POLICY BRIEF

Explaining Food Insecurity in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Role of Governance and Institutions

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Abstract

The burgeoning literature on global food (in)security suggests that sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is lagging the rest of the world despite a period of decline in the prevalence of severe undernourishment. Using panel data covering 34 countries in the region for the period 2000 to 2015, this study examined the correlates and causes of food insecurity in SSA with emphasis on the role of domestic food production, governance, and institutions. The report also provides evidence on the mediating role of governance by examining how the quality of governance and institutions influence the effectiveness of domestic food production on food insecurity in the region. The

paper uses an instrumental variable strategy. The findings suggest that domestic food production and improvements in governance quality, measured by economic freedom and government effectiveness, are fundamental drivers of food security in SSA. We also found that improving the quality of governance would enable countries to better translate domestic food production to reductions in the depth of food deficit and the prevalence of undernourishment. Nonetheless, in the absence of adequate domestic food production, governance reforms alone would be impotent in fostering food security in SSA. The paper further suggests that finding the right balance between State interventionism and market-oriented policy reforms is essential to promote food security among African countries.

Introduction

Alleviating food insecurity remains a key priority on the global development agenda, as reflected by the second United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) — "end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture by 2030". Globally, food insecurity in the form of hunger and malnutrition declined considerably between the early 2000s and 2010s; however, this trend has reversed over the past half-decade (Vos, 2015; FAO et al., 2020b). According to estimates from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), about 690 million people across the globe were undernourished in 2019 and 98% of hungry people lived in the developing world (FAO et al., 2020b). These numbers are expected to rise further because of the COVID-19 crisis, raising global concerns of a food security crisis, particularly in developing countries (Amare et al., 2020).

In Africa, chronic food insecurity is about four times higher than in other regions (FAO et al., 2019). The prevalence of severe and moderate undernourishment on the continent is about twice the global average, and more than double the levels recorded in Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. For instance, in 2019, the prevalence of severe undernourishment in the region was 21.3%, compared to 17.8 percent in South Asia (SA) and 9.6% in Latin America and the Caribbean (FAO et al., 2020b). Although the continent experienced a decline in the prevalence of undernourishment between 2000 and 2014, food insecurity has been on the rise in the region since 2015 (Figure 1). The recent global health pandemic could further worsen the situation. Furthermore, the number of undernourished people, which seemingly remained stagnant until 2011, has increased substantially in recent years. As shown in Figure 1, between 2011 and 2018, more than 50 million individuals joined the category of undernourished people on the continent.

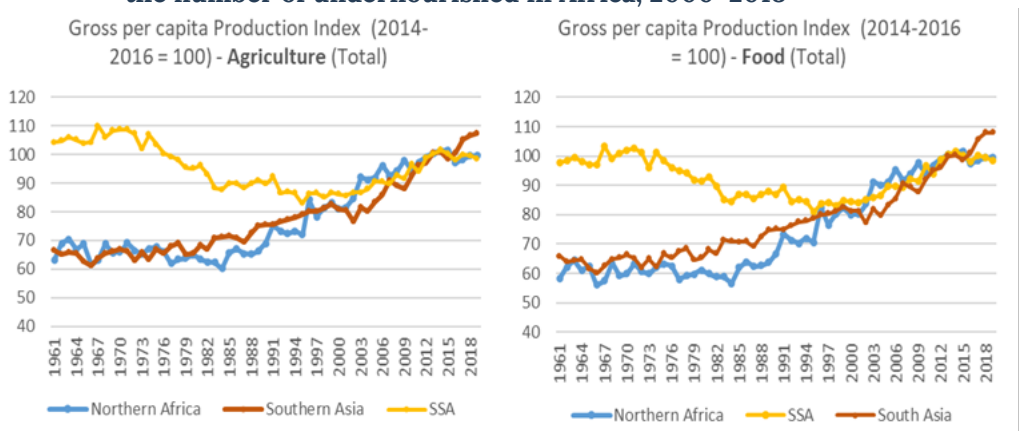
The average African performance on food security hides important heterogeneities across sub-regions (Table 1). In Northern Africa, about 9.3% of the population suffer from severe food insecurity as compared to 20.3% in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). More than half of the population in SSA suffer from moderate or severe food insecurity compared to 31.1% in Northern Africa. This evidence suggests that food insecurity is more predominant in SSA, and thus calls for a better understanding of the factors influencing the phenomenon in the region.

Table 1: Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity across regions/sub-regions, 2014–2018

Regions/sub-regions	Prevalence of severe food insecurity in the total population (%)					Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the total population (%)				
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
World	8.3	7.9	8.1	8.6	9.4	22.4	22.4	23.2	24.8	25.8
Africa	16.7	16.8	18.2	18.5	18.3	46.5	46.5	49.4	51.4	50.6
Northern Africa	10.2	9.0	10.4	11.0	9.3	29.7	26.4	30.0	36.8	31.1
Sub-Saharan Africa	18.2	18.6	20.0	20.2	20.3	50.3	51.2	53.9	54.8	55.1
Asia	8.0	7.5	7.1	7.6	9.1	19.4	18.9	18.9	20.6	22.6
Latin America and the Caribbean	7.1	6.4	8.1	9.3	9.2	22.9	25.1	29.4	32.0	31.6

Source: FAO et al. (2020a).

