kenya but she kept checking the HANCI website as she felt Kenya-specific information would be useful. Then, in November 2014, Ms Mumma visited the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) in Rome, where HANCI team members had set up an information stall. She returned bringing with her new evidence on nutrition for Kenya from HANCI scorecards, and the Global Nutrition Report (GNR). While KANCO had previously relied on outdated demographic and health survey data, now it could situate the Kenyan story within the international context. Whereas the GNR data showed that Kenya is off-course on all World Health Assembly targets, HANCI showed the country demonstrating low political commitment: this was very helpful for engaging the head of nutrition and later the health ministry of the Kenyan government. Ms Mumma was subsequently invited to be part of a delegation visiting the presidential State House. She managed to bring the head of nutrition along and met the first lady of Kenya and shared the HANCI scorecards highlighting the relatively low commitment of the government compared to other countries. The first lady was already involved in the ‘Beyond Zero campaign’ on maternal and child survival, and it was easy for KANCO to link nutrition to these interests. One month after the meeting with the first lady, the government head of nutrition received a letter from the first lady, in which she agreed to become a patron of the Scaling Up Nutrition campaign. Moreover, KANCO had also approached Yvonne Chaka Chaka, a famous South African singer who has been an ambassador for the global fund on HIV/AIDS and TB (areas which KANCO had a track record of working on) to become a nutrition champion. Yvonne was initially sceptical, but was persuaded when KANCO showed her the GNR and HANCI evidence, and made the linkages with her key interests. In all, KANCO used the HANCI to underpin one of international SUN-CSOs key asks around the need for increased political commitment to nutrition. KANCO currently has one nutrition champion among Kenyan MPs, but more are needed, and Ms Mumma notes ‘raising the issue of political commitment is key in motivating additional champions’ (M. Mumma pers. comm. June 2015).

Table 3.6 Component 3 of the causal mechanism: passed and failed hoop tests

Hoop test	International	Bangladesh	Malawi	Nepal	Zambia
Partner organisations employ HANCI evidence seeking to influence policy debates and policy elites’ thinking (contracted)	n.a.	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Partner organisations employ HANCI evidence seeking to influence policy debates and policy elites beyond contracted activities	n.a.	Fail	Fail	Pass	Pass
Non-partner organisations employ HANCI evidence seeking to influence policy debates and policy elites’ thinking	Pass	Fail	Pass	Pass	Pass

We conclude that documents and testimonial evidence for selected partner countries show that several hoop tests have been passed in each (Table 3.6), underlining the validity of Part 3 of the causal mechanism. CSO collectives have employed HANCI evidence to undergird advocacy messages employed in mobilisation, advocacy and media activities seeking to influence policy elites in Bangladesh, Nepal and Zambia. Importantly, this applied not just to collectives with whom partnerships were developed. In Kenya and Uganda, where the HANCI project had no presence, local CSO collectives spontaneously employed HANCI evidence in advocacy efforts, and the framing of political commitment had strong purchase.

However, these efforts did not uniquely emerge because of the HANCI. The framing of hunger and nutrition as political commitment existed prior to HANCI project activities. CSO partners affiliated with the SUN movement were informed by the SUN strategy for 2012–15, which identified that preparedness for scaling up interventions required ‘confirming high-level commitment’ and it targeted ‘a major increase in political commitment to ending under-nutrition’ (SUN 2012: 6, 13). Moreover, while HANCI evidence has been used in several policy advocacy engagements organised with and without project monies, this was regularly done in an opportune and somewhat inconsistent manner.

3.5 Dependent variable Y

Y = policy elites frame hunger and nutrition policy problems and solutions in terms of political commitment and use these framings to divine new policy agendas.

In this final part of the mechanism, we present evidence for the occurrence of Y, the dependent variable, in partner countries and in the global context. We identify evidence that suggests policy elites adopt the policy framings of hunger and nutrition as being about political commitment. It should be noted that limited resources were allocated to assess this outcome in the course of the HANCI project; accordingly, materials presented here largely reflect on a limited number of direct engagements with policy elites by partner organisations and lead researchers.²⁶

In order to affirm the presence of Y, we expect to find evidence that:

- Monitored governments publicly respond to, contest, or seek acclaim based on HANCI evidence;
- Senior political leaders and/or bureaucrats frame hunger and nutrition policy problems and solutions in terms of political commitment in policy and political debates and/or use these framings to divine new policy agendas;
- Senior political leaders and/or bureaucrats report that HANCI evidence inspired them to bring hunger and nutrition higher up on political agendas;
- International policy elites frame hunger and nutrition policy problems and solutions in terms of political commitment, explicitly referencing HANCI.

We can also consider an alternative hypothesis: that any evidence of framings regarding hunger and nutrition being about political commitment could be caused entirely by activities other than those conducted in the HANCI project.

In this respect, our contextual analysis shows that there are several influential actors involved internationally in discussing and tracking political commitment to hunger and undernutrition. The strategy of the Scaling Up Nutrition movement (SUN 2012) has identified political commitment as key to achieving better nutrition outcomes, and tracks progress.

