

Subsidy Reform: Effective Targeting to Reach the Poor? The Case of Egypt

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I dedicate this thesis to

My parents

&

My cute and sweet daughters

“Habiba and Hla”

Abstract

In Egypt, the Food Subsidy Programme (FSP) contributes greatly to social stability, yet there is academic and political pressure to reform the system to prioritise the effective targeting of the poor. This has been particularly so since the 2011 Egyptian Revolution, and in the light of claims by the government and international organisations that the programme is relatively expensive and ineffective in targeting the poor. Most previous studies of the Egyptian FSP address the challenges of exclusion and inclusion errors, from an exclusively econometric approach. However, in this study a mixed approach method is taken with a combination of primary and secondary data. The main source of statistical data is a cross sectional data from the representative national Household Income, Expenditure and Consumption Survey (HIECS), conducted by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS, 2013) of Egypt for 2012/13. This survey contains 7,528 household heads in 27 (local government) governorates, for both urban and rural areas, encompassing around 32,732 individual household members. Applying a more “orthodox”-commonly used- quantitative evaluation of targeting, the study shows errors of inclusion and exclusion of the FSP’s current targeting system across all of the country’s governorates. Additionally, the study explores how targeting is affected by the programme’s bureaucratic structure and policy design. This draws on concepts and theories of public administration and takes account of the growing influence of international organisations in recent reforms. As well as policy documents, this analysis draws on key informant interviews and 12 months of qualitative fieldwork across three different study sites in Cairo, Alexandria and Assuit. This analysis is complemented by the application of sociological concepts, especially street-level bureaucracy, to explore the dynamics of targeting at the micro-level. This reveals how the implementers of the programme at the local level and their working conditions influence targeting outcomes. These combined methods generate both a statistically reliable measure of the targeting performance, as well a more in-depth insights about the programme’s effectiveness in achieving targeting outcomes. A major conclusion is that targeting performance cannot be adequately understood purely on the basis of macro-level econometric analysis, but requires a more multi-disciplinary, multi-level approach. These contextualised insights are therefore essential if real improvements to targeting and effectiveness are to be achieved.

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Acronyms

BS	Bakery Shop
CAPMAS	Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics
DSIT	Directorates of Supply and Internal Trade
ERSAP	Economic Reform and Structural Adjustment Programme
FSP	Food Subsidy Programme
GGP	Governance Global Practice
HIECS	Household Income, Expenditure and Consumption Survey
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MMP	Ministry of Military Production
MSIT	Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade
NPM	New Public Management
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PDS	Public Distribution System
PIN	Personal Identification Number
PMT	Proxy Means Testing
PO	Post Offices
POS	Points of Sale
RO	Ration Office
RS	Ration Shop
SCCs	Smart Card Companies
SITAD	Supply and Internal Trade Administrative Department
SLBs	Street Level Bureaucrats
SLBy	Street-Level Bureaucracy
SRC	Smart Ration Card
SSNPs	Social Safety Net Programs
UNR	Unified National Registry

Currency Equivalents

Exchange Rate as of November 2nd, 2016

1 Egyptian Pound (LE)	=	U.S. \$ 0.1126
U.S. \$ 1	=	8.88 LE

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the general debates about Social Safety Net Programs (SSNPs). These debates provide the wider context for my specific case-study about targeting performance of the Food Subsidy Programme (FSP), one of the most prominent anti-poverty programs in the Arab Republic of Egypt. The chapter briefly discusses issues that are developed in more depth later in the thesis, including debates around targeting, the modalities of the SSNPs and the use of Information Communication Technology (ICT). It then provides a preliminary overview about the FSP in Egypt and identifies the key research questions. The chapter ends by setting out the structure and the general outline of the thesis.

1.2 Mainstream Debates and Modalities of SSNPs

Many countries offer SSNPs to meet the diverse needs of their populations. As a policy framework, social protection has been used as a tool to address poverty and vulnerability, especially in developing countries. A growing number of governments has been adopting programs for national social protection for reducing poverty (Barrientos, 2011). A big debate concerns the choice of social policy, specifically, whether the core principle behind distribution of the SSNP should be “universalism” or selectivity through “targeting”. Under universal schemes, the SSNP is open to the entire population as a basic right, while under targeting schemes, eligibility is the core to access the SSNP benefit as being advocated mainly by the international organization such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and International Labour Organisation (ILO) (Sabates-Wheeler, Hurrell and Devereux, 2015). Indeed, how far a policy regime leans toward either of these options will shape its welfare social contract. The social contract reflects the type of regime and its ideology: liberal regimes are characterised by policies that highly target low income; conservative regimes are shaped by traditional family and social values; social democratic regimes

provide universalistic systems that promote equality of high standards rather than equality of basic needs (Esping-Andersen, 1990). This is a topical debate both in low and middle income countries with limited and fragmented social protection institutional systems and also in wealthy countries with well-developed social security and comprehensive welfare systems (Devereux, 2016). SSNP is needed since the market alone cannot satisfy the social contract; therefore, the state needs to be involved in a way that guarantees that basic livelihood needs will be met. Now, the questions are what the modality of the assistance; targeted or universal scheme and what the technique and form of this chosen modality is; cash, voucher, in-kind or other form.

Extensive literatures exist on different methods of targeting mechanisms, that mostly published by international organisations, especially the World Bank (Hoddinott, 1999; Conning and Kevane, 2002; Coady, Grosh and Hoddinott, 2004b; Coady, 2006; Samson, Niekerk and Mac, 2006, 2010; Grosh *et al.*, 2008; Jones, Vargas and Villar, 2008), administrative, social and political targeting costs (Besley, 1990; Besley and Kanbur, 1993; Grosh, 1994; Grosh and Baker, 1995; MacAuslan and Riemenschneider, 2011) and targeting errors (Cornia and Stewart, 1993; Coady, Grosh and Hoddinott, 2004a; Devereux *et al.*, 2015; Sabates-Wheeler, Hurrell and Devereux, 2015). A few studies addressed the question of whether targeted schemes should be done at all or whether universalistic schemes should be implemented instead (Mkandawire, 2005; Hoddinott, 2007; Ellis, 2012; Kabeer, 2014; Sepúlveda, 2014) and little is known about targeting costs (Houssou and Zeller, 2011). In the debate about the chosen modality of assistance, proponents of targeting have a more optimistic vision and assessment of targeting experience and are confident that the use of modern ICT helps to minimize targeting errors. In contrast, proponents of universal schemes, through social unity, are optimistic that uniform provision of benefits will garner a sufficient budget to provide meaningful social protection. Their opposition to targeting is based on the perspectives of rights of human needs, on the practicalities of targeting and its costs, including political costs and costs to beneficiaries, or on moral principles of equity (Hoddinott, 2007; Devereux, 2016; Leite *et al.*, 2017).