Figure 1: Trend in the prevalence of undernourishment (% of the population) and the number of undernourished in Africa, 2000–2018



Source: FAO et al. (2020a).

Notwithstanding several continental initiatives, including the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063, which aims at sustainable growth and poverty reduction, important barriers remain on the path to achieving food security in the region. Rakotoarisoa et al. (2011), for example, identify three main factors at play, namely: arable and agricultural land availability; low productivity and poor infrastructure; and poor quality of governance and institutions.

The first two factors allude to the existing constraints with regards to agriculture and food production. In fact, four out of the seven targets under the SDG 2 are related to raising sustainable agricultural production at the national level. Furthermore, another important characteristic of the food systems in developing countries, which is rarely mentioned in the literature, is ensuring that locally produced foods are efficiently and effectively translated into food security (FAO, 2019a). This situation explains the emphasis on limiting food waste and losses; and hence the SDG 12 target 12.3 calling on governments to halve per capita global food waste at the retail level and reduce food losses along production and supply chains by 2030. Post-harvest losses are particularly acute in SSA (FAO, 2019a), where a large share of the food produced does not find its way to the consumers due to inadequate storage technologies (on-farm and off-farm losses); underdeveloped food processing industries and markets; and infrastructural deficiencies limiting food distribution (Sheran and Barett, 2017). For example, in 2013 Cameroon lost 15.3% of the maize produced due to inadequate storage and transportation infrastructures, while Togo lost nearly 14% of this staple food in 2014 for the same reasons (FAO, 2019b). Hence, strengthening the supply chain is critical for food security in the region.

Poor governance and weak institutions have deteriorating effects on food security (Rodrik, 2000; Thorbecke, 2013). Many scholars and development agencies highlight the important role of conflicts, and weak economic governance and institutions, as contributing in various ways to the worsening food insecurity. The economic policies

implemented in the 1970s by many SSA countries are often blamed for the poor performance in income growth and agricultural production, which partly led to the economic and food crisis in the 1980s and subsequently to the structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) (Ndulu et al., 2008). These policies targeted import-substitution industrialization and included inefficient regulations and trade restrictions; excessive state controls over resource allocation, agricultural production, and marketing; and faulty macroeconomic management (Bates et al., 2013). Hence, the goal of the policy and institutional reforms implemented on the continent since the early 1990s was to boost productivity, growth and ultimately improve the well-being of the population (Heidhues and Obare, 2011; Fosu and Gafa, 2020).

Although many countries in SSA have implemented notable economic and institutional reforms, weak governance still plays a critical role in the lack of progress in achieving food security in the region (Sahley et al., 2005; Pereira and Ruysenaar, 2012). As observed by Zakout et al. (2006) and Rakotoarisoa et al. (2011), a large share of arable land remains unused and poorly maintained in SSA, partly due to the failure of land management policies, including land distribution, property rights and ownership problems. Tenure-related dispute and conflicts and unequal access to land in the agriculture sector are often due to the weak quality of land governance and poor institutions for land administration, corruption, lack of property rights enforcement and rule of law (Palmer et al., 2009). Moreover, the low and inadequate sectoral investment, and the poor state of market and transport infrastructure are also important aspects of governance affecting food production in Africa (Rakotoarisoa et al., 2011).

As emphasized by Boyd and Wang (2011), poor governance — in the form of weak institutional capacity, instability, and ineffective public policies — rather than natural conditions, is the primary driver of hunger and malnutrition, due to its potential deleterious effect on food production, supply, and distribution. Thus, governance is widely considered as both a "potential driver of, and a potential solution to, situations of food insecurity" (Candel, 2014: 591) in SSA.

Also important in the African context is the role of economic governance and institutions in shaping the extent to which domestic food production translates into food security. In fact, the quality of governance can strengthen or weaken the supply chain for local food producers who are mostly smallholders (Sheahan and Barrett, 2017; FAO, 2019a). For example, policies that provide a conducive business environment for private sector development would not only help to create and strengthen agricultural value chains, but also increase the profits of the food value chain actors and promote greater access to affordable locally produced food through agro-processing and marketing channels. Furthermore, the inadequate regulation of the food distribution system, poor infrastructure development policies and weak macroeconomic policies resulting in high inflation would likely limit both economic and physical access to food (Gazdar and Mallah, 2013).