²⁶ A more systematic effort assessing the adoption of policy framings may, for instance, include a rigorous content analysis of parliamentary debates, media analyses, a series of semi-structured interviews with policy elites, etc.

One of the articles published in the influential *Lancet* Series on Nutrition in 2013 analysed how to build political commitment and showcased the HANCI (Gillespie *et al.* 2013). The Global Nutrition Report annually reviews progress on commitments made by signatory states at the 2012 London Nutrition for Growth Summit (IFPRI, 2014). SUN's activities with national government coordinators and with affiliated civil society groups have importantly raised the issue of political commitment in national policy discussions, alongside a range of other advocacy messages. The WHO has conducted in-depth assessments of nutrition landscapes of commitment, capacities and resources in a range of high-burden countries, though these do not include Bangladesh, Nepal, Malawi and Zambia. The FAO has also conducted country commitment and capacity profiles, although its findings have so far not been published, which limits their influence. Several other international organisations have close advisory relations to governments on issues of nutrition (e.g. UNICEF or Johns Hopkins University); however, these do not appear to particularly debate political commitment.

3.5.1 Evidence regarding Y

In this section, we first review evidence for the occurrence of Y within the partnership countries. This is followed by a short discussion of evidence for Y elsewhere.

In **Bangladesh**, ActionAid considered that HANCI findings were best directed to supporting their Right to Food Campaign. Orchestrating a collective CSO campaign took time, however, and consequently there were few engagements with policy elites. Mid-ranking government officials did not express particularly strong views while participating in workshops. On the back of these, IDS and AAB were invited to present findings to the Government of Bangladesh's Food Monitoring and Planning Unit in September 2014. Although a seminar did not materialise, the lead author and a member of AAB conducted a key informant interview with its Director General (DG), to share HANCI findings and to bring attention to its campaign for a Right to Food framework law. While the DG was generous in allocating time, he dismissed civil society policy advocacy: 'I have seen how fragmented they are, how poor their understanding [is], how poor they are in research, which means that government will not take them seriously. They do not deliver messages that are credible.' The DG next carefully studied the HANCI scorecard. Noting that the scorecard did not allocate highest scores to the Right to Food indicator, the respondent argued that rather than looking at the letter of the law, 'We need to look at the spirit of the constitution, so I don't care what score Bangladesh is getting', adding, 'We [our programmes, ed.] are very real, I am not interested in some hypothetical issue' (pointing to RTF indicator in HANCI). ... I am not aligning our indicators to HANCI indicators – no, I am using my own indicators.' He then summed up his case by noting that the government 'don't believe in the [RtF] law to be framed. We [already, ed.] pursue Right to Food: through markets, through social protection, through pursuing the right food quality.' Accordingly, there is no evidence that senior bureaucratic and political leaders adopted the framing of hunger and undernutrition as being about political commitment. Moreover, while the Government of Bangladesh responded to HANCI evidence, it did not do so in a public manner.

When HANCI findings were presented in a national-level workshop, a member of the National Planning Commission of the Government of **Nepal** noted: 'This is a very good global study and this study has shown the strong aspects of the country as well as the poor aspects of the country and should be done on a continuous basis.' The study 'is eye opening for government and we are happy to work together with CSANN' in future editions. He also underlined the importance of acknowledging existing efforts by the government (Mr Shrestha, National Planning Commission, Government of Nepal, pers. comm. September 2014). CSSAN subsequently consulted with ten MPs on the state of nutrition in the country in September 2014. MPs said that 'Political commitment is of prime importance' and acting

on this, they introduced nutrition as a ‘matter of public importance’ during Constitutional Assembly debates. CSANN lead Professor Koirala recalled that

We met them and presented our nutrition messages which included what the key issues are, why they are important, what evidence is, and how we can progress. As a result of this engagement, the MPs signed a commitment; i.e. to say they are really committed to reduce malnutrition from the country and they will mention it in their manifestos.

(pers. comm. U. Koirala, CSANN, October 2015).

As such, the evidence in Nepal points to the acceptance of framing hunger and undernutrition in terms of political commitment.

In **Malawi**, a National Policy Dialogue on Hunger, Nutrition, and Climate Change was organised by CISANET and IDS in August 2014. The *Face of Malawi* newspaper reported on the event with an article entitled ‘Government welcomes new HANCI findings on addressing under-nutrition, hunger’. It also quoted the Principal Secretary to the Government for Nutrition, HIV and AIDS, Edith Mkawa: ‘We believe that the findings by a reputable institution like IDS on the hunger and nutrition will help provide insights on how we can improve on our commitments to address the challenges of hunger and malnutrition’ (*Face of Malawi* 2014). Such public statements suggest that the framing of hunger and undernutrition in terms of political commitment was accepted by Malawian policy elites.

In **Zambia**, the Government of Zambia received the first HANCI 2013 report in a lukewarm manner. It appreciated the opportunity for discussing the index but officials said they wanted to be consulted on the report writing. They argued ‘Having a low ranking is very disheartening given how much effort seems to have gone into increasing nutrition efforts – what about all the good things we have done?’ (W. Chilufya pers. comm. June 2014).

