Spring 2018

Feeding the People

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Feeding the People:
UNICEF, the Peruvian government, and the fight to reduce undernutrition in Peru

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Undergraduate Honors Thesis
Submitted to the Department of International Affairs
University of Colorado at Boulder

April 5, 2018

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Abstract

Chronic child undernutrition is a concerning health development issue plaguing many countries around the world. In Peru, the fight to reduce child undernutrition has gained international attention due to the involvement of many actors, programs, and policies that have been developed. Many efforts dropped the national rate of undernutrition, which fell from 29.5% in 2004 to 13.1% in 2016 (ENDES, 2016). However, continuous regional disparities in the Andean and Amazonian regions and the rising problem of anemia have stunted further progress to address undernutrition for all children in Peru—not just those living on the coast. This thesis aims to analyze the actors involved such as the Peruvian government, UNICEF, and social programs and the current coordination between actors. In doing so, I aim to fill the gaps within the current research on undernutrition by explaining coordination efforts and problems, differences in programs, and identify the missing links in the system today. Presidents and civil society have played a key role in agenda setting and program and policy creation, especially since 2000. Although program creation and promotion has been on the rise the last two decades, coordination efforts and the lack of responsibility by the government have left the citizens of Peru unsatisfied. This thesis demonstrates the importance of inter-agency cooperation, transparency, and the need for greater accountability as methods to aid policy creation and agenda-setting to combat chronic child undernutrition in Peru.

Key words: undernutrition, Peru, UNICEF, government, civil society, IGOs, NGOs, policy, coordination.
Acknowledgments

To my family, especially my parents. I am so incredibly thankful for your constant support, love and guidance throughout this project and my college career. Your love of education is truly inspiring.

To all of the people I worked with in Peru, thank you for your time, dedication, and assistance with understanding the Peruvian case of undernutrition.

To Luz, my host mom, thank you for sharing your experiences and home with me. I wouldn’t have completed this project without you.

To Douglas Snyder for being the “bad cop” when I needed it, and for all of your grammatical editing. You made this project fun and taught me so much along the way. Thank you for everything.

To my faithful friends, I ranted for hours and wanted to show you everything. Thank you for your patience and all the questions that guided me.

To my committee, thank you for pushing me to be better and believing in this thesis. You inspire me every day to be a better researcher and person.

Finally, thank you to Andrew. Your constant love and support helped me tremendously. Thank you for reading drafts, listening to my presentation, and for being you. Thank you for supporting my dream to study abroad and dream to write a thesis. You are my inspiration.
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## Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Title</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CDI</td>
<td>Child Development Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMI</td>
<td>Child Malnutrition Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRECER</td>
<td>National Strategy for Poverty Reduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIRESA</td>
<td>Regional Health Institute of Cusco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENDES</td>
<td>National Survey of Nutrition and Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENSA</td>
<td>National Strategy for Food Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GORE</td>
<td>Regional Social Development Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IGO</td>
<td>Inter-Governmental Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INEI</td>
<td>National Institute of Statistics and Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRB</td>
<td>Internal Review Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCLCP</td>
<td>Roundtable for Poverty Reduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIDIS</td>
<td>Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUNI</td>
<td>&quot;Improvement of nutrition and preventive health in children under 5 years of the north-east zone of the district of Cusco&quot; Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUN</td>
<td>Scaling-Up Nutrition Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VdL</td>
<td>Vaso de Leche</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>Water, Sanitation and Hygiene program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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</table>
Introduction

A child sits in a classroom, with his mind drifting from what his teacher is saying about the history of Peru or his basic math questions. Where does his mind drift? Is he playing soccer during recess or imagining an upcoming playdate with his cousins? No. Instead, his mind fills with concern over the sound of his growling stomach drawing attention and to his feelings of desperation, as he wonders if there will be enough dinner for his whole family that evening. Children should be laughing, learning, and playing, but in Peru a great number of children are thinking about their food insecurities. How can children study and grow when they are forced to worry about something as basic as food? Children that do not have enough food learn, play, and grow in different ways than their food-secure counterparts. In Peru, children face the fear of not receiving enough food or seeing the tears in the corner of their mother’s eye from the few papas and arroz on the table that will not feed everyone. Chronic child undernutrition affects many children and families in Peru, especially in the rural and poor regions of the Andes and Amazon, and something needs to be done so children do not continue to live in fear over access to a basic resource and necessity such as food.

Chronic child undernutrition is a serious development issue that causes lifelong physical, emotional, and mental hardships if left untreated. For this research, I will use the World Health Organization’s (WHO) definition of undernutrition as it is used by most international agencies and the Peruvian government. It states: “undernutrition… includes stunting (low height for age), wasting (low weight for height), underweight (low weight for age) and micronutrient deficiencies or insufficiencies (a lack of important vitamins and minerals) (WHO, 2016). Chronic child undernutrition in Peru focuses on children under the age of five suffering from one or more of the abovementioned problems. Although the national rate of undernutrition rate has
fallen from nearly 30 percent in 2004 to 13.1 percent in 2016 in Peru (ENDES, 2016), dramatic regional disparities remain in the Andean and Amazonian districts. The United Nations (UN) and other development agencies have praised Peru as a successful case in undernutrition due to the substantial decline in national and coastal rates of undernutrition yet have ignored the remaining high rates in rural and impoverished areas like the Andes and Amazon. The case of Peru illustrates the distinct dichotomy of decreasing rates of undernutrition and international attention and the hidden regional disparities hidden from view of the international eye.

Peru continues to struggle on its nutrition journey. The influence of social programs and international organizations has shown results; the rate of undernutrition remains, however, higher than international averages. The United Nations Children's Fund, or UNICEF, is a key intergovernmental organization (IGO) operating in many developing countries around the world and the most prominent one working within Peru. UNICEF’s commitment to children and reducing undernutrition illustrates its importance to the country’s goals and this research.

Chronic child undernutrition is but one of the many development issues facing Peru. The challenges facing the country reach beyond undernutrition and include political and economic problems as well. Even so, with the influence of UNICEF, the government of Peru has renewed its commitment to reducing undernutrition through the creation of national strategies, social programs, and convening arenas for discussion. To best address the problem, serious gaps in the coordination of policies, social program coverage, and funding transparency, must be resolved. Even with the argument I present, there is a great need for more general consideration of the people most affected by chronic child undernutrition and civil society that exists outside the government officials. The case of Peru is convoluted with many actors, but these actors have not made much consideration to the people and communities of the country.
Background

Chronic child undernutrition can be convoluted and easily misunderstood since it is a multidimensional problem. With the various actors involved, regional differences, social programs, IGOs and NGOs in the country, Peru’s case of undernutrition is not easy to grasp and comprehend. Chronic child undernutrition is a problem that has both direct and indirect causes. With direct or indirect causes comes a different set of needs, programs, and policies. For example, the indirect cause of inadequate water and sanitation needs a different system of approach in comparison to a system that combats a lack of education or difference of cultural practices. All of these aspects combine to create a substantial and detrimental challenge through which serious health problems, challenges for the government, communities, parents, and most importantly, affected children arises.

Current research surrounding this situation in Peru shows that the significant decreases in undernutrition stem from actions taken by the Peruvian government, specifically the presidents, as well as IGOs, NGOs, social programs, civil society, and institutions within Peru. Although there are many hands working on this issue, the results seen are not only promising for the case in Peru, but for the international system as well. There has been significant research regarding Peru's undernutrition history, the regional disparities, and the various social programs that operate in-country as well as community involvement in social programs, IGOs/NGOs, policies, and child development in relation to undernutrition and the lack of access to resources. However, there are gaps in the current literature and situation that my research will address and explain. The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) plays a fundamental role, but studies have not completely connected it to the government nor have they explored how both entities work together and coordinate to combat undernutrition. I will expand on the literature, my
contributions, and my challenges later in my Literature Review. For now, it is important to break down the moving parts of this research and the situation in Peru.

*Undernutrition in General*

Chronic child undernutrition can affect a person from before birth through adulthood. Undernutrition is a serious development issue that can not only stunt growth, but cause premature deaths in infants and children, especially in situations of extreme poverty. In the early 2000s in Peru, child mortality for children under the age of five was at 39.8 deaths per 1000 live births. By 2013, this rate fell by 58% to be only 16.7 deaths per 1000 live births (Huicho et al. 2016, E414). Beyond mortality concerns, there can be severe consequences felt by those living with undernutrition problems. Figure one (below) illustrates how widespread and systematic the effects of undernutrition can be on the human body. Chronic child undernutrition is especially dangerous during child and adolescent periods of growth as they see the most significant development for the mind and body. From immune problems to lifelong psychological challenges, undernutrition often affects many for their entire lives, as is the case in Peru.

Undernutrition, as shown in figure one, is a multidimensional problem that can affect many...
different parts of the body. Therefore, it is insufficient to combat it with the current, one-dimensional programs.

*Undernutrition in Peru*

Chronic child undernutrition is not a new issue. It has affected millions of people around the world for centuries. Yet, it has only been in the last few decades that developing country governments and international actors combat undernutrition as a development indicator and the reduction of undernutrition as a lofty, but important goal. In Peru, chronic child undernutrition is measured by child stunting, which is a low weight for age and/or a low height for age but can also include mental and emotional development indicators as well. As stated by researchers from the University of Michigan: Aguiar, Rosenfeld, Stevens, Thanasombat, and Masud, direct causes of undernutrition are the substantial, tangible aspects such as food insecurity and poverty. The deeper, harder to identify issues of indirect causes include access to resources, education systems, transportation opportunities, weak government, cultural practices, and a lack of clean water and sanitation systems (Aguiar et al., 2007, 1). By looking at all of the above, governments and international actors can work to create policies and programs to combat undernutrition, as is the case in Peru and with UNICEF, one of the longest running international IGOs working in Peru, since 1948. Although Peru has seen dramatic decreases in undernutrition since the 1980s, undernutrition levels are still extremely high and there are concentrated regional disparities (Map 1, page 62). Furthermore, secondary problems, such as the case with anemia, “a condition in which the number of red blood cells or their oxygen-carrying capacity is insufficient to meet physiologic needs” (WHO, 2018) is currently on the rise in Peru due to the lack of sufficient nutrients such as Iron and Vitamin A and the high elevations in which people live. Chronic child undernutrition is a serious issue that deserves attention and efforts by all actors,
not just the few that are closest to the issue.

Peruvian Government and Social Programs

Peru has its own history concerning undernutrition that has been developing over decades. With the national rate decreasing since 2000, Peru’s nutrition journey seems to be on a successful path. However, rates of undernutrition remain near 34% in impoverished and rural areas especially in the Andes and Amazon (ENDES, 2016). The Peruvian government has made steps to reduce undernutrition, and one of the most notable is its creation of the country’s social programs. Based on subsidies or well-being checks, social programs are a part of the government and were created to meet specific needs of groups or sections of the population. JUNTOS, a conditional monetary aid program, Vaso de Leche, a food aid transfer program, and Cuna Más, wellness and childcare program, all work directly with undernutrition and suffering communities, but not every community has a social program while others have all three. Social programs are not the only thing needed to reduce undernutrition. Peru and its government have pushed for better, more sustainable policies, but a history of corrupt leadership and presidential turnover has reduced the positive impact on undernutrition rates and highlighted the negative. In recent years, corruption has been rampant in Peru, and social programs were the main source of positive results in terms of undernutrition. An overall lack of governmental coordination, policy adaptations, and cooperation between the national, regional, and local governments as well as institutions has created more challenges within the fight to reduce undernutrition in Peru. In addition, the government and social programs work closely with communities and the greater civil society, but do not collect opinions regarding undernutrition from the people themselves.

United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)

In 1948, the United Nations Children’s Fund, UNICEF, which was created in 1946,
began its work on various development issues in Peru. UNICEF works on many development and rights-oriented projects to improve education, health, sanitation, nutrition, and protection for people in difficult situations. It maintained its presence with the help of representatives to further the interests of UNICEF and the UN within the government and country. The hiring of locals and implementation of nutrition, water, and education-based programs were added benefits of its presence in Peru. UNICEF is an important IGO in Peru because it has identified concrete goals and outcome indicators for itself as a better way to analyze results seen in-country as outlined in the *Situation of Children* (2008) and *Economic and Social Council* (2017). In addition to goals, UNICEF created a conceptual framework to better understand undernutrition, its causes, and the system surrounding it (see figure 1, page 41). Although the Peruvian government has made major steps to reduce undernutrition, the work done by UNICEF has proven to be important and sustainable, due to their long history in Peru. Each president and UNICEF representative brings in their own expertise, ideas, funding sources, and programs. With these contributions, a more sustainable and diversified response may exist to combat undernutrition and its associated problems.