On this basis, the overall aim of the study was to examine the correlates and causes of food insecurity in SSA with emphasis on the role of domestic food production, governance, and institutions. First, the study looked at the overall determinants of food insecurity, measured by the prevalence of undernourishment and the depth of food deficit. Thus, involved analysing the effect of domestic food production, the levels of economic freedom (measuring economic policies and governance) and its components — namely the size of government; legal systems and property rights; freedom to trade internationally; sound money and regulatory systems — as well as other institutional indicators (namely government effectiveness, control of corruption, voice and accountability, political stability and absence of violence and rule of law) on food insecurity. Second, the study assessed the effect of domestic food production on food insecurity contingent on these governance and institutional variables. Specifically, we hypothesized that improved governance and institutions would accentuate the "food insecurity-reducing" effect of domestic food production. Finally, the paper the results of an investigation into the role of food production as a channel through which governance and institutions affect food insecurity in SSA.

The determinants of food (in)security have been widely studied in the literature. In country-specific and micro-level research, the topics covered include the effect of technology adoption, employment, climate change adaptation and mitigation, social interventions and programmes, and income on food (in)security (Beyene and Muche, 2010; Sacks and Levi, 2010; Anik et al. 2013; Ngema et al., 2018; Sinyolo, 2020; Kansiime et al., 2021). In addition, a panoply of cross-country analyses exists on the subject. For example, Dithmer and Abdulai (2017) investigated the effects of trade openness on food security using a global sample of 151 countries. Bonuedi et al. (2020) examined the effects of trade openness and facilitation on food availability and access outcomes in the African context. Sassi (2015) conducted a cross-sectional analysis of the determinants of food insecurity in SSA within a non-parametric spatial analysis framework and, more recently, Ogunniyi et al. (2020) investigated the effects of remittances and governance quality on food and nutrition quality in the region, focusing on the role of governance as a moderator of the impacts of remittances on food security. In their analyses, these studies accounted for governance and institutions using the World Bank governance indicators, namely government effectiveness, rule of law, control of corruption, political stability and absence of violence, regulatory quality, and voice and accountability.

Despite the rich extant literature, this study contributes to empirical research in two ways. First, in addition to the World Bank governance indicators, the study considered additional aspects of governance capturing the extent of economic liberalization not explored by previous studies, but critical within the context of SSA. For example, global economic views on "good economic governance" have shifted from inward-looking (import-substitution) to outward-oriented economic policies (in line with the Washington Consensus). More recently, the emphasis moved to "finding the right

balance" between strict State interventionism and pure market economy (Fosu, 2013; Stiglitz, 2016). Many African countries have implemented notable market-oriented reforms over the last two decades in the areas of macroeconomic policies; business regulations; trade and financial liberalization; public administration; judicial system; and property rights enforcement. These important aspects of economic governance, however, are not well captured under indicators such as government effectiveness, control of corruption and rule of law, thus necessitating further investigation.

Economic freedom reflects key aspects of economic neoliberalism and the extent to which the business environment and government policies are market friendly (Gwartney et al., 2020). The economic freedom variable and its components (the size of government, legal system and property rights, sound money, freedom to trade internationally and regulation) are important for food security in SSA, as they are likely to shape the supply, the availability, and the distribution of food. Economic freedom has been identified in the literature as consequential for foreign direct investment, income growth and human development (Ghazalian and Amponsem, 2019).

Consequently, the inclusion of economic freedom (which captures the size of government, the nature of macroeconomic policies, trade liberalization policies and the legal systems) contributes to the debate on the impacts of neoliberal policies on food security in Africa. It also fills an important gap as empirical assessment of the issue has so far been absent from the literature. Furthermore, the study used two composite indexes, one capturing the quality governance and the other the quality of institutions, by grouping all the variables using the definitions of World Bank (1992) and North (1990). Thus, by considering a wide range of governance and institutional variables, the study unveils the extent to which different aspects of governance and institutions influence food insecurity in SSA, directly and indirectly through food production.

Second, this research provides important evidence on the mediating role of governance in the region's progress on food security by examining how the quality of governance and institutions influence the effectiveness of domestic food production on food insecurity. While it is widely acknowledged that governance shapes food distribution (via markets and infrastructural development) and affordability (income and prices), thereby easing physical and economic access to food, to the best of our knowledge no other study identifies how the quality of economic governance and institutions influences the extent to which domestic food production is translated into food security.