Moreover, officials took issue with the scales used to assess commitment levels in the HANCI expert surveys. One answer category, for moderate commitment scores, had been labelled ‘mediocre’. This term was deemed offensive, and interpreted as ‘worse than useless’,²⁷ and would jeopardise the CSO-SUN Alliance ability to constructively engage the government (W. Chilufya pers. comm. June 2014). The government also demanded greater transparency on the use of data sources in the global index. In response, in subsequent years, expert survey scales were adjusted (from ‘mediocre’ to ‘moderate’) and partners and IDS reviewed new draft index findings and data for Zambia prior to publication. This process aims to ensure that the latest applicable government data is used to construct the index scores and to enhance the domestic legitimacy of findings.

In August 2014, the CSO-SUN Alliance organised meetings with eight cross-party MPs to present the HANCI and the co-constructed advocacy demands. The MPs were intrigued by the findings, and asked: ‘How are we doing worse than Ethiopia? Or Rwanda?’ The Honourable Hamududu MP testified that ‘HANCI is a very good tool to help us qualify how well we are doing – [we] can worry about the specific data that is included, but this provides us with a framework to think through how we can be improving our commitment’ (Hon. Hamududu, MP, pers. comm. August 2014). In a follow-up meeting in October 2014, the CSO-SUN Alliance once more presented advocacy asks and HANCI findings. The meeting then proceeded by agreeing the founding constitution of an All Party Parliamentary Caucus on Nutrition, which identified six objectives, one of which seeks ‘to enhance political will and accountability to address the burden of malnutrition’.

²⁷ This issue arose only in Zambia.

Next, we discuss how (inter)national policy elites reference the HANCI and frame hunger and nutrition in terms of political commitment **beyond partner countries**. We provide several high-profile examples, many of which emerged in the absence of direct collaborations with IDS.

In **Guatemala**, the government has adopted the language of political commitment at the highest political level, in the wake of its top rankings in the HANCI in 2013 and 2014. The government's Secretariat for Food and Nutrition Security presented its achievement on the HANCI in a release on 15 April 2013, through its Vice President Roxana Baldetti.²⁸ The government independently launched findings, producing banners based on HANCI infographics and texts from the HANCI 2013 report (see Figure 3.2) (Government of Guatemala, 2013). Moreover, the British Ambassador to Guatemala also noted that the Guatemalan Vice President Roxana Baldetti referenced its HANCI ranking at the Nutrition for Growth event in London in June 2013 (Dickson 2013). And the government further presented its HANCI scores in a televised news programme (Government of Guatemala, n.d.).

Furthermore, the Government of Guatemala further referenced the HANCI in its third report on national government (2014–15). 'In 2014, Guatemala received the highest rating index of commitments on Hunger and Nutrition (HANCI), evaluating 22 indicators of political commitments into ranking of 45 developing countries, mainly by government investment in health and access to water and sanitation' (Government of Guatemala 2015: 106; translated by Google Translate). Early in 2015, the Guatemalan President, Otto Perez Molina, referenced the HANCI in his speech at the Third Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). He highlighted the Guatemalan efforts to eliminate poverty, hunger and chronic malnutrition, such as the government's zero hunger pact, and the president noted that 'these efforts and others, contributed to Guatemala receiving the highest rating in the Hunger And Nutrition Commitment Index, which evaluated twenty [sic] indicators political commitment in a ranking of 45 countries' (*Hoy Venezuela* 2015).

Given that we presented evidence of the functioning of the causal mechanism in Nepal, Malawi and Zambia, how do we assess the Guatemalan evidence? It constitutes a passed smoking gun test showing how the HANCI influences the government's framing of hunger and nutrition in terms of political commitment. This was extraordinary, particularly given the lack of IDS working with in-country partners. Yet, despite the Government of Guatemala's high-profile use of the Global HANCI, in the absence of a thorough review of uptake across the population of 44 other governments monitored by the HANCI it is unclear how to assess its influence among monitored countries at large. In terms of the bigger picture, the question remains whether the example of Guatemala provides a case of extraordinary success, or should more governments really have used the HANCI three years after its first report was launched? While this question is difficult to answer, what is clear is that HANCI evidence is being increasingly used in international debates on political commitment to hunger and undernutrition reduction.

In November 2014, Irish President Michael Higgins visited the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources. In a keynote speech to ministers, donors and the academic fraternity he said:

I also congratulate the Government of Malawi on its performance in the annual hunger and nutrition commitment index. Run by the Institute of Development Studies, and supported by Irish Aid, this index ranks 45 governments on their political

²⁸ A photograph of the launch can be seen at: www.sesan.gob.gt/index.php/incopas/item/526-guatemala-el-pais-mas-comprometido-en-reducir-el-hambre-y-la-desnutricion-segun-hanci-2012.

commitment to reduce hunger and under-nutrition. Malawi lies third on the index with only Guatemala and Peru ahead in terms of their political commitment to address hunger issues... I believe that this level of commitment, with the right policy choices and support, can translate into equally impressive progress in reducing malnutrition in the coming years.
(Higgins 2014)

Moreover, donors and international development organisations have also used HANCI evidence to underpin policy frames that consider hunger and undernutrition as issues of political commitment, and approached the authors to use HANCI evidence for monitoring political commitment. In June 2015, the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) of the African Union approached IDS to jointly develop²⁹ an Africa HANCI, to monitor the 2014 Malabo Declaration, which sets out the African Union's ten-year objectives for improving hunger and nutrition. The head of its food security and nutrition programme, Isatou Jallow, publicly announced this intention in a plenary session at the SUN Global Gathering in Milan in October 2015. Furthermore, authors submitted an invited case study on using HANCI in policy advocacy to a new toolkit developed by the global CSO-SUN Civil Society Network in November 2015. In addition, the World Bank has recently approached HANCI authors to present its findings to the Government of Pakistan at the 2016 launch of the Global Nutrition Report, to be attended by Pakistan's Prime Minister.