Although the government and UNICEF have made strides in reducing chronic child undernutrition and its underlying causes, there remain problems within coordination and missing links in transparency and efficient program coverage. This is seen with regional disparities and funding problems addressed by the interviewees. The purpose of this research is to address the mentioned problems, identify the missing links, and to fill in the gaps left behind by prior research in terms of undernutrition policy, the Peruvian government, and UNICEF.
Chapter 1: Framework for Analysis

Research Questions

With research and analysis, I intend to answer the following question: How have UNICEF and the Peruvian national government coordinated in order to fight chronic child undernutrition in the various regions of Peru? This question not only delves into a particularly interesting government in the developing world and prominent inter-governmental organization but also a severe development problem in the world. In order to guide research, I have developed three sets of follow-up questions.

1. How do both UNICEF and the government operate within Peru on chronic child undernutrition and what are UNICEF’s relations with the Peruvian government? How do these actors differ from one another in their recognition and approach to chronic child undernutrition?

2. How do programs offered by the government, IGOs, and NGOs differ from one another? Does this have a visible impact on undernutrition rates?

3. How do election and international funding cycles/timelines affect the reduction of chronic child undernutrition in Peru?
Literature Review

Undernutrition as a topic includes many actors, programs, and policies. In the case of Peru, undernutrition has seen minimal results until recent years, when it has decreased dramatically over the last two decades. With the Peruvian government, civil society, institutions, and international organizations operating within the country, the amount of literature written has increased tenfold since interest was renewed in the early 2000s. This progress was seen with the change of administration away from Alberto Fujimori and the influence of prominent IGOs and NGOs in the country. With more articles and research operations happening in Peru, more information about this topic has become available to people and institutions that are outside of the government, IGOs, and NGO officials. However, we must first step back from region-specific literature to cast a wider net on undernutrition as a global issue. There has been notable research from academic disciplines and IGOs/NGOs that have tapped into the broader questions of childhood undernutrition, political commitments and policy, and geographic and agricultural implications for undernutrition.

Notable Research

Due to the broad nature of undernutrition, policy, and IGOs/NGOs, there is a wide range of data collection methods, research analyses, and conclusions. The various themes presented by the following pieces of literature are broad and all-encompassing but will help my country-specific research to bridge the gap of understanding undernutrition around the world. With themes of undernutrition, sustainability issues of programs and food security, humanitarian aid and the benefits of coordination, and the need to make undernutrition a top development priority, this body of research defines undernutrition, the struggles seen, and goals we all should have.
From David E. Sahn at Oxford, *The Fight Against Hunger and Malnutrition: The Role of Food, Agriculture, and Targeted Policies* has a chapter, “Ending Hunger and Undernutrition by 2025” that outlines the UN goal of ending world hunger through their various Millennium Development Goals or the new, Sustainable Development Goals. It does not present the rates of undernutrition like most sources, but rather how each region uses specific indicators and measurements to calculate undernutrition. For example, undernutrition in Peru is measured by stunting whereas other regions use wasting or micronutrient deficiencies as the main measurement of undernutrition. Sahn states these indicators should be shared, utilized, and “collected collaboratively by international organizations and national and regional governments” (Sahn, 2015, 23). To make undernutrition a serious development goal, there must be multi-actor and multi-sector approaches. Sahn’s concluding remarks state how important undernutrition eradication is to development goals and ideas, but also economics, politics, and society in general. Although his book is a worthwhile source, it leaves gaps in funding, the importance of leadership, and program information. I intend to fill in some of these missing links through the Peru case-study.

Economic improvement is often a policy-agenda item for governments, IGOs/NGOs, and society. *Poor Economics* (2012) uses economics to describe the situation of poverty in the developing world, and the possibilities to reverse the situation. Stated by authors Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo, the West is mostly moved into humanitarian action by hunger, especially post-disaster or when images of undernourished children appear on television. Although their argument lies in the economic field with ideas like productivity, Banerjee and Duflo make a critical point that our world will not eradicate hunger in one easy step, but when it will “join hands with millions of well-intentioned people across the world – elected officials, and
bureaucrats, teachers and NGO workers, academics and entrepreneurs – in the quest for many ideas” (Banerjee and Duflo, 2012, 273). Their perspective is realistic and economic, which is a very different way of thinking when looking at undernutrition since we usually look at undernutrition as a simple food issue and not the complex problem it really is.

Humanitarian aid is the main approach to ending world issues like undernutrition and poverty. Yet, with so many NGOs and IGOs working around the world, how do we know which approach is the most successful? Thomas G. Weiss, an expert scholar on the United Nations and humanitarian aid, discusses how humanitarianism has become business oriented through the need to incorporate economic factors into its realm in his book, *Humanitarian Business*. A key point of Weiss’ chapter “Coordination vs. Competition in Unregulated Markets” is that through coordination efforts, bands of NGOs and IGOs are making real contributions, but the individual organizations are more market-oriented than in previous decades. Market-oriented organizations can threaten their humanitarian focus as too much emphasis on economics and money can blind organizations in their missions. With coordination being a tenant of humanitarianism now, it is no wonder IGOs and NGOs have created “federations” as Weiss describes these, but these are minimal guidelines and unregulated at best. This approach to understanding IGOs and NGOs is useful in understanding UNICEF in Peru, how and why coordination is beneficial, and the further need for regulation and transparency in humanitarian work.

**Region-Specific Research**

The following topics are part of the region-specific look at undernutrition in Peru. These topics align with my research questions and discussion chapters later on.
**Topic One: The Peruvian Government, Social Programs, and Undernutrition in Peru**

The government of Peru, their social programs, and the situation of undernutrition has seen improvements over the last two decades. Andrés Mejía Acosta’s article “Analyzing Success in the Fight Against Malnutrition in Peru” (2011) discusses the whole situation of undernutrition and policy in Peru. Acosta is a key researcher with CARE Peru, an international organization dedicated to reducing poverty around the world. By thoroughly examining historical trends in the reduction of undernutrition and increasing accountability by the government, Acosta argues that undernutrition in Peru must remain a key agenda issue and the needed coordination efforts of government and institutions have merit. Acosta argues that Peru continues to face many challenges socially, politically, and economically in terms of undernutrition and policy, but major developments have been made through greater accountability and government intervention.

Two leading researchers from the International Food Policy Research Institute, Sivan Yosef and Jay Goulden, wrote their article “Commitments and Accountability, Peru’s Unique Nutrition Journey” explain in their article how economics and non-economic factors are reducing undernutrition and where policy solutions can be changed or added to better solve the problem of poverty and undernutrition in Peru. Yosef and Goulden look specifically at how the government’s role in implementation and funding of the country’s various social programs has aided in the reduction of undernutrition. Their conclusions draw on the need to collect data on a subnational level and “coordinate policy interventions and approaches” (Yosef and Goulden, 2016, 131). However, there are still many problems facing Peru in coordination efforts at the regional and municipal levels of government.
“An Analysis of Malnutrition Programming and Policies in Peru”, written in 2011 by researchers with the University of Michigan and the International Economic Development Program, gives an in-depth look at undernutrition in Peru, its causes, the government’s reactions, and how policies can and should be improved. An in-depth analysis of key social programs and government intervention strategies leads to a comprehensive discussion of policy recommendations and changes that could be made to improve the situation in Peru. Social programs are a key aspect of Peru’s undernutrition journey, but the authors state the problem of undernutrition needs to go beyond “improving nutrition [to] improving overall access to education, supporting balanced economic growth, awareness of environmental impact and damage, building markets for Peruvian cash crops abroad, and overall healthcare access… Support of positive development for Peru can lead to better nutrition and overall improvement of health outcomes” (Aguiar et al., 2011, 57-58).

**Topic Two: UNICEF and NGOs**

In 2014, Richard Jolly a former Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF in the 1990s wrote the book *UNICEF: Global Governance that Works* as a way to synthesize the work of UNICEF and its potential for the future. Chapter Five, titled “Nutrition, WASH, Education, and Children” of Jolly’s book delves into how UNICEF has worked on issues of child rights and undernutrition, prominent programs implemented by UNICEF, education systems, and coordination with national governments. UNICEF’s conceptual framework for the causes of undernutrition is a valuable resource shared with government officials and program managers. Jolly’s chapter on nutrition specifically states, “UNICEF has made major contributions to nutrition, WASH, and education, nationally and internationally” (Jolly, 2014, 108). For my research, Jolly’s chapter on undernutrition was the most useful, as it broke down how UNICEF
tackles undernutrition and education in developing countries through coordination and successful program implementation.

Written in 2012 by Stuart Gillespie, Lawrence Haddad, Wenkatesh Mannar, Purnima Menon, and Nicholas Nisbet, “The Politics of Reducing Malnutrition: Building Commitment and Accelerating Progress” discusses the situation of undernutrition in the world and how international organizations have left a lasting impact on those most affected by undernutrition through examples of NGOs and programs in different regions of the world. This joint research team from the Institute of Development Studies and International Food Policy Research Institute give a detailed analysis of the international problem of undernutrition, child stunting, and continuous poverty, with emphasis on the role of actors. With ever-changing discourse and increased level of commitment by heads-of-state and national governments, Gillespie et al. outline how IGOs and NGOs have led the cavalry in fighting undernutrition rhetoric and program creation efforts.

The “Economic and Social Council” brief from UNICEF (2017) is the official plan between UNICEF and Peru for the years 2017-2021. This document presented to the UNICEF Executive Board not only directly states the amount of funding given to Peru and their UNICEF programs, but also their direct targets for undernutrition, child rights, education, and other issues related to child health and well-being. This document shows which government institutions are being held accountable for specific goals and programs, the indicators (height, weight, etc.) used for measuring such goals, and the funding that is contributed to these goals. Based solely on UNICEF and the Peruvian government, this document gives an organized and comprehensive look into the interworkings and cooperation between UNICEF and the Peruvian government on all levels of programming and cooperation.
**Topic Three: Coordination between the Peruvian Government and UNICEF**

The “Situation of Children in Peru” brief presented by UNICEF and the National Institute of Statistics and Information, INEI, in Peru (2008) explains the situation of children in Peru regarding different development indicators. This country-specific document discusses “health and nutrition, learning and education, and environment and the protection of rights” (Situation of Children, 2008, 1). Regional disparities and age group disparities become evident by the differences in the rates of poverty, undernutrition, education, etc. For example, the child development index, CDI, shows the weakest CDI number in the region of Huancavelica in the Andes at 0.42 and the strongest CDI is Callao at 0.85, a coastal region (see map 1). Regional disparities have become a key indicator of social program and NGO program coverage.

The previously mentioned article, “Economic and Social Council” (2017), discusses the fundamental goals of both entities along with the necessary institutions, funding, and development indicator measurements. I believe this document to be crucial for seeing where coordination lies between UNICEF and the Peruvian government, and where further problems still exist today. Since this document is the plan for 2017-2021, it shows the continued promise of cooperation, institutional coordination on specific goals, and the future placement of undernutrition as a leading political agenda item.

Written in 2012 by nutrition researchers Andrés Mejía Acosta and Lawrence Haddad for the Institute of Development Studies, “The Politics of Success in the Fight Against Malnutrition in Peru” uniquely discusses the current situation of undernutrition in Peru in comparison to the world in terms of successful program implementation and commitments made by political leaders. By looking directly at the coordination between the government, social programs, IGOs, and NGOs in immediate and underlying interventions, Acosta and Haddad conclude by showing
how stunting and child undernutrition decreases when all actors are working together rather than apart. According to most articles and researchers in undernutrition, coordination and cooperation between governments, IGOs, and NGOs are imperative of greater accountability and changes in undernutrition and other areas of development challenges.

**Challenges of Research**

Although chronic child undernutrition is a relevant, worrisome subject, the research about governmental and nongovernmental organization coordination is limited in scope and accessibility. In addition, research in Latin American countries can be tricky, due to language and cultural differences. Access to original government documents are often hard to find online and will sometimes disappear or have link changes without warning. With many different organizations and government levels working on undernutrition, the situation can become hazy and confusing in terms of who is doing what and when, and what funding is going where. A key challenge to overcome is to differentiate between the Peruvian government, social programs, and UNICEF, which is often left to interpretation in research articles. Research is often dated, and census data is behind a few years, with the most recent information posted on the INEI website in 2016.

**Contributions of Research**

Although researchers and articles discuss UNICEF and the Peruvian government, there is little information to be found about their combined coordination efforts. I intend to bridge the gap between these two entities and create a better understanding of their relationship. In addition, I believe it to be pertinent to understand all three governance pieces: government, UNICEF, and social programs, and how each one plays a role in the continued reduction of chronic child undernutrition in Peru. In this project, I aim to create a case study of a more important global
development challenge. When we understand chronic child undernutrition in Peru and UNICEF’s role, we can better know how a major world organization makes progress on the local level of societies. I intend to find how and in what ways UNICEF directly aids people in need, how measurable this impact is over the long-run, and what relationships are being nurtured with government programs and institutions. Viewing this as a case study allows for the creation of a generalizable method for analysis. This could benefit regional governments of Latin America, UNICEF, and international organizations, and expose different areas for future research.