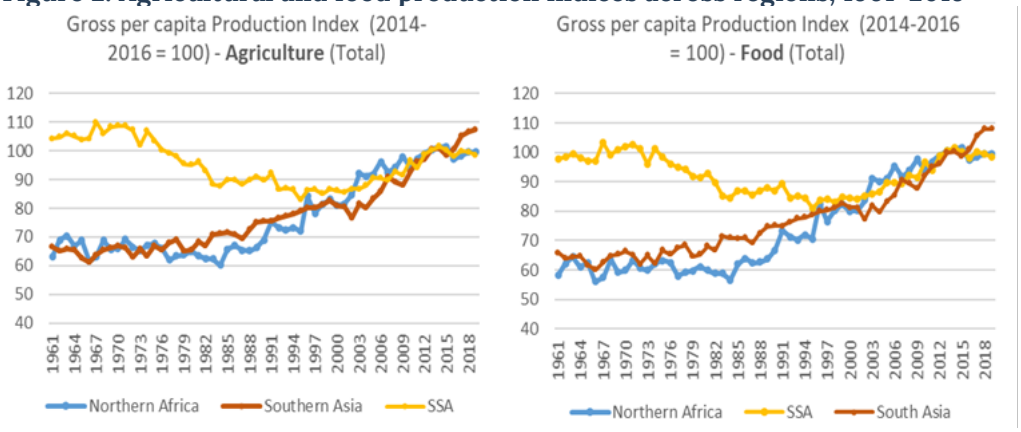
In fact, adequate food systems require good governance and institutions that ensure well-functioning market and appropriate marketing and distribution systems to: (a) minimize post-harvest losses; (b) improve income levels of value chain actors particularly farmers; and (c) enable poor households to have economic and physical

access to locally produced food through social programmes and interventions. In addition, investment in infrastructure development would likely improve access to domestically produced foods by reducing transaction delay and losses, facilitating national trade and access to markets (Miller et al., 2011; Tiwari et al., 2016). Furthermore, providing a conducive environment for private sector development and entrepreneurship in the agriculture sector is expected to reduce food insecurity by creating effective and efficient agriculture value chains for local farmers (Bonney et al., 2013), fostering the link between domestic food production and food security.

Some stylized facts

Agricultural and food production followed a downward trend in SSA between the early 1970s and the mid-1990s (Figure 2) coinciding with the period of high government interventions, widespread import-substitution policies, political instability, and poor growth performance in many African countries (Ndulu et al., 2008; Fosu and Gafa, 2020). This trend reversed from the mid-1990s to 2014 (Figure 2), when governance, agricultural productivity and economic growth generally improved in the region (Bates et al., 2013). Since 2015, however, agricultural and food production have been declining, interestingly consistent with the rise in the food insecurity noted in recent years (Figure 1 versus Figure 2). In contrast, South Asia has maintained a rising trend in production since the early 1980s. As emphasized by Chauvin et al. 2012, food insecurity challenges cannot be successfully addressed in SSA without the effective transformation of the agriculture sector.

Figure 2: Agricultural and food production indices across regions, 1961–2019

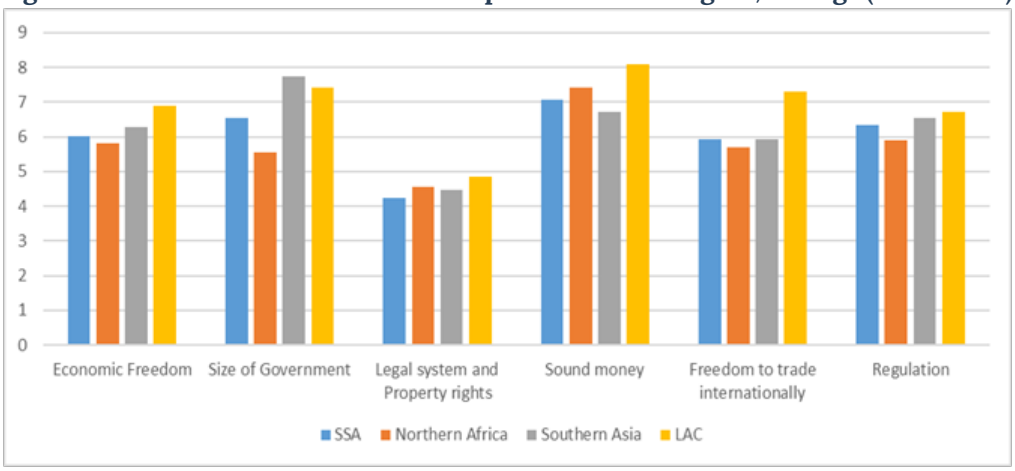


Data source: FAOSTAT (FAO, 2021).

Figure 3 reports the averages of the economic freedom index and its components. The economic freedom index is widely used as an indicator of neoliberal economic policies and economic governance, as it captures the extent to which economic policies and institutions favour free business environment, market competition,

openness, and property rights enforcement. Despite the notable economic and institutional reforms, the performance of SSA on the economic freedom index is lower than that of countries in Latin America and South Asia, mainly due to higher State interventions and weak judicial systems and property rights enforcement in the region (Figure 3). Furthermore, SSA performs worse than all the other regions on control of corruption, government effectiveness and rule of law, but enjoys greater political stability, and voice and accountability than Northern Africa (Figure 4).