Finally, there is one particularly clear case where the HANCI influenced an international organisation's framing of government efforts to address hunger and nutrition in terms of political commitment. In May 2012, the 65th World Health Assembly adopted a resolution to endorse a Comprehensive Implementation Plan on Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition (MIYCN) and urged member states to put it into practice. The Plan includes six global nutrition targets and proposes five actions to support their achievement. One of these five actions is 'Monitor and evaluate the implementation of policies and programmes' using a harmonised international approach. Accordingly, a global monitoring framework (GMF) was devised through a consultative process with member states and UN agencies and an open online consultation. The framework identifies a *core* set of indicators that all member countries must report on. It also identifies an *extended* set of 15 indicators, from which countries can draw to design national nutrition surveillance systems.³⁰ One of these 15 concerns 'Strength of nutrition governance'. Within the last category, two policy indicators are identified, one being the HANCI: 'The HANCI may also serve as a key indicator of governance' (WHO 2014: 35).

While country adoption is voluntary, the WHO considers the framework 'as a benchmark for countries and the international community to measure achievements, identify gaps and trigger corrective actions, and estimate global resource requirements'. Moreover,

Implementation of the GMF has the potential to garner global harmonization on a set of core indicators that are systematically collected, as well as to contribute to the development of a monitoring and accountability system for the follow up of the political declaration of the 2nd International Conference on Nutrition and the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
(WHO 2014)

²⁹ These discussions about collaboration are ongoing.

³⁰ Four types of extended set indicators are identified: (1) primary outcome indicators that measure the progress towards the six global nutrition targets; (2) intermediate outcome indicators that monitor how specific diseases and conditions on the causal pathways affect countries' trends towards the six targets; (3) process indicators that monitor programme and situation-specific progress; and (4) policy environment and capacity indicators that measure the political economy and capacity within a country.

Finally, the core and extended sets of nutrition indicators proposed in the global monitoring framework contribute to a global reference list of indicators for results monitoring on health (WHO 2014).

Moreover, like the Global HANCI, the launch of the Donor HANCI sparked some responses from policy elites. In June 2013, IDS launched the HANCI for 23 OECD donor countries (te Lintelo, Haddad and Lakshman 2013). The dissemination plan for the donor country index included a social media strategy targeting key influencers and bloggers. This strategy was very effective and the research drew direct responses from policymakers in donor countries. Julian Fantino, Canada’s Minister of International Cooperation, tweeted Canada’s HANCI score. This was followed by the Canadian government’s nutrition coordinator contacting IDS directly to get the full data set. The head of the food security and financial sector at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Dutch government, Marcel Beukeboom, tweeted: ‘disappointing 16th place for Netherlands. We are more ambitious than that. Interested in indicators to learn how to improve.’ This was followed up by the Dutch civil service with a request for further information and a breakdown of the findings. The index also received an official response from Irish Aid, with a press release quoting Ireland’s Minister for Trade and Development, Joe Costello, welcoming the index.

Table 3.7 Passed and failed hoop tests for outcome Y of the causal mechanism

Hoop test	International	Bangladesh	Malawi	Nepal	Zambia
Monitored governments publicly respond to, contest, or seek acclaim based on HANCI evidence	Pass	Fail	Pass	Pass	Pass
Senior political leaders and/or bureaucrats frame hunger and nutrition policy problems and solutions in terms of political commitment and/or use these framings to divine new policy agendas	Pass	Fail	Pass	Pass	Pass
Senior political leaders and/or bureaucrats report that HANCI evidence inspired them to bring hunger and nutrition higher up on political agendas	Pass	Fail	Fail	Pass	Pass
International policy elites frame hunger and nutrition policy problems and solutions in terms of political commitment, explicitly referencing HANCI	Pass	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

Table 3.7 sums up the results of hoop tests for the presence of outcome Y of the posited causal mechanism in this study. It is clear that internationally, as well as across Malawi, Nepal and Zambia, but not in Bangladesh, policy elites have responded to HANCI evidence about political commitment, by challenging, denying or embracing its value. Within most of the four target countries, several hoop tests were passed affirming the presence of Y. Evidence was strongest for Zambia, where the constitution of the newly founded Parliamentary Caucus on Nutrition explicitly references generating political commitment as an important goal.