Meanwhile, within these debates and under the guise of enforced austerity responses to financial crisis, price shocks and economic slowdown, international organisations play a vital role in supporting reforms and reshaping the SSNPs. They are trying to shift both the modality of the social schemes from universal to targeted

schemes and also the technique and form of the targeted scheme. International organisations such as the IMF and the World Bank have been introducing and supporting social policies reform initiatives in developing countries since at least the 1980s, not only by supporting the introduction of reform methods but also as by influencing the shaping of the programme's structure (Andrews, 2013). For example, a study carried out by the ILO reviewed the structural adjustment policies of the IMF in 187 countries from 2010-2020. It shows that the IMF advice focuses on a series of reforms, two of which are related to the thesis topic: (i) eliminating universal subsidies (including food, energy and agriculture in 132 countries); (ii) rationalizing spending and further targeting of safety nets (in 107 countries) (Ortiz *et al.*, 2015). International organisations play an important role in pushing reforms with regards to the modality, technique and form of targeted SSNPs, claiming that they are more effective and efficient in distributing government resources among the poor (Domelen, 2007). Contemporary arguments and the structural adjustment policies of international organisations are now focusing more on the technique and form of the modality of the SSNP and the cost-effectiveness of alternative transfer modalities. Therefore, the debate is shifting toward targeted SSNP in the form of cash. Proponent of the merits of cash transfers claim that these cash schemes generate the largest welfare gains because the beneficiaries are free to purchase what suits them. Moreover, it is argued that cash transfers are associated with less stigma and also are less costly to administer (Hidrobo *et al.*, 2014). This debate, however, has been hindered by a lack of rigorous evidence that explores the implementation system of the programme's targeting mechanism at grassroots level (Hidrobo *et al.*, 2014; Alderman, Gentilini and Yemtsov, 2018). This may partly contribute to the continuing existence of food vouchers and in-kind transfer programs in low and middle-income countries, beside historical and political reasons.

Food programs and other SSNPs, such as FSP in Egypt, are still a major part of social policy and a predominant modality in low and middle-income countries such as Indonesia, India, and Mexico (Rishnamurthy, Pathania and Tandon, 2017; Abdalla and Al-Shawarby, 2018; Banerjee *et al.*, 2018; Scott and Hernández, 2018). A World Bank study by Alderman, Gentilini and Yemtsov (2018) show that, based on administrative data for 108 low and middle-income countries, food and voucher programs (including FSP), unconditional cash transfers, school feeding, conditional

cash transfers, social pension, public work and other SSNPs cover around 20.4, 7, 4.3, 3.1, 2.3, 1.7, 1.4 percent of households in those settings, respectively. This means that the programme with highest coverage, i.e. food and voucher programs, reaches 13 percentage more households than unconditional cash transfers. These programs are perceived as a key safety network, providing access to sustainable livelihoods and as a substantive right and an obligation of the state toward people in the society, including the FSP in Egypt. Their existence is justified on the grounds that food is a daily and pressing concern for households at the bottom of the income ladder, drains 61 percent of the poor household's expenditures (Banerjee and Duflo, 2011).

The impact of SSNPs on poor households, studied in various contexts, has been shown to be substantial. For example, a study assessed the impact of social SSNPS on poverty and inequality, using the World Bank's ASPIRE data set, which comprises more than 50 countries. It shows that SSNPs have lifted between 136 million and 165 million people out of extreme poverty (Fiszbein, Kanbur and Yemtsov, 2014). Similarly, there is evidence of the effectiveness of these programs, mainly published by international organisations, with regards to many dimensions such as nutrition, food security, social cohesion, human capital accumulation and climate resilience for households (IEG, 2011b; FAO, 2015; World Bank, 2015b; Alderman, 2016). A World Bank study showed that, an effective targeting SSNP can lead to a tangible difference, especially for poor households (Grosh *et al.*, 2008). Therefore, these reversals of hard-won gains have been mirrored by the expansion of the number of social protection schemes, including a range of conditional and unconditional cash transfers, voucher or in-kind transfer across low and middle income countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia (Devereux, 2016). Currently, there are two growing directions of change that might affect the effectiveness of SSNPs: firstly, in terms of the modality and the technique and form of SSNP; secondly, the view that effective targeting can lead to better outcomes to reach the poor by using technology.

The first direction of change is in the trajectories of reform. The routes of reforms are firstly pushing SSNPs from general provision to targeted ones. The second direction of reform is moving toward cash transfers and the use of technology. For instance, SSNP food reforms in low and middle income countries have charted first the modality, whether the programme should feature a generalised provision or more targeted schemes, and secondly, the technique and form of these SSNPS, whether food

subsidies, food stamps, food transfers, vouchers, and cash transfers. In Egypt, FSP has swung between general provision and targeted schemes. Reforms have not been static in Egypt, as being mostly published by the World Bank studies, however: targeting effectiveness seems to have followed a U shape curve throughout almost the past eight decades, from universal coverage in the 1940s to more targeted forms in 1980s, and gain further increasing coverage in 2000s (Alderman, Von Braun and Sakr, 1982; Löfgren and El-said, 1999; Löfgren and El-Said, 2001; Ahmed and Bouis, 2002; Ahmed *et al.*, 2002; Gutner, 2002; World Bank, 2010; Abdalla and Al-Shawarby, 2018).

In Sri Lanka, the government has moved from a targeted scheme of food subsidies to food vouchers, and eventually to cash transfers. This dramatic shift started in the 1940s, from universal to voucher transfers, as the programme became fiscally unviable. Vouchers were eventually replaced in 2012 with cash transfer schemes to overcome the ineffectiveness of the voucher transfers, for instance, long delays in the issuance of goods and uncertain delivery dates, poor quality of goods and corruption practices. However, the government has faced several implementation challenges; 38 percent of poor households receive cash transfers, while more than 60 percent of poor households are excluded from the programme (Edirisinghe, 1987; Weerahewa, Gedara and Kanthilanka, 2017; Tilakaratna and Sooriyamudali, 2018). In Indonesia, the government has shifted from a generalised to a more targeted provision. In 1998, due to massive devaluation that negatively affected agriculture, the country faced numerous challenges and the government was forced to adopt an explicit targeted programme called Raskin. The programme's objective is to provide rice to poor households. It has persisted as a core domestic SSNP even though the government has since then, launched a number of cash transfer schemes. Raskin is currently moving toward a voucher scheme with on-going pilot programme in 44 cities (Timmer, 1975; Team, 1985; Temple, 2001; World Bank, 2012; Timmer, Hastut and Sumarto, 2018). From the 20th century, some scholars have engaged in an on-going debate about the relative merits of cash versus food programs, while others have discussed the quandary in more details (Gentilini, 2016).

The second trend is to encourage governments to use ICT in delivering benefits to the poor, arguing that technology helps to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of public services, accelerate information dissemination, increase accountability and

the transparency of government administration, in turn reducing corruption, and facilitating citizen participation in local governance. Therefore, technology can play a key role in accelerating, facilitating and enabling reforms for effective targeting (Bhatnagar and Schware, 2000; Bhatnagar and Singh, 2010; Gelb and Decker, 2012; Bhatnagar, 2014; World Bank, 2015c, 2016b). A specific use of ICT is the development of electronic platforms to transfer cash to mobile phones or bank accounts; governments are also using ICT to introduce and transfer voucher and cash transfer programs. For example, in Egypt the government has used card readers that record the number of loaves of bread that each household family take, using a Smart Ration Card (SRC). In Mexico, the government has introduced electronic tracking of free tortillas purchases. In Bihar in India, the government has used digitalisation of the ration card to reduce the leakage of rations (Alderman, Gentilini and Yemtsov, 2018).