**Methodology**

*Hypotheses regarding outcomes of research*

Through a close reading and analysis of current literature, trends, and organization websites, I have formulated four hypotheses. These hypotheses evolved many times over the course of this research, as did the research questions. I believe the following hypotheses solidify the intentions of this project and justification of said research. They act as a guide for my research questions, investigations, and overall conclusions of my research.

1. The combined efforts of UNICEF and Peruvian government have reduced chronic child undernutrition within the various regions of Peru. This includes cooperation and coordination in policymaking efforts.

2. It has been beneficial to have social programs and international actors working within the country of Peru and its various communities due to their unique sets of resources and relations with other actors (government, international organizations, etc.).

3. Key presidential election years and policy promises have led to dramatic decreases in undernutrition in the following two years of the presidency.

4. Funding from international organizations has led to dramatic decreases in undernutrition
within Peru. It is, however, hard to find information that tracks where the funding is directly going.

Thinking about how these hypotheses could affect research and its outcomes, I believe these not only delve into the politics of undernutrition and interworkings of coordination efforts but also the other external forces that influence the rate of undernutrition in Peru. The results that come from this research could help Peruvians, UNICEF workers, and government officials better tailor policies and programs to fit the needs of the population and fill in the gaps currently being seen in research. Although this research only touches on sustainability issues, I believe the in-depth look at coordination between a government and UNICEF can help create better policies that are in turn more sustainable. Since most literature is more policy description rather than analysis of effectiveness, the findings of this research can lead to new or more well-versed forms of intervention, both for policymakers and UNICEF or even other NGOs working within Peru.

For the purpose of this research, I used a qualitative approach with some data regarding undernutrition rates, election timelines and funding cycles. I have identified one dependent variable, which is chronic child undernutrition, as well as five independent variables; UNICEF, the Peruvian government, social programs, election timelines, and funding cycles. Each variable has a large impact on my research and the data I collected. The selected sources below, although slightly dated, helped me better understand the situation, outline my project and help guide my research. I also used the following sources as data points due to their collection of information and the measurements of undernutrition. I believe using both data on the rates of undernutrition, funding, and presidential elections and campaign promises will give me a more well-rounded approach. I chose the following sources were selected due to their basis on undernutrition in
Peru, their emphasis on education or policy analysis, and any influence given to international actors.

The first source, “An Analysis of Malnutrition Programming and Policies in Peru” (Aguiar et al., 2007), has been chosen due to undernutrition and policy analysis offered within the article itself. Also discusses underlying causes of undernutrition that both the Peruvian government and international actors look at when formulating policies and programs. Although this case study is older, it does offer a different perspective beyond the basic knowledge of programs and policies and gives an analysis of each as well as recommendations. Secondly, the “Situation of Children in Peru” (UNICEF, 2008), although also ten years old, delves into child undernutrition in Peru on various levels (regional, age categories, etc.) while explaining the different well-being indicators analyzed by UNICEF itself. Not only does it use statistics for each age group of children from infancy to adulthood, it also breaks down the regional disparities seen throughout Peru and the importance of noting these indicators. Finally, “Analyzing Success in the Fight against Malnutrition in Peru” (Acosta, 2011), which was written by Andrés Mejia Acosta, a key undernutrition expert with CARE, an international organization dedicated to ending poverty. This case study delves into key aspects of policies and undernutrition within Peru’s borders. By explaining the history of the situation along with current policy goals, sustainability challenges, and recommendations for the future, Acosta’s case study allows us to see what is happening from a local and international IGO/NGO level. I believe this to be one of my most valuable and informative case studies for understanding the Peruvian context in terms of undernutrition. All three of the abovementioned articles are more than part of the existing literature as they examine data points such as regional rates of undernutrition, development indicators, and policies.
To help guide my research, I have chosen three main purposes to complete my analysis. The primary goal of this project is to identify and understand current actors in undernutrition, their roles, and how they affect the overall situation in Peru (Peruvian government, social programs, UNICEF). With many actors involved, it is crucial to understand who they are, what they do, and coordination between them. The second goal of mine is to evaluate one case of UNICEF in a developing country in terms of one development focus area: chronic child undernutrition. I will evaluate UNICEF’s actions in the fight against undernutrition, how they work in-country, program development, and what their relationship looks like with the Peruvian government. UNICEF is a prominent IGO in Peru and their long-term history with the government and people of the country provide a basis for UNICEF to operate and see success from. Finally, I will decipher political election timelines of presidents, their main policies, actions during their presidencies, and examine funding sources and how this affects the overall situation.

**Data**

As stated in the above methodology section, analyzing rates of undernutrition and stunting are some of the only ways to understand the current situation, the history, and how the government, IGOs, and NGOs are affecting the rates of undernutrition in Peru. Although the Peruvian government lacks information transparency in many different institutions and data sources, I was able to find trusted data, meaning it has been used in other academic articles and by NGOs, of the current and past rates of undernutrition by region, year, and rural/urban populations. This census data is from the Peruvian National Statistical Office (INEI) and encompasses every year from 2010 to 2016 (in the ENDES 2016 report), as well as annual rates dating back to the late 1990s. In 1992, the national rate of undernutrition was 37 percent. This
decreased to 13.1 percent by 2016 with better results seen in coastal regions than those of the Andes or Amazon (ENDES, 2000 and 2016).

For the purpose of this research, I also examined the election timelines of presidents, the presidents’ notable policies for undernutrition, and their commitments to undernutrition reduction during campaigns. The presidents of Peru are key actors in policymaking, congressional appointments, and the passing of laws by presidential decree (Library of Congress, 2017) and their role in undernutrition has been significant since 2000. In 2000, President Alberto Fujimori was forced out due to corruption scandals and his interim successor, Valentin Paniagua, created the basis for undernutrition policy coordination, the Roundtable for Poverty Reduction. The following presidents Toledo, Garcia, and Humala, all made public commitments and organized programs and policies to further nutrition initiatives. In 2005, President Toledo adopted JUNTOS, a social program based on conditional monetary transfers and “the building of human capital especially among high risk and socially excluded populations” (Acosta and Haddad, 2014, 29). Further examples will be discussed in Chapter Two.

The INEI provides the National Survey of Nutrition and Health (ENDES) for the government, social programs, and general population. This survey is conducted each year to measure undernutrition, poverty, family planning, accessibility to water and other resources, etc. (INEI, 2016). In order to understand and analyze undernutrition in Peru, it was necessary to obtain the current rates of undernutrition from the INEI. Undernutrition is measured by the World Health Organization’s rule for measuring nutrition deficiency problems: stunting (low height and/or weight for age). In Peru, undernutrition has decreased from 23.2 percent in 2010 to 13.1 percent in 2016 (ENDES, 2016, 365) (see table 1). By looking at both rural and urban rates and those of each geographic region, we can better see the discrepancies and issues being
combated today. In each ENDES survey report, there are descriptions and conceptualizations of each social problem examined especially undernutrition. This data on the rate of undernutrition is vital to work in Peru and research in general.

Table 1: Undernutrition in Peru, 2010-2016, by Selected Characteristic (ENDES, 2016).

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lima</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coast</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andes</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amazon</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Many actors play a role in reducing undernutrition. For Peru, the presidency holds some of the greatest power due to its notoriety, commitment to combating undernutrition, and ability to enact laws and policies (Acosta and Fanzo, 2012, 18-20). Due to its importance to the situation, understanding the role and commitments garnished by the most recent presidents have proven to be a connecting link between social programs and UNICEF. The Peruvian presidential candidates have been encouraged into putting undernutrition not only on their policy agendas but as one of the forefront issues of the government and policy making. This first happened in 2006 and has been a trend since that election in Peru with candidates willing to vow to the commitment as well as come through with agenda-setting undernutrition high up on the to-do list. Looking beyond the first commitment asked of the candidates, many of the recent presidents
have pushed policy items, programs, and institutions to combat undernutrition from different sides of the problem. The main example of this trend was with President Alan García with his campaign commitment and the creation of the national strategy named CRECER, which required active participation and coordination between regional and municipal governments. Elections occur every five years and give insight into how undernutrition rates and programs react to changing administration.

\[ \textbf{Table 2: Presidential Timeline, 1990-Present} \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President</th>
<th>Fujimori</th>
<th>Paniagua (interim)</th>
<th>Toledo</th>
<th>García</th>
<th>Humala</th>
<th>Kuczynski</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Assessing how funding from abroad has affected or exacerbated the issue of undernutrition is a big piece of the data puzzle. UNICEF alone has a plan to give more than $4 million USD with another $35 million USD, depending on sources, to fight development issues in Peru by 2021 (\textit{Economic and Social Council}, 2017, 1). This is only one IGO working in the country with a substantial budget. Other organizations such as the World Food Programme, SUN Movement, and the World Bank are also contributing to the many development challenges facing Peru through funding and program implementation of their own design. It is unknown where the funding and donations from abroad are going, to what programs and districts, and to aid which development issue; poverty, undernutrition or another problem. Many questions are left unanswered but provide a basis for further projects and research in the field.

The final aspect of data to discuss is that of the original in-person interviews conducted in May of 2017. With Internal Review Board (IRB) approval, I interviewed six officials, program or project leaders at their offices in Peru. As part of my study abroad experience, these interviews originally came from my final independent study project that researched the vertical
and horizontal coordination of the Peruvian government. For this research in Peru, I specifically asked about social programs, governmental institutions, and their opinions surrounding the situation of child undernutrition. The interviewees gave full consent to use name, organization, affiliations, and opinions prior to asking questions (see table 3, 25).

Although I asked many questions and was given information and opinions, some of the most prominent or frequent answers referred to the limited reach or responsibility of the regional and municipal levels of government and social programs, transparency issues with many different institutions, and the necessity for better coordination efforts by the government. Probably the most surprising answer I received was from the staff at the GORE Cusco office (Jessica Farfán Rodríguez, May 2017). Interviewees directly stated that the regional government had no responsibility for social programs, food aid, or undernutrition at all, but instead worked on healthcare programs and education. Furthermore, all interviewees touched on the national plan of the government and their responsibility to uphold their commitments to fulfilling the goals laid out by the national government, however, the DIRESA representative, Nancy Meza Quispe, informed me of regional plans that occur outside the scope of the national government that are more focused and directed by the regional and municipal governments. I collected a plethora of information from the listed individuals and I was able to gain a greater understanding of the gravity of undernutrition on the lives of all Peruvians, not just those most affected by it.
Table 3: Directory of Interviewees, May 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edith Chacón Ortiz</td>
<td>MIDIS Coordinator</td>
<td>MIDIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy Meza Quispe</td>
<td>Nutrition Strategy Coordinator – DIRESA Cusco</td>
<td>DIRESA – Regional Health Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jessica Farfán Rodríguez</td>
<td>Manager of Social Development – Regional Government of Cusco</td>
<td>GORE Cusco – Regional Social Development Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eulogio Tapia</td>
<td>Sub-manager of Social Development – Provincial Municipality of Cusco</td>
<td>Provincial Municipality of Cusco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Tito Galvez</td>
<td>The leader of Project &quot;Improvement of nutrition and preventive health in children under 5 years of the north-east zone of the district of Cusco&quot; (MUNI)</td>
<td>Provincial Municipality of Cusco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar Gavón</td>
<td>Leader of Social Program Vaso de Leche of Cusco</td>
<td>Vaso de Leche of Cusco</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Thesis Born from a Semester Abroad

During the spring semester of 2017, I traveled to Peru for a semester-long study abroad program with the School of International Training (SIT). Focused on indigenous peoples and globalization, this program allowed students to develop an independent research project (ISP) with local experts serving as advisors and go-betweens for interviews. Upon meeting my homestay mother, Luz, I almost immediately learned of her career as a nutritionist with UNICEF. Over one breakfast early on in the program, she spoke passionately about the hardships endured by mothers, children, municipalities, and the country as a whole. These hardships stretched beyond undernutrition itself to show the underlying causes and secondary effects plaguing the regions of Peru, especially rural indigenous people. Due to my own nutrition struggles, I felt for her and the people of this beautiful country. I chose to study chronic child undernutrition as the main concept of my ISP in conjunction with the vertical and horizontal integration of programs and policies in the government. Although non-traditional by my program’s definition, my ISP led me to interview government officials, program managers, and institutional heads. All those I interviewed plainly described the horrific situation facing individuals, especially children. I spent hours planning out my questions, interviewing anyone who would talk to me, and translating each interview. Each interviewee had a different perspective and response to the situation, but they were all similar in their concern and empathy towards those most affected by undernutrition. Although my ISP ended in Peru, I felt a desire to look deeper at the situation. I returned to the United States and began researching UNICEF, the Peruvian government, and social programs, and I stayed in touch with Luz and my project advisor, Deisy. Both helped me tremendously with understanding the entire situation. Without them, my ISP would not have been nearly as successful, and this thesis would not exist.