Accordingly, there is strong evidence that (inter)national policy elites have adopted the framing of hunger and nutrition in terms of political commitment, and have adopted HANCI

as a globally leading commitment metric. The evidence is of a doubly decisive nature in some cases, for example, for the WHO adopting HANCI as an indicator for the global monitoring framework for infant and young child feeding. However, a plausible argument can be made that HANCI evidence and sponsored activities with local partners contributed to, but were not singularly responsible for this outcome, as other actors such as the SUN movement and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)'s Global Nutrition Reports discussed and debated political commitment.

IDS engagement (as indicator producers) with government officials and MPs in Bangladesh, Nepal, Malawi and Zambia was mediated by local civil society partners. Reflecting on this aspect of the partnership approach offers some new insights for the global literature on indicators. Critically, guidance from local advocacy groups can support global North organisations to effectively engage local policy elites but also to ensure they respect the local conditions within which advocacy is conducted. Indicators' information is often shown to be useful to domestic audiences for holding leaders accountable to international standards such as human rights laws (Kelley and Simmons 2015; Rosga and Satterthwaite 2009). HANCI partners in Zambia and other countries, however, argued that *domestic* standards, when in place, are more potent reference points for policy advocacy. For instance, a growing number of developing countries have adopted national nutrition policies and/or strategies, sometimes with detailed, time-bound outcome targets. Policy advocates gain legitimacy when referencing these domestic standards, and bureaucrats also relate well to these. Moreover, the literature highlights how indicators facilitate users such as states, intergovernmental organisations and non-governmental actors to employ the tactic of shaming, or overtly singling out governments, and sometimes individual leaders, for public reproach (Kelley and Simmons 2015). However, the analysis of the employment of HANCI rankings suggests that they are often not just used as a shaming tactic, but as a talking point, and a means of generating decision-makers' attention. Having gained attention, the focus shifts to index indicators on which the country is doing well, and on which progress is required. Hence, giving praise where due is part of effective advocacy practice. Furthermore, especially where civil society advocacy groups operate in environments where political space may be constrained – and the converse cannot be assumed *a priori* – a singular emphasis on shaming may be a risky strategy that burns bridges carefully constructed over prolonged periods of time.

4 Conclusions

In recent years, the global literature on reducing hunger and malnutrition has come to view progress as much an outcome of a political process as of (nutrition) technical interventions. Political commitment is now seen as an essential ingredient for bringing food and nutrition security higher up on public policy agendas (FAO *et al.* 2013, 2014; Foresight 2011; Gillespie *et al.* 2013; IFPRI 2014; te Lintelo *et al.* 2011; te Lintelo, Haddad, Lashman *et al.* 2014; te Lintelo and Lakshman 2015). As a consequence a range of new indicators and scorecard tools have proliferated seeking to promote accountability and transparency of policy, legal and spending efforts and outcomes in the battle to reduce hunger and malnutrition. While a literature on such indicators is emerging and underlining their governance and knowledge effects (Merry 2011), relatively little is known about if and how indicators affect public policy (Kelley and Simmons 2015). This is very much the case for the proliferating set of indicators for hunger and nutrition, and the policy impact of well-established annual metrics such as, for example, the Global Hunger Index, the Access to Nutrition Index, or *The Economist's* Global Food Security Index is often assumed but rarely explored.

This report innovatively applies a process-tracing approach to understand the policy impact of indicators, focusing on the case of the Hunger And Nutrition Commitment Index (HANCI). The HANCI project publishes annual indices of countries' political commitment to reduce hunger and undernutrition, as well as complementary knowledge products (e.g. expert surveys and community voices). By analysing HANCI's policy impact, this report also contributes to the literature on indicators and to debates about assessing the impact of development research.

The influence of indicators can be understood in its contestation (Hansen and Muehlen-Schulte 2012: 458; Kelley and Simmons 2015). In this report we have developed a causal mechanism that connects the HANCI metric to its policy impact. The process-tracing methodology identified three component parts, entities and activities of the causal mechanism that links the production of the metric with its policy impact.

Two impact pathways set out the process through which the index is contested and wins the attention of various stakeholders, to ultimately influence the ways in which policy elites frame hunger and nutrition as issues of political commitment. The analysis explores if and how HANCI research and project activities have supported existing, and achieved new, policy framings, and/or defined new policy agendas. The project assumes two simultaneous and often complementary impact pathways. The first, general, pathway proposes that producing the metric and developing an effective communication strategy enhances uptake and use by elite and non-elite policy stakeholders. This is the implicit approach adopted by most indicator producers in the area of hunger and nutrition. The second pathway centrally posits the role of partnerships between the producers and in-country civil society users of the HANCI to support advocacy with policy elites. Here, index producers are envisaged as active actors in the uptake and policy-influencing process. The report analysed such partnerships in four target countries, showing how mutual learning fosters understanding, uptake and potential for policy impact of the indicator.

The process-tracing approach involved identifying the necessary and sufficient evidence needed for components of the causal mechanism to function, and then reviewing their presence or absence. The evidence was assessed in terms of the causal inferential strength of the tests that they passed or failed.

We conclude that the evidence shows that the posited causal mechanism is plausible, and that the HANCI has contributed to policy elites' framing of hunger and nutrition as issues of political commitment.