Henceforth, not only in Egypt but also in many other countries, the direction of reform is towards establishing a common registry of current beneficiaries and new applicants in an attempt to coordinate and integrate across programs. A World Bank study has defined the common or social registry as ‘information systems that support outreach, intake, registration, and determination of potential eligibility for one or more social programs. They have both a social policy role, as inclusion systems, and an operational role, as information systems’ (Leite *et al.*, 2017, p.5). This study has stated the importance of central and local institutional arrangements as a core theme in using the social registry for social programs channelled to poor and vulnerable households. Therefore, the gaps in the governance and institutional capacity of SSNPs can play an important role in affecting on the programme’s performance. However, the prevailing structural adjustment policies of international organisations often propose ICT as a technical fix, in which private sector can be involved in providing compelling tools for more effective targeting of the programme. However, this reflects an overly simplistic vision of better targeting outcomes that ignores the complex challenges of the structure, settings and daily routine management on the ground.

Thus, the two directions on-going targeting reforms and debates about SSNPs are taking, reflect how the selection of certain forms of targeting can influence a programme’s outcomes in terms of reaching the poor. A World Bank study showed that, these reforms include the modality, technique and form of SNNPs with the use of the ICT as a competence tool for enhancing their effectiveness (Leite *et al.*, 2017).

However, in promoting these reforms, targeting outcomes results depend on the approach adopted to measure the targeting performance. The common approach is to measuring targeting outcomes is the use of quantitative methods. However, there tends to be a lack of evidence in terms of costs and various unintended consequences due to the implementation as a result of any targeting mechanism, leading some scholars, in the wider literature other than ones produced by the international organisations, to criticise targeting against anti-poverty programs (Mkandawire, 2005), arguing that the World Bank and the IMF have used their influence to impose common models of government reforms on developing countries that have contributed to undermining domestic processes of finding and matching government structures to local contexts (Chang, 2003; Rose, 2003; Rodrik, 2007; Kenny, 2008; Andrews, 2010).

A recent World Bank study has stated that ‘any discussion of food transfers invariably leads to the question, “Why not provide people with cash instead?” When policy-makers consider a new social assistance programme, it is likely to be a cash transfer. To be clear, there are solid arguments to support such an inclination. Above all, cash can, under the right circumstances, provide choice, empower recipients, and generate local economic multipliers. Modern policy making benefits not only from sweeping technological advances in cash delivery but also from evidence sparked by a revolution in empirical inquiry... Yet those arguments alone have not always offered a convincing basis for fully replacing food and voucher schemes with cash’ (Alderman, Gentilini and Yemtsov, 2018, p.2). The recent reforms of the FSP fit closely to policy trends discussed thus far and therefore, FSP can to some extent be used to explore the validity of these wider policy frameworks. In this regards, the World Bank study has stated that ‘the recent experience of Egypt is noteworthy... the presence of an automated smart system to monitor both financial transactions of the bakeries and accrued saving points of the beneficiaries. A private sector partnership consolidated the system and rolled out the model nationwide within about a year...Technology also assists in improving the efficiency of targeting. Computer assisted data collection, for example, makes proxy means testing easier to implement’ (Alderman, Gentilini and Yemtsov, 2018, p.20). These arguments introduce reform and push countries towards more effective targeting of the poor through a “Cookie-cutter” approach based on solely quantitative measures. This is done through promoting the application of cash transfer schemes and technology without looking at

the feasibility of these schemes in the local contexts. In an era when New Public Management (NPM), governance, decentralisation and individualisation of social welfare service are being activated, social caseworkers are playing an increasingly important role in shaping the targeting outcomes of any SSNP of the welfare state (Rice, 2012). The prevailing assessment of the modalities, techniques and forms of targeted SSNPs should not be disconnected from these crucial interlinkages of bureaucratic structure of the programs. The complex institutional arrangement of SSNPs together with the systematic environment where the caseworkers –Street Level Bureaucrats (SLBs) – operate should be intertwined so that the reality on the ground of the SSNPs’ policy implementation and its influence on targeting outcomes can be brought into focus. Henceforth, the concept of complex and interconnected systems in the wider literature published by some scholars are contrasted with the “Cookie-cutter” approach published by the international organisations, underscoring the key role of iteration, adaptation, and feedback loops (Ramalingam, 2013; Duncan, 2016; Andrews, Pritchett and Woolcock, 2017).

Henceforth, the proposed ideas and introduced reforms have not embraced a pragmatic policy design –qualitative approach- that takes into account the implementation process in assessing targeting outcomes. Thus, the selection of a reform through the introduction or evaluation of a targeting method in terms of effectively reaching the poor, has become disengaged from the realities of implementation and a country’s specific circumstances. Governments have thus an important role to play in the design, monitoring and evaluation of social policy interventions as noted by the World Bank study (Coady, Grosh and Hoddinott, 2004a); however, this role does not encompass a pragmatic and practical approach. Consequently, deciding which method of targeting is appropriate under what circumstances is an important question in the implementation of a concrete agenda of programs for reaching the poor. Therefore, targeting performance should not simply be measured by quantifying the targeting errors but should encompass the effect of real implementation given the country’s circumstances and the local context. By measuring the targeting outcomes of certain modalities, techniques and forms of SSNPs within specific local contexts, targeting outcomes can differ greatly from one country to another.

This thesis is about the targeting performance of one of the most prominent anti-poverty targeting programs in the Arab Republic of Egypt. FSP in Egypt dates back to World War II and continues into the present. In an effort to achieve social equity and political stability, policy-makers in Egypt have persistently prioritised FSP on their social agenda (World Bank, 2010; Abdalla and Al-Shawarby, 2018). In the past century, the programme has developed from being an emergency food assistance “universal programme” during war time to a core anti-poverty SSNP in Egypt. Its importance is reflected in the public expenditure allocated in the budget to this programme (Scobie, 1988; Abdalla and Al-Shawarby, 2018). An extensive literature, published by the World Bank, on the pitfalls of FSP has outlined the programme’s challenges regarding targeting, the regressive nature of the FSP’s benefit, and several cost inefficiencies (World Bank, 2010; Abdalla and Al-Shawarby, 2018). Similarly, as being discussed earlier, this large body of literature has assessed the targeting performance through macro-level analysis using different methods, but from a solely quantitative point of view and has then proposed reforms based on various simulations and scenarios (for review; Ahmed *et al.*, 2002; World Bank, 2010; Ramadan and Thomas, 2011). The gap in the literature on targeting performance and reforms of the FSP is that it fails to explore the real implementation phase of the programme itself, a gap that this thesis intends to fill. It should be noted, however, that this study does not offer a solution or claim to provide a comprehensive analysis of FSP performance and its effectiveness. Instead, it identifies some grass-root realities of the programme’s targeting system and provides different insights into the programme’s effectiveness by drawing on interdisciplinary discourses that connect reform preferences with institutional capacity, governance, fiscal spaces, social contract, as well as the political economy of introducing and sustaining food-based transfer programs. It is hoped that these insights may inspire academics, practitioners and policy-makers engaged in SSNPs reforms.