Chapter Two: Peruvian Government and Social Programs

Peru is full of life, history, and rich culture; these great aspects, however, are often overshadowed by a corrupt government and staggeringly high rates of child undernutrition and stunting. Often characterized as a democratic, upper middle-income country, Peru’s presidential system has made major strides not only in economic development areas, such as gross domestic product and natural resource extraction but also in aspects of social development as well. However, chronic child undernutrition is one of the most prominent yet underrepresented multidimensional development issues facing the country today.

Since the turn of the century, Peru has seen impressive growth in the gross domestic product (GDP) which has increased from $51.74 billion USD in 2000 to $192.2 billion USD in 2016 (GDP, 2016). Recent presidents like Alan García and Pedro Ollanta Humala have created major political movements and policies that have boosted Peru’s overall economic standing dramatically. According to the United Nations Children’s Fund executive board, “between 2004 and 2013, the country’s gross domestic product grew by an average of 6 percent per year and its Human Development Index (0.737) is among the highest in the region (The Economic and Social Council, 2016, 2/15). This increase in GDP has boosted Peru’s position in international relations, and also put the country center stage for their efforts in combating development issues. Peru has become the model for its work in reducing poverty, which has declined by 36 percent in recent years. However, its success has not been as significant with undernutrition. Today, adolescents and young children continue to live in underdeveloped economic situations, especially in the rural areas of the Andean and Amazonian regions. As of 2016, a staggering 26.5% of children under the age of five living in rural areas were malnourished (ENDES, 2016).
Regions of the Andes and Amazon continue to have high rates of undernutrition at 21.2% and 19.8% respectively. These rates are not dependent on the location of people, whether in rural or urban districts. In 2014, regional disparities were significant, and the national rate was higher than it is today (see graph 1). Although region-specific rates of undernutrition remain relatively high, Peru proudly boasts its current national average is 13.1%, which is lower on the scale than other Latin American countries (ENDES, 2016 and USAID, 2016).

*Graph 1: Rates of Undernutrition 2004-2014, based on ENDES data (Yosef and Goulden, 2014, 126).*

Peru often faces difficult fronts within policy-making and program creation and management due to the fragmented relationship between the presidency and Congress. With vast geographic distance and obstacles between regions, policies more often than not are trapped on the coast by mountains and a wide range of different cultural practices and beliefs. The demographic concentrations of populations, especially indigenous-identifying peoples, and
cultural diversity proves to be one of the greatest challenges of the Peruvian government. With three official languages, Spanish, Quechua, and Aymara, policies can often be misrepresented or misinterpreted. Peruvian policy-makers, presidents to be specific, make decisions that often lead to distrust or anger in indigenous groups due to their lack of sensitivity to cultural norms or practices, as stated by Elizabeth Tito Galvez of the Project MUNI (Interview, May 2017). The Amazonian region of Peru still has uncontacted and disconnected indigenous tribes that have been left out of census data, policy, and programs entirely. With a wide range of people, interests, and motivations, government officials have trouble creating policies and programs that will fit every region in Peru. Without specialization, Peru’s policies only reach a fraction of the population.

Along with regional blockages, the Peruvian government also faces many other challenges when it comes to policy-making, implementation, and monitoring. One interviewee from the Improvement of nutrition and preventive health in children under 5 years of the north-east zone of the district of Cusco (MUNI), a local project in Cusco City, spoke candidly about the dire need for better governmental and institutional coordination. While many regional and local governments are working together to improve policy and implementation, the national government only has one plan and lacks coordination with localities on adopting policies for the people. Often districts and regions have specific issues and ideas on how to combat such problems but are limited in capabilities due to the national government’s imposed national plan. While coordination is a major difficulty, other challenges include a lack of clarity in legislation, the limited capacity of localities, and weaknesses in monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (Economic and Social Council, 2016, 3). Due to the difficulties of understanding and creating individualized policies, the Peruvian government opts for a “one-size-fits-all” approach to their
policies and the national plan (Elizabeth Tito Galvez, Interviews May 2017). This approach can be particularly difficult when thinking of child undernutrition. Since Peru sees such a high rate of regional disparities in terms of undernutrition, policies that do not individualize regions and districts miss the target group and issue. Previous presidents and major political players have attempted to work on poverty and undernutrition through distinctive initiatives and open-forums.

In January 2001, Valentín Paniagua created the first Roundtable for Poverty Reduction. This forum was a place where lawmakers, heads of programs, regional leaders, and nongovernmental organizations could convene, share challenges and ideas, and coordinate on policy objectives (Mejía-Acosta & Haddad, 2014, 29). This step by a president was the first of many to combat child undernutrition. Since this time in the early 2000s, the Peruvian government and its presidents have created major changes in fighting undernutrition.

As with any political office, the presidency of Peru faces a great deal of pushback and controversy when attempting to create major change, as is the case with undernutrition. As outlined by researchers and Peru experts Acosta and Haddad’s article, *The Politics of Success in the Fight Against Malnutrition in Peru* (2014), each president since Alberto Fujimori (president from 1990-2000) has made substantial efforts to reduce poverty, increase education rates, and decrease child undernutrition. From creating convening spaces to major social programs, the presidents have created major changes in Peru, especially in terms of undernutrition and poverty commitments. As a democratic-presidential system, Peru elects its presidents every five years, and campaign rhetoric is key to winning an election. Undernutrition has been a prominent issue in recent years. During the 2006 elections, the Child Malnutrition Initiative (CMI), an advocacy coalition created by non-governmental organizations in conjunction with the Peruvian government in 2005, pushed candidates to make child undernutrition a key national policy
agenda item. This oath stated that as president, the elected official would fight to reduce undernutrition by five percent in five years for children under the age of five, known as the 5 x 5 x 5 movement. With push not only from Congress and constituents, presidential candidates were faced with pressures from international organizations as well, and most during the 2000s attempted to reverse undernutrition and leave their mark. However, not every president has fought poverty and undernutrition with the same enthusiasm (Acosta and Haddad, 2014).

**Presidents of Peru and their Contributions**

One of the most notable and notorious presidents of Peru was Alberto Fujimori. His administration was characterized by human rights violations, terrorist organizations, and many corruption scandals, yet he stayed in office from 1990 until 2000, when he stepped down. The overall rates of undernutrition and stunting in Peru remained stagnant for much of this time or only decreased by a few percentage points (ENDES, 2016). Fujimori’s focus drifted from social development issues such as poverty and undernutrition during his administration. With the economy taking a hit from increased coca leaf industry regulation and infrastructure problems, Fujimori’s administration focused on economic and fiscal matters with the hope of modernizing the country’s industries. The 1990s were also a difficult time for government programs and subsidies, especially in the form of social programs. With only one program operating at the time, Vaso de Leche (VdL), little funding went to operate the program at the municipal level. Although this time was dark for social development, the following presidents made it their mission to combat the wide range of issues as well as economic and political challenges as well.

Fujimori’s temporary replacement and the interim president from 2000 to 2001, Valentín Paniagua, however, created a key arena for combating undernutrition in Peru. The Roundtable for Poverty Reduction (MCLCP), allowed state and civil society organizations to come together,
coordinate, and combat issues of poverty and undernutrition (Acosta and Haddad, 2014, 29). This was an important step towards reducing poverty and undernutrition in Peru and also allowed for successors to continue the progress easily under new administrations. Today, the MCLCP is the main coordination arena for the government, UNICEF, and civil society members. The MCLCP has great influence on social policies, especially in terms of equality, and leads the charge to improve the efficiency of social programs in Peru. A key goal of the MCLCP is to increase transparency within the government, policies, and social programs (MCLCP, 2018, *Objetivos y Funciones*).

In the 2001 election cycle, Alejandro Toledo, the first indigenous-identifying president, came to power. Taking his own background into consideration, Toledo made many strides to fight poverty, social injustices, and undernutrition. During his presidency, Toledo created a valuable social program, JUNTOS, that gives stipends to families in need if they follow a set of guidelines for participation in the healthcare and education sectors of society. This social program was intended to meet the needs left by Vaso de Leche and answer the demands of the people. JUNTOS is an “initiative to break the intergenerational transmission of poverty and reduce children’s chronic undernutrition by building human capital especially among high risk and socially excluded populations” (Acosta and Haddad, 2014, 29). With the early success of JUNTOS, Toledo’s administration also developed a national strategy, the National Strategy for Food Security (ENSA), that intended to establish administrative and organizational platforms for future policies and strategies that would allow for greater coordination and implementation of programs and policies. Although ENSA was never implemented due to its late creation at the end of the Toledo administration, it did create the basis for which a later strategy, National Strategy for Poverty Reduction (CRECER) in 2007. President Toledo left office with rates of
undernutrition declining and with a new, successful social program operating in the country.

Toledo’s administration formulated important programs and made key strides in the fight to reduce undernutrition. His successor, Alan García, took the job one step further and has been commended for his successes greatly. García took office in 2006 after agreeing to the 5 x 5 x 5 campaign and created a major policy within his first 100 days in office. In response to his electoral win and his allegiance to the 5 x 5 x 5 plan, García stated his administration had the goal of reducing undernutrition by nine percent instead of five, focused on children under the age of three that are more vulnerable to the effects of undernutrition, and pledged to close the poverty gap substantially between urban and rural areas. “García’s plan included developing human capital, promoting social development, and co-responsibility, and reducing poverty in 1119 districts nationwide” (Mejía-Acosta & Haddad, 2014, 30).

Alan García’s influence on undernutrition did not stop at this one early plan. He is most well-known for creating the CRECER strategy in 2007 that was based on Toledo’s ENSA idea. According to Peru experts Acosta and Haddad, “CRECER represented a radical change in the government’s strategy for fighting malnutrition because it went beyond a classic food distribution approach. Instead, it promoted a series of complementary interventions that included teaching improved cooking techniques to mothers, facilitating better access to healthy and cheap agricultural products, improving access to clean water and sanitation and ensuring good access to health care” (2014, 30). With two social programs already in existence at this point, VdL and JUNTOS, CRECER aided many more people with health and undernutrition problems than policies prior to its creation. During García’s presidency, the economy in Peru took a major upturn with booming metal mining industries in both the Amazon and northern regions. In addition to economic growth, undernutrition and stunting fell from 27.8% in 2007 to 19.5% in
These results were praised by officials and drew the attention of international organizations and other governments. Social development became a priority under the García administration, and his early goal to reduce undernutrition by nine percent was met with pride and hope for the future.

Ollanta Humala, president from 2011 to 2016, used his administration to continue the fight against social inequalities and poverty. One major move created by Humala was his administration’s creation of the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion (MIDIS). The main purpose of this ministry was to implement and monitor social programs in the promotion of social equality and inclusion in the country. MIDIS now has control over Vaso de Leche, JUNTOS, and a social program that was created and implemented in 2012, Cuna Más. Humala’s presidency faced many challenges, both economically and socially. Social inequalities such as wealth, distribution of resources, and undernutrition burdened his administration and caused Peruvians to dislike his administration. Near the end of his term, Humala faced corruption charges that soiled the public’s view of him completely. Even with the difficulties his administration faced, Ollanta Humala saw undernutrition fall from 19.5% in 2011 to 13.1% in 2016 (ENDES, 2016). Most attribute this decline of 6.4% to the development of MIDIS and the further regulation placed on social programs. During this time, Peruvian society saw a third social program, Cuna Más, be created. The combination of political will to fight social inequalities and poverty, MIDIS, and a new social program targeted at rural and working families are the reasons for the decline during a characteristically difficult administration.

Peru has seen many results in terms of undernutrition, stunting, and poverty especially in the rates of undernutrition since the early 1990s. However, the current president, Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, elected in 2016, has focused on economic problems and civil unrest in forms of
protests of policies, building projects, and the state of the country in general. Kuczynski’s administration has worked on social development issues of indigenous rights and identity, but not much information has come out about his policies regarding undernutrition.

The presidency of Peru, being the most powerful policy position and key lawmaker (Library of Congress 2017), has the ability to enact major change both on economic issues, and in terms of social development as well. Since Alberto Fujimori’s 2000 resignation, each president has made critical changes to the system through program and strategy implementation in order to improve the situation of many poor and undernourished children. Each time a president is elected, there have been major declines in undernutrition, which then stagnates for the final two to three years of a presidential term as policies settle and funding dwindles. Usually, social policies that are based on campaign rhetoric or promises tend to be enacted early on in a term, only to be sidelined in favor of other policies later on.

Social Programs

Peru’s main tool in combating undernutrition is its three top social programs, Vaso de Leche, JUNTOS, and Cuna Más. Social programs are government entities that work on specific development issues. All three of the mentioned social programs work on child undernutrition, but in very different ways. JUNTOS focuses on cash transfers while Cuna Más works on family building and monitoring of children. Each program can be tailored to the regional and local levels but are still controlled by MIDIS and the national government. These social programs have proven to be important for Peru in combating undernutrition. They are often riddled, however, with administrative problems and accessibility challenges.