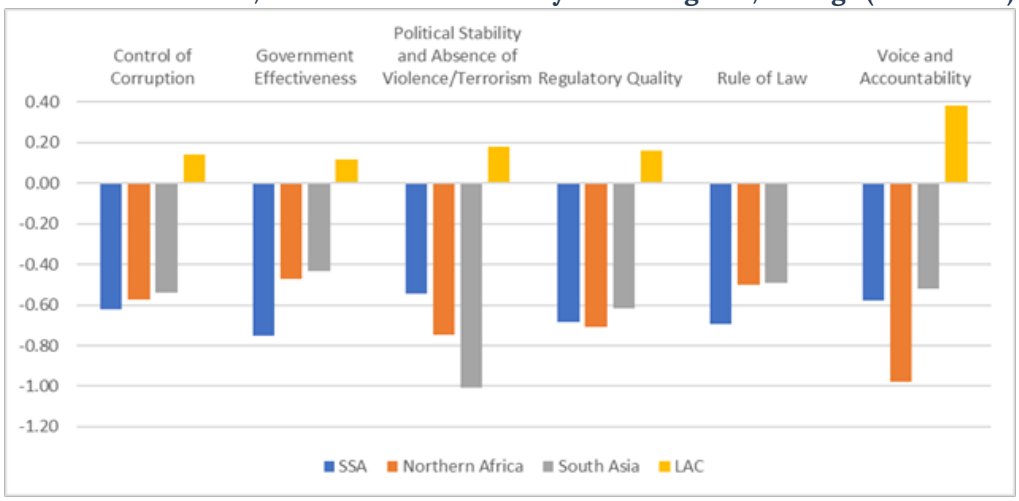
Figure 3: Economic freedom and its components across region, average (2000–2018)



Notes: Authors' computation. The data are obtained from the Fraser Institute and range from 1 to 10, with 1 representing the lowest performance and 10 the highest (Gwartney et al., 2020). For each region, the arithmetic mean is computed over the period 2000–2018.

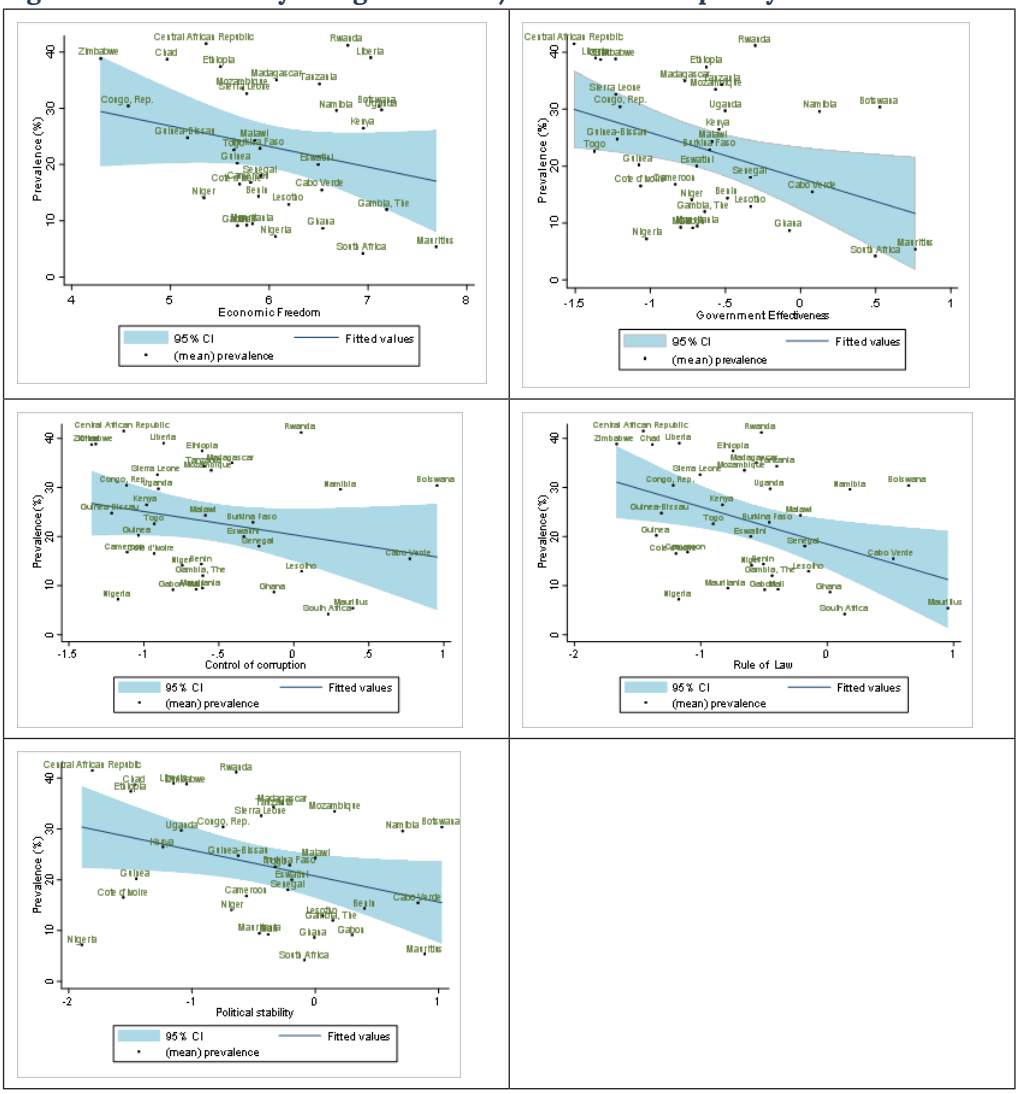
To elaborate more on the relationship between governance/institutional quality and food insecurity in SSA, Figure 5 shows the association between food insecurity, measured by the prevalence of undernourishment, and governance/institutional quality variables. Overall, there seems to be a negative association between the country averages of the prevalence of undernourishment and governance/institutional quality variables in SSA, suggesting that poor performers on governance and institutional quality tend to record high levels of food insecurity, on average. For example, Central African Republic (CAR), Zimbabwe, Chad and Liberia are among the lowest performers on economic freedom, government effectiveness, control of corruption and political stability, and exhibit low levels of food security. Meanwhile, Mauritius, South Africa and Ghana have low prevalence of undernourishment, and are among the best performers on governance and institutional quality variables. While this preliminary evidence suggests the existence of a negative association between food insecurity and governance and institutions, more rigorous empirical investigation is required to support this hypothesis.