The objective of this thesis is therefore to measure the targeting performance outcomes of the FSP and to then identify the extent to which the real implementation and the local context influence these outcomes. Moreover, the study can be used as a case study within wider debates about targeting in social assistance to draw attention to the limited validity of mainstream approaches in understanding targeting outcomes and their performance. I explain some of these claims in the thesis and reinforce them by using empirical evidence of the FSP, as a case study, showing the extent or nature

of the mainstream approaches on how it may have a significant impact on the targeting outcomes. In so doing, I examine how effective targeting performance is in terms of mis-targeting errors based on the “orthodox”- commonly used- quantitative evaluation approach and then go on to explain what the different interpretations for these errors are, by exploring how and why these errors occur across different domains, both from a public administration and sociological perspective. This thesis represents one of the first studies on FSP that explores the implementation of the programme’s targeting mechanism at grassroots level. Implementation realities should not be addressed in isolation, but organically. The thesis does so by presenting different insights with regards to targeting that are of great relevance to the effectiveness of the programme’s outcomes.

1.3 Egypt Case Study: Targeting FSP- Measuring the Outcomes by Introducing Quantitative, Qualitative and More Heterodox Methods

Egypt is a country with a substantial food subsidy programme. Indeed, in Egypt, these subsidies have become embedded as an acquired right for citizens, and the legitimacy of the ruling regime has been predicated on the ability to provide food and basic goods at affordable, subsidised prices. It has become as a commitment on the government (Abdalla and Al-Shawarby, 2018). Not only Egypt but also other countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region rely heavily on food and fuel subsidies (Sdrulevich *et al.*, 2014). Despite the objective of allocating these substantial amounts of subsidies mainly to the poor, the spontaneous revolutionary wave, the so called Arab spring, in the MENA region, was propelled by demands for greater equality of access to resources and resource redistribution in society. In January 2011 in Egypt, protesters called for an end to poor economic conditions, injustice and corruption (Houissa, 2010). The Arab spring has highlighted some key challenges in the MENA region, including high levels of poverty rates, the need to reform national subsidy systems, the growth of inequalities, and social injustice (Hinnebusch, 2006; Ross, 2012, 2008; Breisinger, Ecker and Al-Riffai, 2011; Drukan, 2011; Korotayev and Zinkina, 2011; Bellin, 2012; Campante and Chor, 2012; O’Sullivan, Rey and Mendez, 2012; Singerman, 2013; Beck and Hüser, 2015; Costello, Jenkins and Aly, 2015).

Poverty is an important policy challenge in the MENA region, despite a large proportion of governments' expenditures being directed to SSNPs (Sdrlevich *et al.*, 2014). In 2008, for example, 2.7 per cent of the MENA population were living below USD 1.25 (the lowest daily poverty line) and approximately 13 per cent were living on less than USD 2.00 a day. Additionally, multiple deprivation is commonplace, including malnutrition (Ncube, Anyanwu, and Hausken, 2014). Yet, three-quarters of MENA countries devote budget expenditure to food subsidies, amounting to 0.7 percent of the MENA region's GDP in 2011 (Sdrlevich *et al.*, 2014). For the period 2005–2013, Egyptian food subsidies equated to, on average, 6 per cent of total government expenditure, which amounted to 2 per cent of its GDP. In 2013, 77 per cent of the population benefitted from FSP (CAPMAS, 2013). Food subsidies, especially in the form of FSP, contribute greatly to social stability in Egypt. Nevertheless, there is academic and political pressure to either reform or abandon the current system in favour of a more effective targeting-based system to reach the poor (World Bank, 2010; Sdrlevich *et al.*, 2014). Simply put, despite often decades of operational experience, the effectiveness of reaching the poor through a social protection system that focuses significantly on food subsidies, is being questioned (World Bank, 2010; CAPMAS, 2013). Consequently, identifying and providing effective social protection measures for the poor in the MENA region is a challenge for policy-makers (Van Eeghen and Soman, 2007) and has become a matter of national and international concern.

A common tool for poverty alleviation is targeting; however, the choice of the appropriate targeting method is open to debate, as discussed in Section 1.1. Importantly for Egypt, there is a debate between academics, policy-makers and international organisations on the appropriate method to reform food subsidies (World Bank, 2010; Sachs, 2012). Such reforms, supported by international organisations, present a major challenge for policy-makers with regards to maintaining political and social stability and avoiding civil unrest (Ramadan and Thomas, 2011). The targeting performance measures used for FSP, reforms and simulations are mostly based on quantitative models published by the World Bank, as discussed in Section 1.1, that ignore the interconnectedness between the local context and the grass-root realities of the programme's performance (Löfgren and El-said, 1999; Löfgren and El-Said, 2001; World Bank, 2010, 2015a; Ramadan, 2015). Therefore, most of the research assessing the targeting performance of Egypt's FSP has been almost exclusively quantitative in

approach, with little practical research that takes into account the complexity of effective targeting- empirical rather than practical approach-. For example, little attention has been paid to the role of the local context in influencing targeting outcomes and no study in Egypt has linked the targeting performance and outcomes with the actual implementation phase. To help fill this gap, the aim of this thesis is to better understand Egypt's FSP and discern and explain the effectiveness of targeting outcomes. To do so, a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches is employed in an iterative manner, to respond and explore to claims that FSP, one the country's main anti-poverty interventions, is relatively expensive and weakly targeted on the poor.

First, this thesis quantifies the targeting performance of the FSP using a quantitative approach. This analysis helps to measure targeting outcomes of FSP by identifying how many targeting errors are in the programme. However, quantitative analysis does not provide a clear explanation for the poor targeting mechanism. To provide a better explanation and a better understanding of the programme's performance, I go beyond the quantitative approach by adopting a pragmatic analytic approach that draws on interdisciplinary concepts and approaches. That pragmatic approach tries to explore and answer how and why the targeting performance is poor. Henceforth, the thesis seeks to move beyond for a better understanding of the programme's performance. Second, grounded in the applied concepts of Public Administration discourse used and promoted by international organisations in evaluating and reforming the FSP, I analyse how interlinked FSP institutional-level arenas influence the targeting outcomes. Three streams of policy research are especially useful: the public administration literature on service delivery of the SSNPs and their formal institutions; the proposed role of ideas and discourse of social public policy reforms for better targeting outcomes of these programs, mainly supported by the Bretton Woods institutions; understanding the real implementation of these programs. Although distinct, these three streams of literature should be harmonious of any SSNP yet there is little evidence linking these three streams when it comes to assessing the targeting outcomes, a gap this study tries to fill. Third, I have narrowed down the focus of the thesis on a micro-level and have analysed to what extent the abilities, behaviours and actions of those employees who are actually implementing the programme, and their working conditions, can influence the targeting outcomes.