The differences between the three social programs are vast, but they aim to assist underprivileged families and individuals overcome poverty and food insecurities. Vaso de Leche
was the first social program in Peru which focuses on food aid and community relations through community-based boards and regional managers. JUNTOS was created to explore a different problem under the umbrella of undernutrition, monetary transfers for those willing to participate in government healthcare and education programs. The third and most recent social program, Cuna Más adopted a well-being and wellness check system that provides childcare to families in difficult situations, rural areas, or working families. Each social program’s focus is intended to help a specific subsection of the population through government transfers of aid.

Vaso de Leche (VdL) was created in 1984 by the World Bank in order to give food aid to communities and children below the poverty line. For Vaso de Leche, women who are lactating and children under the age of six are the two most important groups to receive assistance, but often times these target groups are overlooked through gaps in the system, frequent migration of poor families, and lack of trust in the government (Edgar Gavón, May 2017). This program has experienced difficulties with monitoring, evaluation, and implementation of the program on the municipal levels. By using community boards to distinguish regional challenges and what families need aid first, oversight becomes an issue because board members want aid to go to the people they know rather than to unknown or migrant individuals and families. Furthermore, Vaso de Leche specifically aids with milk and cereal transfers to households, and more often than not, this aid is given to the entire family, rather than the child or mother in need of it (Elizabeth Tito Galvez, May 2017). Food aid is extremely valuable due to its higher quality and the frequency of transfer established by VdL. Families rely on the basics provided either weekly or monthly, depending on established need. Peru is facing challenges and questionable administrative practices within and involving VdL. Support of VdL garnishes prominent political power and is often used unjustly as a political tool to gain support from different regions or
districts of the country. This type of manipulation can cause distrust of the government by officials or mothers, which only hinders the progress of reducing undernutrition.

Since Vaso de Leche is specifically a food-aid program, the Peruvian government created another program that would attack a different challenge not previously addressed. Established in 2005, JUNTOS is a money-transfer program based on participation of recipients. By utilizing monthly cash transfers of 100 soles, or $30 USD, mothers in the households often supplement current diets, buy necessary sanitary items, and other health-related goods. This being said, all recipients of benefits must participate in the health care system and National Nutritional Assistance Program, be vaccinated, send their children to school, and have national identification documents created for all members of the household (Aguiar et al., 2007, 52). While encouraging participation of beneficiaries, JUNTOS targets children under the age of three, and often times overlooks families with children in need due to regulations and funding regulations. According to Elizabeth Tito Galvez, the head of the MUNI project, JUNTOS often perpetuates the problems felt in poverty-stricken homes by throwing money at the people. In addition, many regulatory and monitory problems exist within the program itself. Without wellness checks on children or tracking of progress, people can use the money for what they like rather than what they need (Elizabeth Tito Galvez, May 2017). JUNTOS allows for individuals and families to build wealth, purchase goods like fruits and vegetables, and access health and education systems. Although there are many benefits to the JUNTOS program and possibilities to improve the lives of many, the lack of regulatory and monitory systems creates a way for people to work the system that is easily overlooked or falsified.

The final prominent social program in Peru is fairly new, created in 2012, Cuna Más. Created by MIDIS, Cuna Más is a home visitation program that provides wellness checks,
childcare, and family participation. Their aims include education for children at a very young age, childcare, and family attachment between young children and parents. Cuna Más takes a very different approach to combating undernutrition than either JUNTOS or Vaso de Leche. This program allows families to connect and learn from each other through community programs, emotional and educational support systems, and crucial wellness checks on all family members. Although Cuna Más does not directly provide food or monetary aid, it is often in districts where such programs already exist. This coordination is rare and also extremely beneficial for all involved. By educating parents on child well-being, education, and emotional development, as well as encouraging greater participation in programs, Cuna Más has made major strides in health, education, and undernutrition issue areas.

Social programs are Peru’s key to successful changes in undernutrition rates across their vast regions, however, there still remain gaping holes, a lack of information, and concerning administrative challenges that hinder more and better work from being done. During our interview, Elizabeth Tito Galvez of MUNI spoke about the serious need for focused programs, better evaluations of families and the program itself, and coordination across all levels of government and institutions. She also explained how undernutrition is a multidimensional problem being addressed by one-dimensional government programs. Families are often scared of losing their benefits and participation of mothers is limited due to cultural implications of these programs, such as indigenous rituals, stigmas against supplement, and the value of indigenous knowledge through traditional upbringings outside of the government. Overall, mothers lack trust of the government and have a difficult time allowing officials into their homes to evaluate children (Elizabeth Tito Galvez, May 2017). Social programs are addressing some of the main issues with undernutrition and poverty in Peru, however, they have also opened up large gaps
where secondary problems, such as anemia, a lack of healthy red blood cells caused by an iron deficiency, have crept in. By being supply-based programs, meaning, programs that supply goods without looking at what a community needs, social programs could be hindering their progress themselves. A further issue of social programs is the lack of consultation with the community and other components of civil society for their opinions and potentially influential input. The mothers and children most affected by undernutrition are left out of the equation in terms of ideas, cultural practices, and effective programs. Instead of asking for what a community needs or how to better implement a program, the government and social programs supply what they often think is best rather than demand-oriented programs.

With social programs, policy changes, and the creation of different strategies like CRECER, a broad strategy and policy that encouraged better nutrition and food security, Peru has made important steps to reduce undernutrition and poverty. International actors have taken notice of Peru’s work towards reducing poverty and undernutrition for all people, and this has put immense pressure on the administration to show greater results faster. Since Peru emphasizes supply-side programs and experiences changing administration frequently, few avenues for changing the system exist. Social programs have a limited picture and scope of capabilities when it comes to designing and implementing region-specific assistance, and with each new president, funding is cut, or new directions are created. Without continuity within social programs and in public policy administered by the government, Peru’s challenge of dealing with undernutrition could stagnate again, causing countless health and educational issues for thousands of children and adults. With the current set of programs and strategies in operation, Peru’s challenge goes far beyond implementation, but to further issues such as sustainability. By creating reliant families, the problem only persists for future generations to decipher. Fighting undernutrition has become
a major focus of policy and administrations in Peru, but underlying causes (sanitation, water, disease) and secondary issues (anemia) are still left untouched by officials and policy. According to all interviewees, the opinions of the people are needed to better implement programs and policies while taking into account cultural practices and norms. Currently, the Peruvian government does little to address the concerns of the people and civil society organizations directly related to the issues. This phenomenon is concerning since it really matters how people perceive and understand programs. Successful implementation is reliant on willing participants (Interviews, May 2017). Peru has made major advances during the 21st century, but there is still a long road ahead, especially with the current program system, lack of opinions, funding holes, and administration challenges.
Chapter Three: UNICEF and International NGO work

Peru’s government has made major strides to reduce chronic undernutrition, however, international intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have filled in some of the gaps left behind by the government. NGOs have created a multitude of programs, strategies, and coordination plans to better assist with undernutrition, poverty, and human rights issues. A relevant case for efforts against development problems, Peru has multiple IGOs and NGOs working within its borders. From the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) to the World Food Programme (WFP) Peru’s development issues have many actors and influences from all parts of the world. Each program has attempted to reduce child undernutrition on many different continents with various programs and supporting results, but Peru’s journey with IGOs and NGOs has proven to be successful in the fight against undernutrition and poverty. IGOs and NGOs can improve funding operations, provide broader yet more specific programs, and look more directly at long-term sustainability goals through their demand-based programs and strategies. These organizations’ efforts add to the already substantial work being done by the government, civil society, and the people themselves.

The United Nations Children’s Fund is one of the most prominent programs and IGOs in Peru today. Beginning its work in 1948, just two years after its inception in 1946, UNICEF has worked on all levels of the government, communities, and with various programs and strategies. UNICEF’s work centers around locals and the people most in need. Most of the people working with UNICEF in Peru are residents of the country, rather than foreigners attempting to make a change somewhere they do not understand. This is the case for my homestay mother, Luz, and many others from various backgrounds and education. By employing local knowledge to situations, UNICEF has gained better traction within communities that have difficulties trusting
outsiders and foreigners. In terms of program and strategies, UNICEF has changed its focus to one with greater understanding, strategy, and partnership in order to see greater improvements in results (Jolly, 2014, 91). Over the years, UNICEF’s framework has seen a significant change in order to better understand and combat the current issues facing the world, one of which is child undernutrition. The Conceptual Framework (figure 1) has evolved over many years. It breaks down the various causes of undernutrition to illustrate all the different factors that can lead to child undernutrition, and if untreated, death. By creating a better understanding for policymakers, NGO workers, and local leaders, UNICEF and its representatives can better attack all the problems associated with undernutrition, even those that are often forgotten or overlooked.

*Figure 2: UNICEF Conceptual Framework of Undernutrition (Jolly, 2014, 95).*
UNICEF’s Conceptual Framework (figure 1) is a universal of this IGO, but it has been adopted by representatives and experts in Peru and other countries. In Peru, this framework breaks down all the contributing factors to high rates of undernutrition. This better allows for agencies and the government to attack specific problems rather than the whole system at once. For example, political resources are basic, systemic causes of undernutrition while the inadequate access to food and insufficient health care are the underlying causes. In Peru, there has been a significant push with the social programs JUNTOS and Vaso de Leche to combat the underlying causes of undernutrition through proper health care access and greater food subsidies. UNICEF’s framework also examines the direct causes of undernutrition, which are disease and inadequate dietary intake. With bacterial infections like Malaria and Dengue Fever, children living the Amazon and on the coast are at higher risk during the rainy season than those living in the Andes. This is due to elevation and average temperature. However, social programs in these areas push for children and families to be vaccinated and use proper protection methods against mosquitoes. This conceptual framework allows for specialization, program creation, and more targeted approaches to the broader idea of undernutrition.

While looking at the history of UNICEF, one can see they have looked into all different routes to reduce child undernutrition since its inception. By basing its recent work on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) created by the United Nations, UNICEF has transformed its approach to include the underlying causes of undernutrition. Underlying causes include micro-nutrient deficiencies, anemia, health care, education, and access to resources. Although access to water, sanitation, and health care are extremely important factors when combating child undernutrition, UNICEF also works to promote and fulfill rights of children. These rights include access to education, safety
protections, and specialization of programs and facilities. UNICEF’s work with undernutrition spans from the womb to adulthood. Breastfeeding programs and child-specific hospitals are some of the most notable strategies created and funded by UNICEF and are also some of the most successful. By providing access to healthcare and child-specific education for mothers, UNICEF has gone past food or monetary aid to demand-oriented strategies.

**WASH Program by UNICEF**

While UNICEF has a broad basis of programs and strategies to combat child undernutrition, one stands out from the rest. The “Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene” program (WASH) is a premier program of UNICEF in conjunction with other NGOs and UN agencies. WASH looks not only at undernutrition but the underlying causes of it as well. Clean, potable water is one of the largest concerns in the developing world, and WASH has worked with localities and individuals on education, promotion, and distribution of deep-well drillers and water hand pumps in developing regions (Jolly, 2014, 103). This low-cost, sustainable innovation allowed communities to access clean water. WASH, however, tackles more than water, but also sanitation and hygiene. In conjunction with WASH, education programs have been created to teach communities about proper disposal methods, the importance of keeping drinking water separate from sanitation water, and other aspects of health promotion.

During the 1990s, WASH and UNICEF created a program specifically for school-aged children. This part of WASH supplied schools with clean water, separate bathrooms, and education programs to teach children about proper sanitation and drinking water habits (Jolly, 2014, 103). As UNICEF’s most notable program, WASH encourages education, community participation in program development, and the continued decrease in child undernutrition in Peru and around the world. As shown in the conceptual framework, insufficient health care and
unhealthy environments are some of the underlying causes of undernutrition. With proper sanitation and hygiene practices, the risk of diseases and bacterial infections is reduced.

*Education Promotion and “Child-Friendly Schools”*

As a United Nations organization, UNICEF covers varying development issues all over the world. Beyond undernutrition and WASH, UNICEF has made strides for bettering education in developing countries since 1961, when “executive board directives made it legitimate to assist education programs at the primary and secondary levels” (Jolly, 2014, 103). With a focus on primary levels of education and funding boosts to help their goals, UNICEF created education strategies like the “child-friendly schools.” Child-Friendly Schools is a program developed in the 1990s that has been implemented in 93 countries, including Peru. In this model, schools are supposed to operate in a manner that is “more child-centered, more welcoming, and less run by rigid rules” (Jolly, 2014, 105). This allows students to share, experience, and learn in their own ways rather than by standardization. Increasing the presence and flexibility of schools allows for education to be something that is accessible to all children, even those living in rural areas. Once a child is in school, they have access to school breakfast and lunch programs, educational materials, and clean water.