Figure 4: World Bank governance indicators: Control of corruption, government effectiveness, political stability and absence of violence, regulatory quality, rule of law, voice and accountability across regions, average (2000–2019)



Notes: Authors' computation using data from World Governance Indicators database (World Bank, 2021). The indicators range from -2.5 to 2.5; zero (0) represents the world average. For each region, the arithmetic mean is computed over the period 2000–2019.

Figure 5: Food security and governance/ institutional quality variables



Notes: Authors' computation using data on the prevalence of undernourishment (% of total population), economic freedom index, government effectiveness, control of corruption, rule of law, and political stability and absence of violence. Data on prevalence of undernourishment is from the FAOSTAT database (FAO, 2020); that on economic freedom is obtained from Gwartney et al. (2020). The data on the rest of the variables are from the World Governance Indicators (World Bank, 2020a). The economic freedom index ranges from 1 to 10, with 1 representing the worst performance and 10 the best. Government effectiveness, control of corruption, rule of law and political stability and absence of violence range from -2.5 to 2.5, and the lowest value represents the worst performance on these indicators.

Conceptual framework

Figure 6 depicts the drivers of food security at the macro-level. This conceptual framework is adapted from Sassi (2015, 2018), and is related to the framework proposed by Thompson and Metz, 1996. As observed in Figure 6, the goal of a well-functioning food economy is to ensure adequate food availability and access to food. Then with adequate food utilization, food security is achieved.

Food availability (the supply of food on the domestic market) is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for food security. It is a combination of the food produced locally and food stocks, food imports and food aid. Domestic food production is a key factor in determining food supply. It is partly driven by household assets and the availability of farm inputs. According to the literature, a two-way relationship exists between domestic food production and food security. However, growing domestic production may lead to increases in food security by affecting both the supply and household access to food. This effect is direct when the farmer (household) consumes his/her own produce, and indirect mainly through reductions in prices and rising income (Johnston and Mellor, 1961; Diao et al., 2010). With respect to the reducing prices, the increase in food supply — relative to the demand for food — may lead to a fall in food prices, allowing the poor to have greater access to affordable food. Focusing on the rising income, a rise in food production causes an increase in the revenue that accrues to households, especially farm households. Improvements in nutrition and food security lead to increases in domestic food production, since meeting dietary needs (being food secure) has a positive effect on human capital and productivity, which in turn contributes to the growth of domestic food production (Knowles and Owen, 1995; Strauss and Thomas, 1998; Webber, 2002).

As apparent in Figure 6, both food availability and domestic food production are determined by various factors, such as trade, external assistance, external shocks, physical infrastructure, as well as governance and institutional quality. In extant literature, the effect of trade — or trade openness — on food access can be either positive or negative. The relationship between trade and food security can be traced to the discourses on trade liberalization and food sovereignty. First, following the arguments of “trade for food security” proponents, trade openness not only contributes to food security by increasing the availability of food on the domestic market through imports (food imports), but also promotes domestic food production (by enabling the imports of agricultural inputs) thereby improving availability and access to food by the poorer population (Dollar and Kraay, 2004; Chatterjee and Murphy, 2014). Furthermore, trade is perceived to enhance the quality of food supplied to individuals.