In sum, in this thesis, I argue that to situate the targeting performance outcomes for FSP within the complex institutional environment in which the employees operate, the quantitative approach needs to be combined with public administration and sociological approaches, thereby laying the groundwork for a practical and research agenda of policy implementation and reforms, with the aim of reaching the poor. Based on these different insights of targeting, this thesis develops three major themes: the measurement of targeting through a quantitative “orthodox” approach; the bureaucratic structure of FSP and targeting; and SLBs and targeting. Under these themes, I explain that targeting performance cannot be adequately understood purely on the basis of macro-level quantitative analysis, but requires a more multi-disciplinary and multi-level approach. I have organised the three themes in such a way as to enable me to answer the key research question: How does the targeting mechanism of the Egyptian FSP operate and perform? To answer this key question, I consider the following sub-questions:

- I. How effective is the targeting of FSP in terms of inclusion and exclusion errors?
- II. How are targeting outcomes affected by the Programme’s bureaucratic structure and policy design?
- III. To what extent do the implementers of the programme at the local level and their working conditions influence targeting outcomes?

In the next section, I explain how the thesis is organised and provide a summary of the chapters.

1.4 Thesis Outline and Summary of the Chapters

The thesis is organised into seven chapters. This first chapter has introduced the mainstream approach to assessing targeting. I have argued that the recent reform of FSP fits closely to wider mainstream approaches with regards to targeting effectiveness and that therefore, FSP can to some extent be used to explore the validity of these policy frameworks. I have introduced the wider debates that surround targeting and have explained why targeting performance cannot be adequately understood purely on the basis of macro-level quantitative analysis. I have proposed that the integration of multi-disciplinary and multi-level approaches are required to yield better explanations of programme performance when measuring targeting. These insights need to be considered in connection with preferences with regards to reforms, institutional capacity, governance, social contract, as well as the political economy of introducing and sustaining food-based transfer programme. These contextualised insights are therefore essential if real improvements to targeting and effectiveness are to be achieved. The chapter ends with a guide and summary to the rest of the thesis.

Chapter Two presents the literature review and concepts. The chapter is divided into three major sections. The first section, focusing on targeting, reviews the ideological shifts surrounding the notion of targeting, and the role they have played in the design and implementation of SSNPs to address problems of poverty, inequality and insecurity. Specific theoretical frameworks about the nature and effects of targeting are then evaluated and various targeting methods discussed in the literature in relation to a number of costs are reviewed.

The second section reviews how the programme and policies of targeting the SSNPs are underpinned, either explicitly or implicitly, by the performance of all the bodies who are involved in the service delivery, be it central, regional or local government, as well as agents; those represent the other bodies who are involved in the service delivery. I draw on concepts and theories of public administration and take account of the growing influence of international organisations over recent reforms and the effect this has had on the programme's outcomes. This section reviews the design of SSNPs in the field of public administration in terms of the NPM and of governance, along with institutional capacity, decentralisation and private contracting which subscribes to the use of agents, networks, collaboration, and partnerships in

policy and government processes. I describe the complex nature of the bureaucratic structure and implementation realities and argue that when assessing targeting performance, these cannot be addressed in isolation, but organically, as they are likely to have a significant impact on the targeting mechanism.

In the third section I explain the role of the SLB in the implementation phase. The section reflects on how the actions and the behavioural performance of the SLBs is considered as a critical dimension of public service delivery and provides some background to the fundamental tension between, on the one hand, the need for policy design for the bureaucrats to function in and on the other, the infinite variety and messiness of real implementation processes. I then show how this tension might create a trade-off between the bureaucratic settings of the public service delivery and the range of challenges of real policy implementation. The challenges that can result from policy conflict, a stressful working environment and limited resources are also discussed, in terms of how this dynamic stressful environment might influence the performance outcome of any service programme. As was pointed out in Chapter One, this sociological framework has not been applied to the food targeted SSNPs, showing the influence of the SLBs on the performance outcomes of these programs. The review shows that as of now, there is no study in the Egyptian context that provides the range of targeting insights that are essential if real improvements to targeting and effectiveness are to be achieved, a gap that this study aims fill.

Chapter Three discusses the research methodology and methods I have used in this study. This thesis consists of a case study of FSP, developed through mixed methods and diverse approaches, so as to address the gaps that are aforementioned. The chapter begins with making explicit my positionality. I then explain the research motivation and the development of the research ideas and frameworks, beginning with first-hand accounts from within local offices, of actual implementation of FSP. These accounts are then positioned within the wider conceptual public administration framework and sociological theory in interpreting the poor targeting performance of FSP. I then explain how I have deployed mixed methods, using quantitative and qualitative approaches, followed by discussing how and why I used each of these methods. Putting together quantitative, qualitative, and various other sources of data into a mixed method triangulation approach has helped to generate different insights about targeting. In this chapter, the fieldwork sites and sampling are described along

with the different sources of my empirical data. Finally, I reflect on how I have managed and analysed the collected data.

Chapter Four describes the economic context of Arab Republic of Egypt and discusses how FSP is considered as one of the main SSNPs provided on a national scale. It reviews how high levels of poverty pose the major challenge for the government of protecting poor and vulnerable households through establishing and maintaining an effective programme to reach the poor. FSP represents a major component of the government's poverty alleviation strategy. However, I explain how continuous fiscal support of the poor through food subsidies has failed to decrease or curb the growth of poverty. This fact creates a policy space for investigating the programme's effectiveness in reaching the poor as well as its ability to meet its targeting outcomes. I use descriptive quantitative macro and meso-level analysis to show the performance of the targeting mechanism of FSP. The analysis shows high levels of inclusion errors and also the programme incurs some exclusion errors. I then build a PMT model for targeting FSP's benefit. The chapter reflects on the poor targeting performance outcomes of the programme and poses the questions of how and why the targeting is ineffective.

Chapters Five and Six explore the reasons for the poor performance of FSP. Chapter Five explains how targeting is affected by the programme's bureaucratic structure and policy design. It discusses the quantitative-based assessments of the hindrances of the system conducted by World Bank and IMF and identifies the specific policies and procedure reforms within public administration discourse that are driven by neo-liberal ideologies (World Bank, 2010, 2015a). I argue that these reforms focus on pushing specific policies without understanding the implementation realities of the FSP context. This has created a lack of understanding about the specific national context in terms of how to implement a service delivery for better targeting, which in turn might affect the programme's outcomes. I discuss the complexities of the design and administration of FSP and introduce the key policy actors who have been put forward by the Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade (MSIT) for the FSP entitlement, pointing out that these bureaucratic structural complexities are ignored when measuring targeting performance. I therefore provide a better understanding of the entitlement process in practice and the real implementation of the FSP. Among the key findings of this chapter is that the recent reforms supported by the World Bank

and IMF within the public administration domain, including new public management, governance, decentralisation and the use of ICT through private contracting, can significantly affect the programme's outcomes in terms of contributing to the occurrence of targeting errors.