Education is a primary source of contact for officials to evaluate child health and nutrition, as well as assist with the problems as well. UNICEF is different than other IGOs working in Peru. Its focus on children, especially those in unsafe and unhealthy circumstances. UNICEF is a widely accepted program around the world, and it produces results. Results interpreted by UNICEF officials relates to programs created or maintained, such as WASH, popular opinion of a community surrounding programs, rates of undernutrition, poverty, sanitation, access to healthcare, and feedback from government and UNICEF officials.
Prominent NGOs in Peru

Nongovernmental organizations are extremely important, and more than one often operates in a country such as Peru. A few prominent programs stand out from the NGOs currently in Peru for their work on undernutrition; the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Scaling Up Nutrition Program (SUN). The WFP focuses on undernutrition problems and emergency preparedness for situations like the extreme flooding on the coast and in the Amazon in early 2017. Much like UNICEF, the WFP works with Peruvian society to eradicate hunger and undernutrition and place nutrition and food security on the political agenda at all levels of government and it has gained international attention. According to the WFP, their overall mission is to “implement innovative and inclusive nutrition intervention models that are adapted to regional and cultural context” (World Food Program, 2018). Since the Peruvian government has faced challenges with tailoring programs to specific regions, allowing NGOs to work on that front could better spread resources and funding, as well as reach more people in need. By making the information and education materials accessible to the public, the WFP has seen results with increased participation and advocacy from different government officials. The WFP also created a program, Healthy not Hungry to educate people about native foods, preparation, food waste, and encouraging sustainable crops, this program is set to complete numbers two and three of the Sustainable Development Goals. The World Food Programme has pushed beyond the normal scope of NGOs to influence policies, donors, and the lives of people suffering from food insecurity and undernutrition.

The other prominent NGO now working in Peru is the Scaling-Up Nutrition Program (SUN). While UNICEF and the WFP have coordinated on undernutrition efforts and education, SUN began in amidst the 2008 financial crisis as a strategic plan and then blossomed into a
program in 2010. Peru joined the sixty countries now involved with SUN in 2010 with the approval of MIDIS (Scaling-Up Nutrition, 2018). SUN works at combating food insecurities and undernutrition in developing countries around the world. Member states coordinate with each other at global summits to better inform governments, provide necessary aid to communities suffering from high rates of undernutrition, and push the global agenda towards undernutrition programming and policy-making. In Peru, SUN works directly with the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion (MIDIS) and the Child Malnutrition Initiative (CMI) to build up current programs already working, as well as monitor and evaluate programs. SUN’s largest contribution is their accountability. By ensuring scientific data supporting undernutrition findings and the necessity of programming, to assisting with allocating budgets to specific regions, SUN improves the coordination and cooperation problems seen between the different levels of the Peruvian government and with UNICEF. Further, Peru is the only South American country currently a part of the SUN Movement.

Child undernutrition is a multidimensional problem that affects millions of children around the globe. Governments, much like that of Peru, have made major strides in reducing this chronic social development issue. However, they cannot do it alone. With the help of international IGOs and NGOs for programming, policymaking, and funding, governments can better supply the right assistance to the people who need it most. The United Nations has produced some of the most prominent and sustainable programs in terms of undernutrition. UNICEF and the SUN Movement are two of their most effective development-oriented organizations that target undernutrition specifically. UNICEF, with a focus on child well-being and undernutrition, has taken a more local approach to their work in Peru and has seen major effects on the lives of people that work for the organization, and the lives of families across the
country. SUN, although a baby in comparison to UNICEF, has one focus, undernutrition. Since placing this development issue at the forefront of policymakers’ minds, they have bettered the lives of their beneficiaries and furthered their own goals. The World Food Programme has worked in Peru for many years and has always been concerned with the obvious challenge of food security and sustainability practices. Education has been a key proponent of their strategic goals, as well as with most programs operating in Peru and against undernutrition.

UNICEF’s work in Peru is important and effective in many ways, yet there are troubling issues with transparency on the country level and with the lack of community opinions as well. Much like the Peruvian government, it can be difficult to find up-to-date information on UNICEF in Peru, even with their upscale website. Further, UNICEF uses demand-oriented programs, but do not collect community and public opinions to better solidify and implement programs like WASH. Much like the problems seen with the government, the lack of consideration and incorporation of the people can result in weak participation and trust levels. UNICEF is an important IGO that has created important programs, but there is still room for improvements in programs, implementation, and transparency. The combined efforts of the government, IGOs, and NGOs have not solved child undernutrition yet. International organizations help fill the gaps, but holes remain.
Chapter Four: Coordination and Cooperation

When combating child undernutrition, the Peruvian government and the various international intergovernmental (IGOs) and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) must coordinate and combine their efforts in order to see sustainable results. Each entity has the ability to tackle one of the many causes of undernutrition while leaving other aspects up to the rest of the responsible parties. Much like comparative advantage, some governments are better at providing food aid and subsidy programs, while IGOs/NGOs are better at combating regional disparities and systemic discrepancies. One example of this is how social programs operate a ‘one-size-fits-all’ strategy rather than allowing for regional interpretations. Although attempted with social programs, only a few regional governments have tailored social programs to fit the needs of the people. An example of a successful adaptation of a program was in the Ayacucho region of Peru in 2008 where regional presidents took “over the CRECER agenda and put their own regional stamp on it” and called it, “Ayacucho’s CRECER-Wari program” (Acosta and Haddad, 2014, 31). Decentralization of policies and programs has shown some results, it is still limited due to a limited scope of accountability and responsibility by regional and local governments (Jessica Farfán Rodriguez, May 2017).

In the fight against child undernutrition, it is key that all actors involved understand their role, what the current issues are, where the gaps lie, and how to better solve the problem. In Peru, the Roundtable for Poverty Reduction (MCLCP) is one of the most reliable frameworks for all actors to come together. As discussed in chapter one, the MCLCP is a convening arena for government officials, IGOs/NGOs, and civil society to discuss challenges, focus policies, and create strategies to better eliminate poverty, food insecurities, and undernutrition. Although there are many partners in the fight against undernutrition in Peru, the government and international
IGOs/NGOs work together to find sustainable solutions to a daunting problem that bridges generations and affects people for entire lifetimes. This chapter looks at current programs initiated on both the government’s social programs and UNICEF’s WASH and education programs in addition to analyzing coordination efforts. Undernutrition in Peru is convoluted and multidimensional, but this chapter will describe how this problem is being tackled by the government and UNICEF.

Peru has a wide variety of social programs, strategies, and policies that were implemented to reduce undernutrition across all regions and demographics. However, undernutrition persists at above-average regional rates throughout the country (USAID, 2016). Social programs such as Vaso de Leche, JUNTOS, and Cuna Más all attempt to overcome different challenges that add to undernutrition. By tackling different underlying problems of undernutrition like access to clean water and sanitation problems with UNICEF, undernutrition has seen a steady decline since 2000. Although the main secondary effect, anemia, remains at staggeringly high rates, undernutrition and its underlying causes have been eased for a large part of the population. Peru has made strides, but it wasn’t without the influence of IGOs and NGOs, especially UNICEF. Since the beginning of their work in 1948, UNICEF has created programs, legislation, and relationships within the government and communities of Peru. Their demand-based programs have targeted undernutrition, anemia, and poverty in Peru and around the world. By creating WASH, Child-Friendly Schools, and other strategic policies, UNICEF has made a name for itself in Peru and with undernutrition-stricken families due to their employment of local experts rather than individuals from outside the country. The combined efforts of UNICEF and the Peruvian government is where the most beneficial outcomes are statistically shown. Child undernutrition has been declining since UNICEF’s beginning in 1948 and made even more rapid
declines since social programs were created and political accountability was forced on presidential candidates in the early 2000s (ENDES, 2016).

**Coordination Efforts**

Coordination has been a problem for the different levels of government, civil society, and UNICEF, however, with the assistance of the UN and strategic plans, these entities have been able to coordinate, cooperate, and coexist in the same realm and country. As stated by UNICEF officially, they “support [the] Peruvian state in the formulation of local, regional, and national public policy that facilitates progress towards national goals and the Sustainable Development Goals” (UNICEF, 2017). UNICEF and the Peruvian government have worked together on different levels, but the most prominent is at the national level. A UNICEF representative works directly with government representatives and UNICEF workers within Peru. This appointed representative provides technical assistance to the Peruvian government, writes up briefs for UNICEF and their executive board, and guides all the work that UNICEF does within the country. This representative is essential for the continuous relationship between the IGO and the government, especially during changes in administration. The current UNICEF representative, Maria Luisa Fornara, has been working in Peru since 2015 and has been a major advocate for undernutrition programming and funding during this time (UNICEF, 2017). Beyond national representatives, UNICEF employs local experts to work on a variety of boards, projects, and committees. My homestay mother, Luz, specifically works as a child nutritionist and development and wellbeing consultant with UNICEF in the district of Cusco City and the Sacred Valley. Most of her work revolves around creating education programs, promoting health care and better nutritional practices, and assisting with UNICEF programs on a smaller, more local scale. She described that it was easier for her or other locals to enter a community or approach
mothers than someone who didn’t look Peruvian or speak Spanish. UNICEF’s strategy with employing local experts allows for better community connections in addition to more trustworthy relationships with families, and more specifically mothers of undernourished children.

In the case of Peru, the government and UNICEF have signed onto the Cooperation Program for 2017-2021, in which both entities have a set of standardized goals for undernutrition, poverty, security, and education. According to the Cooperation Program Document, UNICEF and the Peruvian government agreed on the following goals by 2021: to reduce the rate of stunting to 10% nationally, increasing reading comprehension from 43.5% to 54%, to increase the access of rural home to a public water network from 61.8% to 72%, and to decrease the rate of impoverished children from 32.5% to 26% (Economic and Social Council, 2016, 13-15). With these abovementioned goals and many more, UNICEF and the Peruvian government have identified which governmental organizations or institutions are responsible for completing a specific goal. For example, a goal organized by UNICEF and Peru states “by 2021, integrated care models for health and nutrition for adolescents will have been adapted and implemented for the priority territories” (Economic and Social Council, 2016, 15). This goal is stating that health programs and Cuna Más can provide more well-rounded systems and programs for nutrition. Further, the priority territories mentioned are Loreto, Ucayali and Madre de Dios in the Amazon region, and Huancavelica and Huanuco in the Andean region. These regions maintain the highest rates of undernutrition in Peru due to their larger rural populations and limited access to goods and services.

The abovementioned goal involves MIDIS, Ministry of Education, IGOs, NGOs, regional and local governments, civil society, and many other institutions that could contribute to this issue. By breaking larger goals into smaller, more attainable ones, they seem easier to reach in
the allotted amount of time. Furthermore, by recognizing which institutions and governments are needed for combating a particular issue, there is greater accountability with multiple institutions and actors playing a role. With more people involved, there is the hope of better results occurring in the future. Breaking down the social development challenges seen in Peru creates practical avenues to realize the rights of all citizens, especially children. UNICEF and their Executive Board play a key role in planning, funding and creating practical goals for the future in their Country Programme documents. Their efforts to identify the most important issues allows the government to be more targeted both with goals and funding as well.

Looking beyond the direct coordination efforts between the government of Peru and UNICEF, it becomes apparent how much work both entities have put forth in the fight against child undernutrition. The Roundtable for Poverty Reduction (MCLCP), created in 2000, has been the key convening arena for UNICEF and the government. Actors have compared the results seen in the ENDES surveys, programs, and policies. Other topics include issues encountered, funding sources and allocation, popular support, and community relations. This convening arena can assist with the better planning of policies and the overall effort to reduce all the social development issues that exist in conjunction with undernutrition. The MCLCP is just one of the areas in which the government and UNICEF can coordinate informally and with other institutions and organizations operating within the government and country. In addition to undernutrition being the main ideal of the government and one of UNICEF’s overall organizational goals, education has become a key area for coordination. UNICEF and the government have increased the number of education programs and access to education in rural areas in order to spread programs that will also combat undernutrition, sanitation problems, and water scarcity issues. UNICEF’s WASH program and their “Child-Friendly Schools” idea have
pushed past some of the finer problems like access to education to give students a way to learn, experience, and then share important aspects of health within their communities and families. Furthermore, Peru’s education now allows for school food programs to be active in rural and underprivileged communities. A prominent example is of the school meal program implemented on Taquile Island on Lake Titicaca. Families sign up for individual meals once a month or so and help supply the school with either breakfast or lunch staples. This program allows the community to come together and ensures no child feels hungry. Schools in most rural and urban areas of Peru will feed students breakfast, lunch, and a small snack before sending them home for the day. A major problem in education is that some communities and families still lack access to schools, and communities have worked to provide food and communities programs that will feed children and adults throughout the day. Food security is one of the most troubling problems in Peru, and families are often embarrassed by their unfortunate situations. This leads parents to restrict their children as to avoid scrutiny from others (Elizabeth Tito Galvez, May 2017). Food programs take the pressure off families and allow children to return to school.