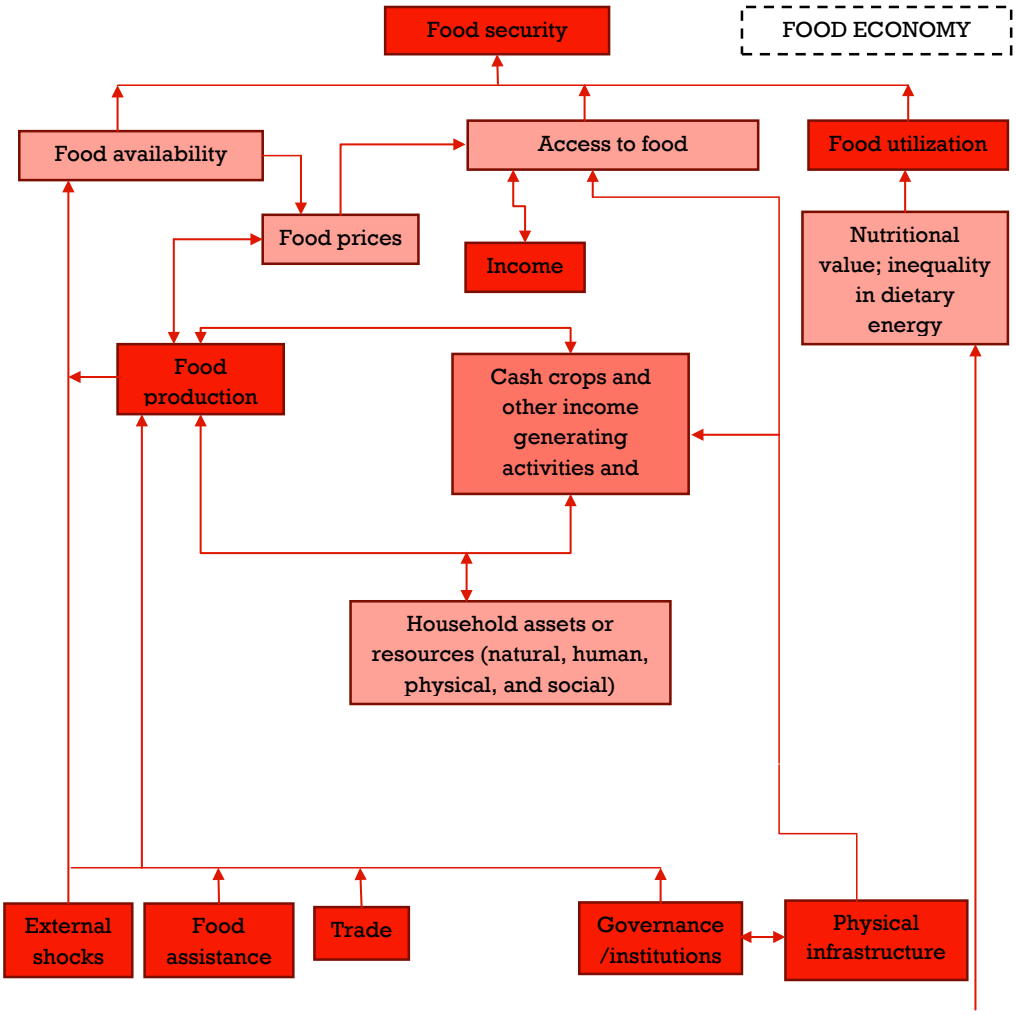
Second, focusing on the negative effect of trade on food security, many scholars posited that openness to trade may inhibit food security in two ways. Openness to trade may discourage the demand for locally produced food with negative consequences for household income — especially farm households — particularly in developing countries and in rural areas, where most people practise subsistence farming. However, countries that are over-dependent on the foreign market for domestic food supply tend to be more vulnerable to external shocks, especially to food price hikes on the global market.

Food aid is often a short-term intervention during famine to quell malnutrition and hunger among populations. Thus, while the effect of external assistance in the form of food aid on food availability may be direct and positive, it may also help improve productivity and thus, food production through its effect on human capital. Nevertheless, food aid may discourage the demand for locally produced food, by altering the taste and preferences of individuals. It therefore has a negative effect on domestic food production, food availability and access through the channels discussed earlier in this section.

Negative external shocks may lead to food insecurity. For example, a series of floods disrupt food availability and distribution leading to a rise in food prices with negative consequences for food access. Furthermore, food price hikes on the global market may create food shortages on the domestic market. The effects of external shocks on food security could be either positive or negative, depending on the nature of the shock. Positive shock — for example, good weather and a fall in oil prices — will enhance domestic food production (hence food availability) and access to food via reduction in food prices and income increases while negative shocks are likely to have an opposite effect.

Improvements in the quality of institutions are expected to raise the level food security by promoting greater food supply, and therefore food access, or by operating through domestic food production (Dreze and Sen, 1989; Timmer, 1992; Ninno and Dorosh, 2003). Similarly, good governance promotes domestic production and food security. The state of transport infrastructure, which may also be considered as an aspect of governance, is likely to affect the access to markets, delivery of food, prices as well as domestic food production.