Various tests were passed for each of its three component parts of the causal mechanism and further demonstrated the achieved policy impact. Donors and international development organisations have clearly used HANCI evidence to underpin policy frames that consider hunger and undernutrition as issues of political commitment. The high-profile use of HANCI by the Government of Guatemala and the WHO constitute smoking gun tests, to substantially elevate our confidence in the causal mechanism, achieved through the international uptake pathway.

We also presented distinct evidence for the functioning of the partnership pathway. A range of hoop tests were passed, albeit in different manners in different target countries; the partnership pathway functioned in Nepal, Malawi and Zambia, but less clearly so in Bangladesh. Civil society collectives in target countries advanced the adoption of framings of political commitment by policy elites, not only as part of but also *beyond* contracted activities. Moreover, civil society organisations spontaneously employed HANCI evidence in advocacy and mobilising activities aimed at policy elites in countries where the project did not operate.

However, we cannot isolate the role of HANCI in devising these policy framings, because of important co-founding factors. The HANCI emerged during a period when other internationally influential reports such as the strategy of the Scaling Up Nutrition movement, since 2012, and the Global Nutrition Report (since 2014) have also identified the importance of, and started tracking, political commitment.

Our assessment of the partnership pathway challenges some tenets of the literature on indicators. For instance, metrics' information is often presented as useful to domestic audiences for holding leaders accountable to *international* standards such as human rights laws (Kelley and Simmons 2015; Rosga and Satterthwaite 2009). HANCI partners, however, note that *domestic* standards are more potent reference points for policy advocacy. For instance, a growing number of developing countries have adopted national nutrition policies and/or strategies (partially as an outcome of the Scaling Up Nutrition campaign). Policy advocates gain legitimacy when referencing domestic standards, offering common reference points for engaging bureaucratic and political elites.

Moreover, HANCI CSO partners highlighted the importance for metrics to incorporate up-to-date government-owned statistics for successful policy advocacy. A recent study also notes that indicators that rely on host government data tend to be more influential (Parks *et al.* 2015).

Further, the tactic of shaming is often underlined in relation to indicators (e.g. Kelley and Simmons 2015). Our analysis showed that shaming has a role, but there is more. For civil society advocacy groups operating in environments where political space can be constrained, and journalism not free, shaming can be a risky strategy that may burn bridges with governments, bridges that have been carefully constructed over time. Rankings were hence used as a shaming tactic, but chiefly as a means of generating decision-makers' attention. Having gained attention, partners shifted focus to index indicators on which the country is doing well, and on which progress is required. Giving praise is an important part of effective advocacy practice and co-constitutes the reputational politics that indicators incite. And incremental advocacy efforts smooth working relations with local power structures, potentially enabling a greater policy response than head-on shaming and challenging (Parks *et al.* 2015). Indeed, shaming involves reputational risks not just for governments but also for civil society organisations.

The partnership pathway to policy impact can be constrained by shortages in resourcing, and advocacy expertise and capacities in local civil society collectives. Here, producer–user partnerships can contribute to enhancing mutual capacities for supporting and conducting advocacy. Civil society partners noted that association with IDS, a well-established international research organisation viewed as producing reliable evidence on political commitment, enhanced their credibility for governments and other policy stakeholders. Partnership activities also enabled the development of advocacy messages that were aligned with civil society priorities; underpinned by sound evidence; and attuned to local socioeconomic, cultural and political contexts. This significantly enhanced their potential to appeal to policy elites, whether by civil society organisations or by IDS.

We propose the following scoping conditions for the use of commitment indicators to successfully influence policy:

- International organisations and bi- and multilateral donors generate demand for the metric by highlighting the importance of the unit of measurement (political commitment).
- Evidence on political commitment is complemented by up-to-date evidence on the status of the social problem (e.g. hunger and nutrition).
- An organisation or institute with a strong reputation for rigorous analysis produces the metric.
- CSO partners have credibility, clout and effective working relations with governments to organise meetings and workshops with senior government officials.
- CSO partners draw mainly on national-level statistics and evidence, owned by governments, and reference existing government policy, strategy and plans.
- Communication strategies effectively reach out to a range of national and international think tanks, donors, leaders and policy entrepreneurs.
- Advocacy messages on political commitment reflect domestic conditions and have a good grip on key policies, laws and spending practices in a country.

Finally, the analysis of HANCI impact in this report shows that a commitment index that produces sound evidence and effectively communicates this, and that establishes effective civil society partnerships in high-burden countries, can help to mobilise further commitment to end hunger and undernutrition. While the first HANCI was first published only in 2013, already it has been widely discussed by national and international policy elites in the area of hunger and nutrition, who are now anticipating future editions of the index. The longer the track record of an indicator, the more influential it tends to become *vis-à-vis* others. Policymakers with limited time, money and political capital will pay greater attention to well-established indicators, and those with anticipated future editions (Parks *et al.* 2015).

Annex 1 Authors' roles in the HANCI

Dolf te Lintel: IDS fellow, HANCI project manager and lead author of this report, in charge of operational delivery of HANCI with partners.

Tamlyn Munslow: IDS Monitoring & Evaluation research officer, second author of this report, minor role in operational delivery of HANCI with partners.