Programs and Problems

The coordination efforts between UNICEF and the government of Peru has created this bond of programs in which WASH, “Child-Friendly Schools,” and school food programs all work together in the same region. For example, a school in the San Jeronimo district of Cusco City serves many migrant and impoverished children. In order to assist parents and children, the school created a food program in which all food is to be provided by the school. Parents and community members are welcome to donate goods, but no student brings their own lunch since it is provided. At the same school a few years earlier, the “Child-Friendly” program began. This allowed for teachers to use Quechua and other indigenous languages for exercises. Further,
students are encouraged to share why they are diverse and how to appreciate other backgrounds. Although part of an impoverished district of Cusco, the children retain high rates of attendance, test scores, and inclusionary practices such as equal treatment of peers, shared values, and increased willingness to play with one another. This bond of programs has aided students, teachers, and the community as a whole in more ways than originally thought by UNICEF and the government.

Coordination and cooperation efforts between the Peruvian national government and UNICEF have improved over the last few decades, but there are still different spheres of work, different representatives, and different ideas and goals competing against one another. With other NGOs present working on the same issues, it can be challenging for every opinion, policy goal, and funding operation to be heard in both Congress and the Roundtable for Poverty Reduction. World Vision, World Food Programme, USAID, SUN, UNICEF, and many more IGOs and NGOs all are working in the same program, and three in themselves have goals about reducing undernutrition and boosting education: UNICEF, SUN, and WFP. Coordination efforts between most IGOs/NGOs and the Peruvian government result in Country Programme documents such as seen with UNICEF, but they all identify different indicators, goals, and results than the next plan. This discrepancy and lack of overall coordination results in a sustainability issue for all actors involved. Without coordination and cooperation, plans fall through, programs get defunded, and organizations could shift focus or leave the country altogether. According to one of the coordinators of MIDIS, there needs to be a greater level of responsibility and organization at the national level with institutions, IGOs, and NGOs. MIDIS as an institution works to identify the needs of communities but does not have much influence on policy-making or decisions when it comes to social development problems. Due to their influence and international notoriety,
UNICEF and other NGOs have greater capabilities to make a change on all levels of government and in communities (Elizabeth Tito Galvez, May 2017). It is the view of many Peruvians that NGOs have more pull in government policymaking operations that municipal leaders. This is due to the fact that IGOs and NGOs give funding to the government, have more influence in the international system, and have greater leadership within the national government.

**Goal Promotion**

Looking beyond the government, IGO and NGO-level, the well-known Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the new, Sustainable Development Goals, (SDGs) are driving forces of IGOs, NGOs, and policy changes. Due to the UN advocacy efforts and goals to reduce social and economic problems and inequalities around the world, they created eight MDGs in 2000 to combat issues like poverty, food insecurity, and access to education. Governments, including Peru’s, signed on to combat these same issues within their regions and borders. Only a few select countries have met the MDGs and the goals set by the UN. Since Peru reduced undernutrition dramatically since 2000, as well as improved maternal health and increased access to primary education, portions of goals one, two, and five have been met. UN agencies, as is the case of UNICEF, have promoted the MDGs in their work around the world, and now advocate for the SDGs. UNICEF took to Peru to help reduce undernutrition, child mortality, and increase the access to education for people in rural or difficult living situations. In order to achieve these goals, UNICEF and the Peruvian government met at the Roundtable to discuss the best courses of action. Their coordination efforts have been limited, but when they do coordinate, many different aspects of social development have produced results. Coordination between the Peruvian government, institutions, social programs, IGOs, and NGOs is an essential aspect of improving the lives of citizens in communities around Peru (Edith Chacón Ortiz, May 2017).
UNICEF and NGOs have filled in some of the gaps left behind by social programs and government institutions when it comes to poverty reduction and child undernutrition. However, IGOs/NGOs could not tackle these issues without the work of government, local knowledge, and the relationships established by government officials in communities across the Andes and Amazon regions. Coordination is essential for cooperative people and success in reducing undernutrition (Edith Chacón Ortiz, May 2017). If the government and UNICEF could coordinate on programs better, both WASH and social programs, they can better reach children in every situation and in every district in Peru, without the fear of overlap or inefficiency.

Although I have touched on coordination efforts and programs between UNICEF and the government, one area of coordination has not been discussed. Funding is a major necessity and issue in combating undernutrition, poverty, or any development challenge. In Peru, funding from the government is directly funneled to social programs and regional governments to run other institutions or programs on a more localized level. International IGOs and NGOs receive funding from developed governments, grants, and private donors (UNICEF, 2016). NGOs can also give funding grants to governments in need, especially for programs or organizations that are attempting to reverse the issues being tackled by the Sustainable Development Goals. Big intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) such as the World Bank and the UN, also give grants or conditional loans to governments needing the boost. The UNICEF Country Programme Document for 2017-2021, it estimated $4,670,000 USD would be allocated with another $35,475,000 USD, subject to availability, in other resources (Economic and Social Council, 2017, 1). With this money alone, we can see how much funding can funnel through one organization to one country. However, where does all this money go? Without coherent transparency or coordination between the government and NGOs, it is difficult to trace exactly where all funding
goes and to what program or institution. The coordinator of MIDIS, Edith Chacón Ortiz, spoke candidly about the need for more resources and financial grants to allow programs to grow and reach all the people in need, but that funding often gets “lost” in the system or there just isn’t enough to go around (Edith Chacón Ortiz, May 2017). Another interviewee, Edgar Gavón from the municipality of Cusco City, also discussed the need for more accountability with funding. He especially emphasized the conditions needed for regional and local governments to make sure funding is being spent on the right programs and organizations. Coordination between the levels of government, IGOs, and NGOs has the ability to create a sense of responsibility and push funding into the right direction. However, more work is needed to improve coordination and cooperation between actors, transparency in funding needs to be improved, and the coverage of programs could be enhanced with IGO, NGO, and government programs take into consideration.

As will be addressed in the following pages, the main missing link between IGOs, NGOs, and the Peruvian government is coordination and cooperation. Each entity has their own ideas, relations, and programs in Peru, yet programs frequently overlap or miss populations entirely. Not one entity is to blame, especially since they encompass different ideas, goals, and solutions to the same problems. Major efforts have been made, and the creation of the Roundtable for Poverty Reduction has been a key asset in combining forces to combat child undernutrition. However, missing links still exist in coordination, funding, and accountability.
Chapter Five: Missing Links

Peru’s undernutrition journey has seen its share of benefits and burdens. But it has been convoluted with actors and intentions to the point the system has unknowingly created gaps that many communities and children fall through. The rural communities in the Andes and Amazon are often left with one or no social programs to aid in their nutrition and poverty struggles. Specifically, in the Amazon, indigenous tribes remain unknown, uncontacted, and undocumented, leaving many to wonder how their lives compare to other areas in the region. Missing pieces and oversight hinder further progress and can even cause greater problems. The rise of anemia in populations has shown how detrimental non-action can be to the health of many. Anemia, a blood disorder, has been caused by the over-reliance on cereals and low-iron foods. Mothers, especially of traditional or indigenous backgrounds, fear for supplements or fortified foods since they fall out of the realm of traditional crops. Therefore, children are often not given proper, iron-rich foods or the necessary iron and Vitamin A supplements to eradicate anemia (Elizabeth Tito Galvez, May 2017). From problems of responsibility and accountability to a lack of funding transparency and public opinions, Peru’s nutrition problems are deeper than food insecurity and water issues. However, filling in these gaps and creating better program coverage could aid in the overall fight against child undernutrition.

Accountability, Transparency, and Program Coverage

With the government and its programs and institutions, the main problems have to do with accountability, transparency, and program coverage in general. A major issue addressed by the interviewees of this project spoke about the lack of responsibility felt by regional governments as well as the issues with accountability of program leaders and ministry heads. When speaking with Jessica Farfán Rodríguez (May 2017) of the regional government of Cusco
City, she described how the national and local levels control food subsidies, social programs, and nutrition-based programs while the regional government was responsible for institutions like health, education, and security (see figure 2). Officials outside of the regional government are of the opinion that the regional government passes the responsibility onto another institution or ignores the problem altogether. Most social programs are designed to be tailored at the local and regional levels, but due to this gap in coordination, responsibility has been left floating between government officials and levels. Without solid responsibility being undertaken at each level, undernutrition remains a continuous problem that many have to face.

Beyond responsibility, government officials, institutions, civil society, IGOs, and NGOs are lacking the necessary accountability to combat undernutrition. It wasn’t until the presidential election of 2006 that candidates were asked to make undernutrition a priority in their first 100
days of administration. Since many candidates took the oath, the winning candidate, Alan García was the main contributor to undernutrition policy so far in the 21st century. His successors made policy changes and legislative moves that have aided undernutrition, but none to the extent García has. By asking for accountability from the beginning, accountability resulted. Accountability must go beyond presidents all the way to the local leaders and program officials as well. Those who oversee the social programs, funding and allocation of resources on the lower governmental levels should also have greater levels of accountability. Instead of passing duties on to the next person or organization, those faced with fighting undernutrition could work on creating better accountability for others, community members, and families too. In order to improve the situation of undernutrition in Peru, all those involved, directly and indirectly, should improve their responsibility and accountability roles, in order to better programming and the lives of many.

While the government, institutions, and organizations have made strides to better govern social programs, IGO and NGO programs, there are still gaps in program coverage. Communities on the coast, who tend to see lower rates of undernutrition, have the most social programs operating in their regions (Acosta, 2011). This seems to be misplaced since the Amazonian and Andean regions have the highest rates of undernutrition in the country. Furthermore, programs like Vaso de Leche do not track their beneficiaries, so more often than not, food aid is given to an entire family, rather than those individuals identified as undernourished. Due to the problem of programs operating in some areas and not others, comes a problem where social programs can often overlap. In the Sacred Valley, all three mentioned social programs, JUNTOS, VdL, and Cuna Más, operate in the same small area. This overlap leaves other populations completely untouched in terms of program reach. The lack of cooperation and information sharing between
social programs was a major concern in many of the interviewees’ minds, and a key issue facing the government and organizations today (Elizabeth Tito Galvez and Eulogio Tapia, May 2017). Social programs have their set group of beneficiaries in a specific region, but without coordination, it is difficult to see what social programs are operating where and if there is any overlap of beneficiaries (one family receiving benefits from two or more social programs).

As with most governments and organizations in the world today, transparency is always an issue. Although the government of Peru has provided a direct web link to see its transparency information on their website and specific institutions in Peru do the same, there is still missing information that would be key to fill in the gaps. Transparency in social programs, nutrition and development plans, and policies would increase the accountability of individuals and the government as a whole. Without seeing the proposed plans, policies, and changes made to programs or institutions, non-government individuals are often left in the dark to what is really happening in the undernutrition battle on a day-to-day basis. Transparency of a social program’s allocation of resources and aid, and beneficiaries through identification and tracking would assist officials in the overall process of policymaking. Yet this information is usually not recorded or released to the public through internet channels. While I was working with interviewees in Peru, more often than not I was offered information that would have been critical to receive, such as the national plan for combating undernutrition, but the officials either didn’t have it or ended up not sharing the information. When discussing Vaso de Leche (VdL) with Edgar Gavón, its regional head, he stressed the importance of tracking beneficiaries, but then explained it doesn’t happen due to the lack of responsibility of the government (May 2017).

One of the largest transparency issues I have found related to funding. While looking into funding sources for social programs, IGO and NGO organizations, and the entire undernutrition
objective in Peru, I found many data points pointing to large sums of money going into Peru with
the example of UNICEF allocating $4.67 million USD to Peru for 2017-2021 (Economic and
Social Council, 2017, 1). Further, the World Food Programme (WFP) has allocated $12,033,437
USD for their strategic plan with Peru for 2018-2022 (WFP, 2017, 1). With figures from IGOs
and NGOs, it should be easier to track where all this money is going, but information falls short.
No matter what website or government document I found, I couldn’t find figures depicting where
all the money is funneled, which programs benefit, or which regions currently get the most
development aid. This lack of transparency issue seems to be compounded by the millions of US
dollars contributed by various international organizations that have little to no trace left after
being absorbed by the government. Now, Peru has been the case of many corruption scandals for
decades and still sits with relatively high rates of corruption that is often seen in money
laundering, fraud, and illegal resource extractions (Transparency International, 2016). With high
rates of corruption, one is left to wonder, where does all the funding for social programs and
development really go? Is it lining the pockets of political leaders or is it going toward
combating food insecurities, poverty, and child undernutrition? Although these questions are
currently left unanswered, it is important to note these gaps in transparency, even in today’s
technological age. For UNICEF’s plan for 2017-2021, $4,670,00 USD will be allocated to Peru’s
development goals formulated in the Economic and Social Council (2017) document, with
another $35,475,000 in other resources that are subject to availability. Although undernutrition
and many other development problems are expensive, this is only one organization pumping
close to $5 million USD, with more funds available, into one country. Which programs are
benefitting, and which communities see most of this? While questions are left unanswered, we
see a need for greater transparency that can lead to filling in the gaps in Peruvian policy, institutions, and undernutrition.