Chapter Six links the complex institutional arrangement of the SSNPs discussed in Chapter Five together with the systematic environment in which the caseworkers operate. I argue that the Street-Level Bureaucracy (SLBy) approach, introduced by Lipsky, as a sociological theory should be combined with public administration theories, thereby laying a theoretical foundation for the grounded realities of SSNPs' policy implementation (Rice, 2012). Until now, studies in the Egyptian context have not looked at the targeting performance of food subsidies within the SLB theoretical framework, a gap that Chapter Six aims to address. I use the comprehensive and eloquent analysis of SLBs that Lipsky conducted in linking the bureaucratic local settings of the FSP to the implementation phase. This implementation phase is presented as a dynamic interaction between the SLBs and the households. I situate the SLBs and identify their implications in terms of FSP's targeting performance. I examine how the combination of actions and behaviours of the SLBs together with the work environment, can affect the FSP targeting outcomes. These actions and behaviours are shaped by: the SLBs' abilities, skills and experience; several interconnected factors that influence the communication between the SLBs and the beneficiaries and applicants; working conditions; and inadequacies and uncertainties associated with rationalizing practices through numerous costs the households pay to access the benefit. All these factors are presented in the discussion and the analysis of the chapter as part of providing a more comprehensive analysis of the implemented policy of the programme within the SLB sociological framework, towards understanding the FSP's targeting outcomes.

In Chapter Seven, I return to previous chapters to draw the key findings and arguments together and answer the research questions posed in the thesis. I explain how the research questions have been answered. I also identify interesting findings in each chapter. These include firstly, revisiting the "orthodox" method of evaluating the targeting performance of FSP. I conclude that the "orthodox" approach of measuring the targeting performance provides an important indicator and clue for quantifying the targeting error; however, this approach cannot achieve an in-depth level of explanation

of how and why the targeting error occurred or how the mechanism operates in reality. Secondly, I explained the effect of the FSP being a traditional Weberian bureaucratic structure and the programme policies and this marriage affects the targeting outcomes. I conclude that the introduction of reforms that embraced the selective NPM and governance policies, supported by the international organisations, within the traditional bureaucratic FSP structure, created gaps that potentially undermined the programme's outcomes. Thirdly, with regards to the role of the SLBs and the working environment in affecting the programme's effectiveness. I conclude that the SLBs in different field of works, their behaviours and the working environment have been shown to significantly impact on service delivery outcomes. The study therefore raises the challenge of how to reform the FSP system under the existing structure and within the underpinning political complexities.

Chapter 2 – Research Literature, Key Concepts and Research Questions

2.1 Introduction

SSNPs are active interventions in the economy that play an important role in distribution, protection and transformation or development goals. In other words, they not only help in reducing poverty but also enhance the social welfare process through ensuring equity and social cohesion. Nonetheless, the overwhelming preference for ‘targeting is a reflection of the residual role assigned to social policy; that is, it has been considered an instrument for correcting outcomes of macroeconomic policies’ (Mkandawire, 2005, p.7). This statement highlights a key point that seems to frame the literature about designing and measuring SSNPs. First, numerous studies focus on targeting SSNPs, assessed mostly from a quantitative perspective, as discussed in Chapter One Section 1.2. This partial assessment disconnects the evaluation of specific programs from the grass-root implementation phase, and as a result, frustrates efforts to make broader assessments about their effectiveness or to provide a comprehensive picture of targeting performance outcomes. On the other hand, there is an extensive body of literature on the assessment of the institutional capacity of SSNPs and how the design and policy structure influence the implementation and consequently, the programme’s outcomes. However, there is rarely an overlap between these two bodies of literature. Additionally, the actual implementers of the SSNPs and the influence they might have on the targeting outcomes, do not have a place in the targeting literature.

In order to review the three main streams investigated in this thesis, in the first section I start by presenting the ideological shifts that have underpinned targeting policies and targeting theory with regards to SSNPs. I describe targeting methods and their associated costs and then outline the “orthodox”- commonly used quantitative-approach; evidence on targeting outcomes derived from an extensive review of

quantitative existing methodologies and studies (for review: Coady et al. 2004). In the second section I discuss the effect of SSNPs' bureaucratic structure and policy design on targeting, drawing on concepts and theories used in public administration research and taking account of the growing influence of international organisations in shaping SSNPs' policies. The third section applies sociological concepts, especially SLBy, to explore the dynamics of targeting at the micro-level. Specifically, the role of actual implementers of programs and their working conditions in terms of their influence on targeting outcomes, are explored.

2.2 Targeting In the Literature

Regime ideologies play a significant part in the methods chosen to provide SSNPs to address challenges such as poverty, inequality and insecurity (Mkandawire, 2005). Indeed, the level of resources allocated to SSNPs are crucial in defining welfare regimes (Esping-Andersen, 1990). In developing an understanding of targeting in the literature, it is helpful to begin by explaining targeting in theory, the different targeting methods and their associated costs. This section is organised as follows: ideological shifts in targeting, targeting SSNPs in theory, targeting methods and associated costs, and finally, measuring targeting performance.

2.2.1 Ideological Shifts in Targeting

Ideologies play an important role in shaping the design and implementation of any programme that addresses problems of poverty, inequality and insecurity. Social policies have emerged from cultural and ideological definitions of the “deserving poor”, “entitlements” and “civil rights” (Mkandawire, 2005). During the relatively prosperous period of the 1960s and 1970s in Europe, the trend was towards social policies that were universal in their coverage while in most major countries in the MENA region, governments imposed schemes of state-led development. However, with the economic downturn due to the stagflation in 1979 and the increase in oil prices, a process of restructuring social policies began in some Western European countries. In Eastern European countries, social policy design began in the aftermath

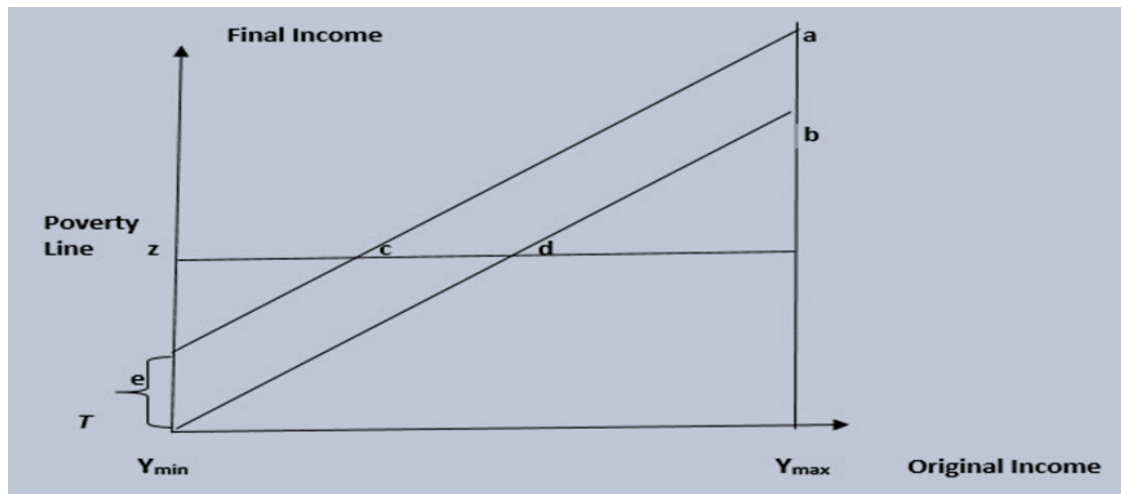
of the political upheavals of the early 1990s. In both parts of Europe, redesigning social policies basically has meant a revival of the debate on the crucial targeting question of who should benefit from social provisions, what type of benefit and why (Oorschot, 2002). The implementation of neoliberal economic reforms –free market economy- that began in the late of 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, as a response to the fiscal crisis in the 1970s that led to a perceived need to restructure budgetary restraints, encouraged developing countries to lower or remove protective tariffs, reduce subsidies and increase their comparative advantage in some sectors of the economy (Jain, 2014). This fiscal crisis illustrates the relationship between ideology and targeting in that the shift towards targeting is itself ideologically driven. Since the 1980s, the shift has radically tilted in favour of policy targeting to alleviate poverty in both developed and developing countries. Between 1980 and 1990, these ideological moves in the North led to similar shifts in the South, underpinned by developmentalist ideologies have aroused in which they have strong conceptual and ideological alliances. This shift was supported by both the World Bank and IMF (Devereux, 2016).