Rajith Lakshman: IDS research officer, third author of the report, technical specialist index building, minor role in operational delivery of HANCI with partners.

Kat Pittore: IDS nutrition convener, fourth author of the report, project management and major role in operational delivery of HANCI with partners.

Annex 2 Media engagement

[Update dated 19 April 2015], covering period 2014-15

HANCI traditional media and social media mentions			
Global			
Date	Outlet	Type	URL
25 June 2014	Charity Times	NGO/Development Networks	www.charitytimes.com/ct/New_evidence_shows_chronically_poor_countries_gathering_pace.php
25 June 2014	Secure Nutrition	NGO/Development Networks	www.securenutritionplatform.org/Blog/post.aspx?ID=101
25 June 2014	HEART	Blogs	www.heart-resources.org/blog/hanci-2013-new-evidence-commitment-reducing-hunger-undernutrition/
25 June 2014	IDS	NGO/Development Networks	www.ids.ac.uk/news/new-evidence-shows-chronically-poor-countries-are-gathering-pace-in-tackling-hunger-and-undernutrition
25 June 2014	Panapress	Printed/Online Media	www.panapress.com/Zambia--Zambia-needs-leadership-in-tackling-hunger,-under-nutrition--15-917286-32-lang2-index.html
26 June 2014	Transforming Development	Blogs	www.transformingdevelopment.com/2014/06/measuring-political-will-meeting.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+TransformingDevelopment+%28Transforming+Development%29
26 June 2014	<i>PBS</i>	Printed/Online Media	www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/guatemala-woke-malnutrition/
26 June 2014	<i>Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting</i>	Printed/Online Media	http://pulitzercenter.org/projects/central-america-guatemala-global-health-infant-mortality-zero-hunger-plan
26 June 2014	<i>Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting</i>	Printed/Online Media	http://pulitzercenter.org/reporting/central-america-guatemala-city-malnutrition-crisis
25 June 2014	<i>Relief Web</i>	Printed/Online Media	http://reliefweb.int/report/world/hunger-and-nutrition-commitment-index-hanci-2013-measuring-political-commitment-reduce
25 June 2014	One World	NGO/Development Networks	http://oneworld.org/2014/06/25/hunger-and-undernutrition-unacceptably-high-warns-global-index/
26 June 2014	Development Horizons	NGO/Development Networks	www.developmenthorizons.com/2014/06/is-commitment-to-hunger-reduction-same.html
27 June 2014	LANSA	Blogs	www.lansasouthasia.org/blog/what-does-new-hanci-say-about-political-will-reduce-undernutrition-south-asia
30 June 2014	Bread	NGO/Development Networks	http://notes.bread.org/2014/06/country-commitments-to-fighting-hunger-and-malnutrition-again-ranked.html
1 July 2013	<i>World News</i>	Printed/Online Media	http://africa.widmi.com/index.php/zambia/the-post/news/106101-zambia-records-decline-in-hunger-reduction-efforts

1 July 2014	<i>Post Zambia</i>	Printed/Online Media	www.postzambia.com/post-read_article.php?articleId=50947
3 July 2014	Duncan Green Blog	Blogs	http://oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/which-governments-are-doing-bestworst-in-the-fight-against-hunger-and-undernutrition/
3 July 2014	<i>Guardian Global Development Professionals Network</i>	Printed/Online Media	www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2014/jul/03/hunger-nutrition-africa-burundi-liberia
6 July 2014	<i>Diario de Centro America</i>	Printed/Online Media	www.dca.gob.gt/index.php/opinion/item/31665-un-incentivo-internacional.html
3 July 2014	<i>EIN News</i>	Printed/Online Media	http://world.einnews.com/article__detail/212216257?lcode=Zg1yszjY8M_3HDOs1KZEW8Wmpm mQ0_P7tUUFaitesqE%3D
6 July 2014	<i>Diario de Centro America</i>	Printed/Online Media	www.dca.gob.gt/index.php/template-features/item/31670-guatemala-primer-lugar-en-lucha-contra-el-hambre-y-la-desnutrici%C3%B3n.html
4 July 2014	<i>Borgen Magazine</i>	Printed/Online Media	www.borgenmagazine.com/qa-research-fellow-dolf-te-lintelo/
7 July 2014	<i>All Voices</i>	Printed/Online Media	www.allvoices.com/news/17423263-africa-which-7-countries-are-most-committed-to-ending-hunger
4 July 2014	<i>All Africa</i>	Printed/Online Media	http://allafrica.com/stories/201407070485.html
11 July 2014	<i>Agencia Guatemalteca de Noticias</i>	Printed/Online Media	www.agn.com.gt/index.php/world/item/17740-guatemala-lidera-lucha-contra-el-hambre-en-el-mundo
7 July 2014	<i>Big News Network</i>	Printed/Online Media	www.bignewsnetwork.com/index.php/sid/223570795/scat/c1ab2109a5bf37ec
11 July 2014	<i>Prensa Latina Agencia informativa Latinoamericana</i>	Printed/Online Media	www.prensa-latina.cu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2859361&Itemid=1
14 July 2014	<i>Down to Earth</i>	Printed/Online Media	www.downtoearth.org.in/content/india-less-committed-reducing-hunger-nepal-and-bangladesh-shows-hanci-report
14 July 2014	<i>Global Nutrition Report</i>	Printed/Online Media	http://globalnutritionreport.org/2014/07/14/assessing-the-impact-of-political-commitment/
14 July 2014	Sci Dev	NGO/Development Networks	www.scidev.net/global/nutrition/analysis-blog/poverty-nutrition-science-political.html
3 October 2014	<i>Gestion del Conocimiento en Nutricion y Desarrollo</i>	Printed/Online Media	www.paho.org/nutricionydesarrollo/?p=5002
16 July 2014	Bangladeshi News Media/Channel 24	TV	www.youtube.com/watch?v=Na6SOj-ZluQ&feature=youtu.be
3 December 2014	<i>The East African</i>	Printed/Online Media	www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/Dar-still-grapples-with-malnutrition/-/2558/2459936/-/14etdvh/-/index.html
17 July 2014	<i>The Citizen</i>	Printed/Online Media	www.thecitizen.co.tz/News/Dar-scores-high-marks-on-nutrition/-/1840392/2489340/-/l4f5a6z/-/index.html