**Coordination and Regional Disparities**

While gaps in accountability, transparency, and program coverage exist, there are deeper, institutionalized problems hindering progress. Specifically, problems in policies, coordination, and programs have left gaping holes in undernutrition that are left open by the abovementioned, large-scale problems. On a micro-level, policies have led to regional disparities. Favoring coastal 

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**Map 1:**
*Regional Disparities of Peru. The darkest colors represent the highest rates of child undernutrition and other development indicators. (UNICEF, 2008, 5).*
regions and those more visible to policymakers, an example being Lima and its outlying districts, has led to higher rates of undernutrition and lower access to resources in the Amazon, Andean, and rural regions of Peru (see map 1).

Funding has been given to social programs, but according to historical records, more funding has been given to Vaso de Leche and JUNTOS than Cuna Más (Aguiar et al., 2007). Although these programs tend to serve a larger population and be more cost-effective than Cuna Más, the unequal distribution of financial support further highlights the gaps in funding altogether. Cuna Más serves more rural or underprivileged regions in Peru, while JUNTOS and Vaso de Leche are more prominent and work in cities like Cusco, Lima, Puno, and Arequipa, which are all large meccas for the people and favorable policies. Furthermore, social programs are often used as policy add-ons or political favors, continuing the regional disparities in program coverage. The larger the region that supports one social program and candidate, the more that program will work in their communities.

According to the interviewees of this study, the largest, micro-level problem facing the Peruvian government and society is that of coordination. Eulogio Tapia, the Sub Manager for Social Development in the municipality of Cusco City, believes that regions, institutions, social programs, and the different governments at all levels need to coordinate better. This would improve policies, social program coverage, and access to resources for many. As stated by Eulogio Tapia, improved coordination could arise from community meetings between government officials and local leaders, focused projects that are tailored to regions, acknowledgment of the national plan by regional authorities, relationship building, gathering of community opinions, and overall changes to the system. While each level of government operates in their own realms, it is necessary to improve coordination and cooperation between all
actors involved (Eulogio Tapia, May 2017). With so many actors, communities, and programs operating in Peru, it is difficult to see and understand what everyone else is doing. Institutions like the Roundtable for Poverty Reduction were created to combat this issue. It sits, however, at the national level while the regional and local governments are left to find another arena for coordination. The lack of coordination between social programs contributes to the regional disparities and overlapping problems. The head of the MUNI project, Elizabeth Tito Galvez, spoke intensely about the need to coordinate programs to better serve each community, increase education, and improve an area’s access to resources like clean water and health care. Without this coordination, efforts only do a fraction of what they could (Elizabeth Tito Galvez, May 2017). Coordination between national institutions like MIDIS and the Ministry of Education could improve this problem by directing the work of people and organizations in other institutions and levels of government. Coordination and cooperation are major issues facing the interworkings of the Peruvian government, organizations, civil society, and institutions today.

**Administrative Problems**

Finally, a gap in social programs has led to this continuous undernutrition challenge in Peru. Although the fight against undernutrition has seen many positive results and social programs have been a key driver of that change, their fundamental problems cause the rates of undernutrition to stagnate or rise only slightly. This is demonstrated near the end of presidential terms in rural regions (see table 3, page 22). Without the proper coordination for region-specific programs, the overlap will continue. Overlap creates inconsistencies in the system where people often disappear without notice from the view of the national government. With the coastal regions being the most served, rural Andean and Amazonian regions are left bearing the burdens of undernutrition and lack of access to clean water. Without the tracking of beneficiaries,
programs could be giving their aid to families that are not identified as needy or don’t know when they no longer need to give aid. Some people and families desperately need the assistance of these government social programs but are unable to receive benefits due to regional or local problems within the social programs and governing boards of programs. The difference between government social programs and the programs instituted by IGOs like UNICEF is that the former is supply-oriented while the latter tends to be demand-based. Government programs are driven by policies and officials, while WASH, a UNICEF program, is driven by the demand of the localities and regions themselves. The demand for clean water, education, and sanitation measures has driven UNICEF to create different programs attacking each problem. Without combining supply and demand programs, it is one side versus the other, and nobody truly benefits due to its lack of sustainability. Social programs, IGOs, and NGO organizations are both crucial in the fight against undernutrition, but the lack of coordination efforts causes these two ideas to be more combative against each other rather than child undernutrition. According to Eulogio Tapia (May 2017), social programs, IGO, and NGO organizations are critical, but each garner different support from the communities, and with a struggle of sustainability, their overall effectiveness has been put into question time and time again.

Undernutrition is a very serious and personal challenge faced by children and adults in Peru. Unfortunately, the current system doesn’t allow for many opinions outside of the main governmental and international actors. Civil society, which includes communities, local organizations like MUNI, and people outside the government, plays a key role in understanding and promoting programs. In Peru, the civil society and communities are left outside most of the dealings between the government, IGOs, and NGOs. This means that the people most affected by undernutrition are not being heard. According to all interviewees and the current literature,
communities do not have a voice when it comes to undernutrition. The voice of the people is needed to better current programs provided by both UNICEF and the government. The current, top-down approach causes participation and implementation problems both for the government and IGOs/NGOs working in the country.

*Areas for Future Research*

Chronic child undernutrition is a serious development problem that hinders the lives of many children in Peru, and around the world. Even with the current research on undernutrition, government policies, international actors, policies, and programs, a great deal can still be analyzed. In the case of Peru, it would be beneficial to map out the districts with social programs and overlay said map with district rates of undernutrition. This type of research could either show a correlation between social programs and undernutrition or illustrate the need to look beyond programs to other reducing factors. Since social programs are a prominent piece of the Peruvian puzzle, I believe the field would benefit from a localized and personal view of social programs and their impacts.

Further, with the stated issues of transparency, the Peruvian case would gain greater understanding with more in-depth research on funding of programs and policies in relation to undernutrition. Since funding is difficult to track once it enters the country, I believe it would be incredibly informative to track where funding is being sourced from, which programs receive the greatest share, and which districts have the smallest amounts of funding. Since funding sources are both in the Peruvian government and from international governments and organizations, it would be important to differentiate between types of funding and intended goals of said endowments. An improved tracking system would allow actors to recognize which regions of
Peru are the most under-served and if the lack of funding correlates with higher rates of undernutrition.

Finally, an interesting and important research opportunity would be to interview mothers and community members to understand and catalog their interpretations of policies and programs put forth by the Peruvian government and international IGOs and NGOs. By doing so, the issue of top-down governing would be reduced and better, or more tailored programs could emerge with support of the communities. This process would delve into program differences, coordination efforts, and accountability greater than this project. Due to an inadequate amount of time, insufficient funding, and shortcoming of in-country contacts at the time, I was unable to interview mothers and leaders of communities while in Peru in 2017. Yet, I do find it important to understand the side of the citizens and people most affected not only by undernutrition but by policy and program changes simultaneously.

All of the abovementioned areas for future research only touch on the greater subject of undernutrition, actor coordination, and policy implementation in Peru. Research about undernutrition and actors could be done on a by-country basis and on a global scale. Undernutrition is a worldwide problem that crosses borders and affects millions of innocent children and families living in impoverished situations. Peru has seen successful reductions in the national and coastal rates of undernutrition through improved national strategies, continued work of social programs, and the creation of the Roundtable for Poverty Reduction to improve policy and strategies through discussions between the various levels of government, civil society, and international actors. However, the Peruvian case is still missing research on social program coverage across all districts, the transparency of funding, and the opinions of locals, civil society, and community leaders.
Conclusions

Undernutrition is a major development issue that affects most countries around the world, but especially developing countries, even neighbors, and allies of the United States. Peru’s case is unique because there has been major progress in reducing undernutrition, but this progress has seemed to have slowed. Regional disparities and program coverage paint a bleak picture for impoverished people living in the Andean and Amazonian regions. Coordination, better program coverage, and demand-oriented plans and programs are needed to improve the situation of thousands and reduce the rate of undernutrition. UNICEF and the Peruvian government are able to fill in the gaps of their programs and policies by improving their communication and policymaking efforts together. As an extension of the Peruvian government, social programs possess the relationships and information to improve themselves, but without agreement by the government itself or policies that bolster their funding and roles, they are only doing half of what they are capable (Eulogio Tapia, Municipality of Cusco, May 2017). Involving the opinions of mothers and community members could help tailor social programs through implementation and cultural practice knowledge. Further, better organization and better tracking of beneficiaries or those who are seeking social program benefits, social programs can make a worthwhile impact.

UNICEF has been operating in Peru since 1948, but its relationship with the Peruvian government has not moved past the Roundtable for Poverty Reduction or beyond the chambers of the government. UNICEF’s WASH and education programs have merit and are answering the demands of the people. Although coordination has been seen between these two actors, there are gaps and missing links that allow people to fall through. From program coverage to education to sanitation efforts, UNICEF and the government can and should improve their cooperation and coordination efforts since it would seem to benefit society as a whole.
The presidential office of Peru holds the most policymaking power and influence in Peru. The national plans, programs, and funding are all controlled by this office. With an incredible amount of power and responsibility, the presidents of the 21st century have pushed to make undernutrition an issue of the past. Through the creation and improvement of social programs to greater relations and allowance for interpretation of programs at a localized level, we have seen results in undernutrition statistics. However, the coastal regions are reaping the benefits of multiple social programs while the Andean and Amazonian regions have a limited scope of capabilities due to the lack of programs or region-specific policies. Without the acknowledgment and diversification of social programs in conjunction with UNICEF, one can assume the rates of undernutrition will remain elevated for those living in the Andes and Amazon.

One large question has been left unanswered: funding. The lack of transparency of funding locations, amounts, and intended beneficiaries is troubling, especially with frequent problems and scandals regarding corruption in Peru. Millions of US dollars filter into Peru’s government and economy with the intention to be distributed to support development policies and programs; this information, however, has not been published or discussed publically. UNICEF alone is planning to give $4,670,000 USD between 2017-2021 with another $35,475,000 USD is subject to availability (Economic and Social Council, 2017, 1). With other NGOs and IGOs working in Peru, millions of dollars can and probably are being sent either as aid or conditional loans. Transparency about the situation would be beneficial for understanding the breakdown of social programs, their beneficiaries, and the situation of undernutrition in general.

By looking at current policies, the influence of international organizations and money, and social programs, much can be learned from this study and all the factors that influence the
fight against chronic child undernutrition. This situation in Peru is not a country-specific problem, rather one that bridges all borders of the world. Understanding UNICEF’s actions and coordination efforts with the Peruvian government allows us to understand what challenges development organizations are facing and what can be improved for the future. I believe researching the various data points, interviewing government officials, and examining related literature, the picture has broadened in terms of undernutrition in Peru, but there continues to be a need for more work and research. Due to the difficulties of accessing information and the limited timetable for this project, some questions were left unanswered. However, this research has added information and context to the ever-growing situation of undernutrition in Peru and around the world. It was important to contribute to the current literature, analyze the current system, and give context in order to better understand the Peruvian situation with undernutrition. The future of Peru looks bright with undernutrition declining, but the underlying causes, anemia, lack of community opinions, and government coordination problems cast a dark shadow on a positive development in chronic child undernutrition.
**Bibliography**


Appendices
Interview Question Guide (May 2017 – IRB Approved)

These questions were used during the spring semester of 2017 for my study abroad research project. As semi-structured interviews, some questions were repeated to other levels of government or interviewees and are denoted with an asterisk.

**National Level of Government**
- *In relation to the social programs, have you established a way to measure the reduction of malnutrition?*
- *What do you think of Vaso de Leche? How about other social programs?*
- *What is the role of each level of government? How do governments and institutions coordinate?*
- What advances have there been in inter-governmental coordination?
- How do the sectors and ministries coordinate?
- *What difficulties are there?*
- What is the role of MIDIS in the fight against undernutrition?
- *What do people think about social programs and MIDIS?*
- *What are the plans for the future?*

**Regional Level of Government**
- What are the relations with the national level?
- What is the approach of the regional government? How does it complement the national approach?
- *How many projects are there and how long have they been working?*
- How do the districts and local governments coordinate?
- *What is the perception of the social programs?*
- *What do you think about the programs? Which has the best impact on people?*

**Local Level of Government**
- What is the state of undernutrition?
- *What is being done to improve the situation of undernutrition?*
- What advances have there been? What difficulties?
- *Are the projects and/or programs sustainable?*
- *How does one coordinate with the institutions? Do they coordinate with other districts?*
- What is your opinion about the social programs and their contributions in the best care of kids? How do they coordinate with these programs?
- What is your relationship with the national and regional government levels?
- *What is your opinion of Vaso de Leche?*

**Vaso de Leche**
- What are you doing to improve the situation of undernutrition?
- Is Vaso de Leche sustainable?
• What is your relationship with the levels of government? Are there advances? Are there difficulties?
• *How do you coordinate with the national, regional, and local levels of government?
• Are you familiar with the national plan? What is your opinion about it?
• What do you think about its role in the reduction of chronic child undernutrition?
• *What are your plans for the future?
• *What is your opinion about social programs and their contributions to better the lives and care of children?
• *What are the perceptions of the people about Vaso de Leche, specifically the mothers?