Figure 6: Conceptual framework: Determinants of food security



Source: Authors, adapted from Sassi (2015, 2018).

Globally, periods of political instability and conflicts are associated with food insecurity and famine (Buhaug et al., 2015). First, instability or conflicts negatively affect food security. Food shortages are often due to the reduction in food production when farmers are forced to flee their homes, when access to inputs is prevented for security reasons or food distribution disrupted as the result of conflicts and wars. Furthermore, having lost their income generating activities due to war, most households have difficulty purchasing food, leading to malnutrition and severe food insecurity. Second, food insecurity creates tensions and conflicts within countries. Consequently, there is a bi-directional relation between political stability and conflicts, and food security. With respect to food utilization components, the nutritional intake of individuals in the households and the distribution of dietary energy consumption across individuals are important components of food security that can jeopardize productivity.

Conclusion

Reducing the incidence of hunger and malnutrition remain undoubtedly important in Africa, particularly if the continent is to achieve the SDGs by 2030 and the AU Agenda by 2063. Using data on 34 SSA countries, this study investigated the factors explaining food insecurity measured by two indicators, namely the depth of food deficit and the prevalence of undernourishment. The study focused on the role of domestic food production, governance (measured by economic freedom and government effectiveness) and institutions (measured by control of corruption, rule of law, voice, and accountability). It also investigated the role of governance and institutions in moderating the effect of domestic food production on food insecurity. Lastly, this paper provides some evidence on the role of domestic food production as a channel through which the quality of governance and institutions affect food insecurity in the region.

The study found that an increase in domestic food production and a more equal distribution of habitual calorie consumption are essential in promoting food security in SSA. It also confirmed the existence of a bi-directional relationship between food production and food security in SSA and observed a greater effect of food production on food security once endogeneity is accounted for. Furthermore, the results suggest that trade, transport infrastructure development, and external assistance play an important role in promoting food production, thereby indirectly influencing food insecurity in the region. Moreover, natural disasters such as floods, droughts etc., represent negative external shocks, which adversely affect food production.

The analysis of the effect of governance and institutional quality on food security showed important variations. Specifically, the results showed that improvements in governance would contribute to reductions in food insecurity. However, its effect was non-linear. Specifically, we found that in the absence of adequate domestic food production, improving governance, economic freedom and government effectiveness would be impotent in reducing the depth of food deficit and the prevalence of undernourishment. Furthermore, the results support the hypothesis that "good" governance would enable countries to better translate domestic food production into reductions in food insecurity. This finding is attributable to the potential role of governance in strengthening the food supply chain and improving the income of the various actors, including farmers. With respect to economic freedom, however, the study revealed that increasing food production would lead to increases in calorie shortfall and undernourishment under strict State interventionism. However, beyond a given threshold (of roughly 5, on average), countries would start experiencing a fall in food insecurity as domestic food production increases. Given that economic freedom had no significant effect on food production, the findings show the need for governments in SSA to find the *right balance* between strict State interventionism and pure market economy (Fosu, 2013; Stiglitz, 2016).

Additionally, the study showed that the positive (direct) effect of economic freedom on food security is mainly driven by the positive effect of a well-functioning judiciary system and property rights enforcement on food distribution, which are key for land administration and food distribution on the continent. In addition, the existence of minimum trade restrictions contributes both directly and indirectly to food security. Besides, government effectiveness in the provision of public services is crucial for productivity, and thus, for food production. However, rule of law appeared to have no significant influence on food insecurity, whereas the control of corruption is greatly beneficial to productivity and food production, with positive consequences on food security in the region.

As revealed by the results, achieving food security would require, among other things, a greater investment in transport infrastructure and adaptation strategies to mitigate the impact of natural disasters on the production of food. Additionally, food aid remains an important solution for food security in times of crisis because it is "productivity-enhancing" within food insecure localities in SSA, and hence would likely promote food production in the region. Furthermore, corruption remains a hindering factor in the food production sector. Aside from addressing the corruption issues affecting the agriculture sector, government should also continue to improve the effectiveness of public services delivery, as the study found that the variable is important in supporting domestic food production in SSA. On whether trade is good or bad for food security on the continent, the findings are in favour of the hypothesis that trade has been beneficial to food production on the continent. However, the effects of trade openness policies have been mixed. Our results seem to suggest that while minimizing trade restrictions would help alleviate food insecurity, presumably, through decreases in food prices, it could also reduce hamper food production. Finally, promoting a business-friendly environment by improving the judiciary system and property rights enforcement and ensuring adequate regulatory appear to be important in addressing hunger and malnutrition in SSA.

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Mission

To strengthen local capacity for conducting independent,
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The mission rests on two basic premises: that development is more likely to occur where there is sustained sound management of the economy, and that such management is more likely to happen where there is an active, well-informed group of locally based professional economists to conduct policy-relevant research.

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