Twitter			
Top twitter users who shared the donor report #hanci			
.@ifpri	40,800 followers	The International Food Policy Research Institute seeks sustainable solutions for ending hunger and poverty	
.@gainalliance	9,230 followers	The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition builds partnerships to increase access to essential nutrients	
.@I_haddad	4,270 followers	Senior Research Fellow, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)	
.@ConcernVoices	1,692 followers	UK account for Concern Worldwide: We work with the world's poorest people to tackle hunger and transform their lives - for international updates follow @concern	
.@wchilufya	1,073 followers	Country Coordinator Civil Society Scaling Up Nutrition Alliance (@CSO-SUN) in Zambia. Not a Nutritionist But an Advocate for Nutrition	
Donor			
Date	Outlet	Type	URL
17 November 2014	<i>Global Guardian Development</i>	Printed/Online Media	www.theguardian.com/global-development/poverty-matters/2014/nov/17/world-leaders-must-grasp-the-nettle-in-the-battle-against-malnutrition?CMP=share_btn_tw
17 November 2014	IDS Website	NGO/Development Networks	www.ids.ac.uk/news/uk-tops-rankings-for-tackling-hunger-and-undernutrition
18 November 2014	Aid News	Blogs	http://aidnews.org/uk-tops-rankings-for-tackling-hunger-and-undernutrition/
19 November 2014	<i>AllAfrica</i>	Printed/Online Media	http://allafrica.com/stories/201411181194.html
20 November 2014	<i>Le Estrella de Panama</i>	Printed/Online Media	http://laestrella.com.pa/vida-de-hoy/familia/guatemala-afirma-reducira-desnutricion/23822028
21 November 2014	Humanosphere	Blogs	www.humanosphere.org/world-politics/2014/11/u-s-lacks-commitment-end-hunger-undernutrition/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+kplu%2FslXa+%28Humanosphere%29
21 November 2014	Every Child Fed	Blogs	http://everychildfed.org/hunger-in-the-news-u-s-lacks-commitment-to-end-hunger-and-undernutrition/
24 November 2014	<i>Huffington Post Francais</i>	Printed/Online Media	www.huffingtonpost.fr/mike-penrose/quel-role-de-la-france-dans-la-lutte-contre-la-faim_b_6186006.html?utm_hp_ref=tw
Twitter			
Top twitter users who shared the donor report #hancindex			
.@carecanada	7,954 followers	CARE Canada is committed to defending dignity and fighting poverty by empowering the world's greatest resource for change: women and girls	
.@Irish_Aid	5,171 followers	The Irish people's overseas aid programme, managed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	
.@micronutrient	4,417 followers	The Micronutrient Initiative is a non-profit organisation working to eliminate vitamin and mineral deficiencies in the world's most vulnerable populations	

.@I_haddad	4,270 followers	Senior Research Fellow, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)
.@resultsuk	2,362 followers	RESULTS UK works to create the public and political will to end global poverty. Join us to help change the world!
.@ACTION_Tweets	2,199 followers	Global partnership of advocacy orgs impacting policies & resources to end TB, vaccine-preventable deaths, child undernutrition
.@GlenTarman	1,753 followers	* Advocacy/campaigning on world poverty/inequality/global issues * International Advocacy Director for Action Against Hunger ACF
.@IntSchoolMeals	1,322 followers	International School Meals Day, next celebrated March 5th 2015. News + views from around the globe on the best in School Meals, Health Education & Well-being
.@wchilufya	1,073 followers	Country Coordinator Civil Society Scaling Up Nutrition Alliance (@CSO-SUN) in Zambia. Not a Nutritionist But an Advocate for Nutrition
.@Mbeukeboom	951 followers	Head Food & Nutrition Security, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, Development Cooperation, the Netherlands #minbuza #globalpublicgoods

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Brighton BN1 9RE

T +44 (0)1273 606261

F +44 (0)1273 621202

E ids@ids.ac.uk

www.ids.ac.uk