Thus, a fundamental driver of social policies that focus on targeting in developing countries has been the pressure from international organisations. Andrews (2013), in a study exploring the extent to which international organisations shape government solutions in developing countries, concludes that international organisations do have a major impact and a growing influence on the structure of policies in developing countries and that this influence does impose a common model on these countries. Moreover, developing countries prefer to follow this common model as this is the way to qualify for donor loans. International organisations are increasingly shaping the ideas, opportunities, demand and supply of public sector reform in developing countries and therefore, playing a vital role in forming and reforming social policy. Not surprisingly, then, any shifts in the ideological underpinnings of social and economic policies in the donor countries are reflected in the principles underpinning the provision of loans (Mkandawire 2005).

2.2.2 Targeting SSNPs in Theory

Targeting policies and changes to the allocation of welfare benefits are ultimately a political issue and are also framed by wider shifts in ideological debates about the role of the state in social assistance (Harik, 1992; Oorschot, 2002; Mkandawire, 2005; Hall and Lamont, 2014; Jain, 2014). However, it is also useful to examine specific theoretical frameworks about the nature and effects of targeting from international development perspective. The theory of targeting can be expressed graphically: **Figure 1** illustrates how a government can use targeting to concentrate its resources among the poor in relation to a universal scheme. Under this hypothesis, assuming equity of access to information, each household's income can be identified accurately at zero cost. The graph shows, with an assumed fixed budget, the levels of income of individual households which are ordered before any transfer schemes, from the worst to the best off. This ordering is shown on the x-axis that represents the “Original Income”, while the y-axis represents the income of the individual households after receiving the transfer and z is the poverty line. The line (bY_{min}) depicts, by definition, before any transfer, that the original incomes are equal to the final incomes. If we assume that the government applies a universal coverage transfer policy, a new income distribution will be represented by (ae) that will be parallel to the initial income distribution (bY_{min}) . Thus the amount of the transfer will be the distance between Y_{min} and e , equal to $T (=e - Y_{min})$. The poverty gap decreased from $(Y_{min}dz)$ to (ecz) . The leakage of the transfer to non-poor households equals to $(abdc)$.

Figure 1: Targeting Poverty Alleviation Transfer



Source Adapted from Coady, Grosh and Hoddinott (2004a)

Let us now assume that the government uses the same amount of resources to implement a targeted policy for poor households only (i.e. their income is below the poverty line). Moreover let us assume the amount of the targeted transfer policy ($Y_{min}z$) equals to the difference between the poverty line and the income of the households who are located below the poverty line. This transfer brings all the poor households up to the poverty line (z). The poverty budget is represented by the area ($Y_{min}dz$) and is the minimum budget required to eliminate poverty. Under the targeted policy, the number of the poor households and the poverty gap equal to zero, as the transfers are all directed only to the poor. However, under the universal policy, the poverty impact is less than the targeted programme, less by the area (ecz). The total leakage of the budget is given by the area ($abdc$), under a fixed budget assumption, must be equal to the area (ecz), which equals to the level of poverty after the implementation of the universal policy. Under universally accessed information with the assumption of no change in behaviour, the targeted transfers are likely to be more effective than the uniform transfer policy in alleviating poverty with the same amount of resources.

However, this is a hypothetical example. In practice, a number of elements complicates the implementation of targeting policies. First, it has to contend with the complexity of the bureaucratic institutional capacities and different targeting costs associated with different targeting mechanisms used for identifying targeted groups. Second, during the implementation phase, there are many factors that can hinder the targeting mechanism and affect performance. Who benefits from the programme interventions is a question that leads directly to the dynamics of the bureaucratic environment in which targeting works. An important aspect of assessing targeting performance could lead to multilateral faces and insights of targeting, when the empirical evidence of implementation is reflected in analyzing the targeting outcomes. These are the major challenges that can face governments and policy-makers when they try to design, reform and implement a targeted SSNP.

2.2.3 Targeting Methods and the Costs of SSNPs

Targeting involves various methods that are associated with a number of costs. This section reviews these methods and the costs that have been incurred in applying targeting mechanisms to reach the targeted beneficiaries.

2.2.3.1 *Targeting Methods*

The targeting literature features a variety of methods used in directing resources to a particular group with the aim of achieving better targeting outcomes with regards to identifying the poor. Demographic targeting is based on age, for instance, child allowances and social pensions. This kind of targeting is popular because of its universality and therefore the absence of stigma as well as being straightforward and relatively cheap to administer. However, using demographic targeting cannot achieve the desired results of reaching the needy, as age may be weakly correlated with poverty. Thus, many studies recommend merging this method with other targeting methods (for review; Lanjouw, Milanovic and Paternostro, 1998; Deaton and Zaidi, 2002; Kendro, 2013).

A second method is community-based targeting, a ‘state policy of contracting with community groups or intermediary agents to have them carry out one or more of the following activities: 1) identify recipients for cash or in-kind benefits, 2) monitor the delivery of those benefits, and/or 3) engage in some part of the delivery process’ (Conning and Kevane, 2002, p.2). This method relies on there being local information on individual circumstances for small scale programs, which may be less costly and more accurate than other methods (Kendro, 2013). However, there are also potential challenges, namely, that it may increase conflict and divisions within the community (Conning and Kevane, 2002). Some programs mix the community- based targeting with other methods, for instance, the Oportunidades in Mexico initially uses geographical mapping, then proxy means tests and then community targeting is used to fine-tune the targeted needy (Skoufias, Davis and Vega, 2001).

Means testing is another targeting method, involving the collection of comprehensive information on households’ income and/or wealth (Samson, Niekerk and Mac, 2010). This method requires a designated officer to visit the applicant or a

visit by the applicant to the programme office. Verification can involve an interview with the information provided taken at face value, supporting documents provided by the applicant (individual documentation) or information collected against independent sources (third party verification). Alternatively, applicants may be asked to provide more documents such as pay stubs, telephone bills and electricity usage bills. For workers in the informal sector (most of their economic lives are undocumented), this will work poorly, as these procedures can entail significant transaction costs for them. In spite of the high accuracy of using this method, the administrative costs of implementing it are relatively high due to the verification process. Moreover, the applicant's visit to the office may incur significant money and time costs associated with the documents required for eligibility. Mean testing is deemed to be appropriate in countries with an adequate administrative capacity and where income can be easily verified by third party (Coady, Grosh and Hoddinott, 2004a).

Fourthly, self-targeting is theoretically open to all but designed with the expectation that participation rates will be higher among the poor than the non-poor, or the degree of benefit is expected to be higher among the needy. Self-targeting programs are, in principle, available to anyone who wants to take part (Hoddinott, 1999). However, stigma may be a factor in influencing decisions to join the programme and the level of stigma is always associated with the country's vision about poverty, equality of opportunities or the role of the government in fulfilling the minimum requirements for individual households' standard of living (Rainwater, 1982; Graham, 2002), as well as the programme specific features (Coady, Grosh and Hoddinott, 2004b). Another factor influencing participation is the private or transaction costs of the programme. For example, Leon (1999) shows that, in Ecuador some participants in the Bono Solidario programme spend 3 hours waiting in a queue, others incur transport costs above 20 percent of the benefit they receive and others are forced to spend a night away from home. Self-targeting is considered one of the less expensive mechanisms for targeting the poor. Also, this method is considered as desirable when other methods are less feasible due to low administrative capacity, during a crisis or when the information about income is arbitrary or irregular. However, self-targeting involves significant targeting errors (Samson, Niekerk and Mac, 2006).

Lastly, proxy means testing (PMT) is a prominent method advocated widely by international organisations to target poor households and has arisen out of the need to overcome the problems associated with collecting and verifying information about income and consumption. Instead of collecting household income and consumption which is difficult and expensive to measure accurately, PMT uses different variables called proxies for income or wealth, in order to estimate household welfare and establish an effective targeting programme (Coady, Grosh and Hoddinott, 2004a; Castañeda *et al.*, 2005; Kidd and Wylde, 2011). PMT does not require as much information as means testing, and yet is claimed to be objective. But it is also quite complex, as it combines different indicators. PMT can generally reduce the number of non-poor beneficiaries; however it can also lead to poor households not being identified (Samson, Niekerk and Mac, 2006). Also, PMT is used to reach poor targeted households rather than identifying those who might be suffering most acutely from any given crisis. This approach also requires a large body of computer literate employees to carry out the registration (Coady, Grosh and Hoddinott, 2004a; Samson, Niekerk and Mac, 2006). A range of publications from the World Bank outline the merits of this method. For example, some studies strongly claimed that this method can accurately and cost effectively target the chronically poor (Leite, 2014; del Ninno and Mills, 2015). A number of countries use PMT, including Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Armenia, Indonesia and Turkey (for review, Raczynski, 1991; Sancho, 1992; Grosh and Baker, 1995; Sumarto, Suryahadi and Pritchett, 2000; Clert and Wodon, 2001; Ayala Consulting, 2002; Castañeda, 2003; World Bank, 2003; Larrañaga, 2003; Coady, Grosh and Hoddinott, 2004a; Grosh *et al.*, 2008). By contrast, other studies show that PMT is not an accurate method of targeting the poor (for instance, Brown, Ravallion and van de Walle, 2016; Kidd, Gelders and Bailey-Athias, 2017). Therefore, the implementation phase is crucial in introducing, assessing or reforming any targeting programme.

In my case-study, I built a PMT model as it has become the predominant targeting mechanism for SSNPs schemes across many low and middle income countries as aforementioned. A recent study also conducted by the World Bank states that the Egyptian government ‘established a tool for targeting the poor (a proxy means test), with the goal of having the two new cash transfer programs—Takaful and Karama—reach 2.1 million households by June 2017’ (Abdalla and Al-Shawarby,

2018, p.112) and that to improve targeting and policy makers plan to use the PMT for the FSP. However, PMT needs strong institutional capacity to achieve its objectives (Brown, Ravallion and van de Walle, 2016).

There are many approaches in constructing the PMT to predict the consumption expenditure- a welfare based indicator, the arbitrary approach, principal component, factor analysis and finally, consumption prediction using regression analysis. A number of studies use the arbitrary approach and call the proxies 'naïve proxies', which are often constructed as the sum of indicators or dummy variables for whether a household family has certain assets or not (Montgomery *et al.*, 2000; Morris *et al.*, 2000; Falkingham and Namazie, 2002). Other studies use the principal component analysis and factor analysis as an alternative to the simple sum of asset variables that exist in the survey data, by determining the weights of the welfare index through using a statistical technique (Filmer and Pritchett, 1999). However, the principal components method suffers from an underlying lack of a theory upon which to choose the variable or the appropriateness of the weights of the proxies. Sahn and Stifel (2000) have constructed a welfare index on the basis of factor analysis and argue that using factor analysis is preferable to the principal component method. Finally, regression analysis has been used extensively to construct the PMT and has become a common approach for targeting (Glewwe and Kanaan, 1989; Haddad and Kennedy, 1991; Raczynski, 1991; Grosh and Baker, 1995; World Bank, 1999b; Coady, Grosh and Hoddinott, 2004a; Coady, Grosh and Hoddinott, 2004b; Wagstaff *et al.*, 2007; Grosh *et al.*, 2008). In cases where the consumption expenditure data is available from national household surveys, it is possible to derive the weights of the proxies to predict the welfare indicator- consumption expenditure for a household through using regression analysis. Data are regressed based on sets of household characteristics and assets and coefficient estimates are used as weights. I used the latter approach and based on the salient literature, I choose variables to generate scores for households based on fairly easy to observe characteristics of the household that are verifiable and hard to manipulate (more discussion is found in Chapter Four Section 4.5.3).

2.2.3.2 Targeting Costs

Targeting mechanisms are associated with different costs that reflect the decisions taken at various stages of the process, from choosing eligibility criteria to monitoring the intervention outcomes. Targeting entails the cost of establishing who is poor, a process that is not straightforward as such information is hard to acquire. First, there are administrative costs that include the costs of collecting information to identify who is eligible for the intervention. This means that less of the budget is then available to be distributed to the eligible households (Grosh *et al.*, 2008). Determining these costs requires a detailed budget, for instance how to allocate the costs of systems and staff who work on more than one function/programme. There is little data available regarding these costs and interpreting the available data is problematic (Samson, Niekerk and Mac, 2010).

The second cost is that incurred by the individual. Potential applicants may incur direct costs in order to apply for certain programs and demonstrate their eligibility. These costs include the time and costs associated with gathering information, travelling to the registration offices and standing in transit and queues. If these costs are sufficiently large, eligible households may be discouraged from participating in the programme (Samson, Niekerk and Mac, 2010). Duclos (1995) estimates that one fifth of the Great Britain Supplemental benefit- means tested cash programme- is lost to recipients due to private costs. Thus private costs can influence targeting outcomes (Coady, Grosh and Hoddinott, 2004a)

Thirdly, there are indirect costs which include incentive costs and social costs. The incentive costs occur due to the presence of the eligibility criteria that may arise when households change their behaviours in order to become eligible for the programme intervention (Coady, Grosh and Hoddinott, 2004a) while social costs occur when a beneficiary receives public benefit from a certain programme that can generate a feeling of shame about being publicly seen to be receiving it. Rainwater (1982) found that stigmatisation is a more significant factor in non-participation in programs in the United Kingdom than in Italy. In Armenia, the government introduced a cash transfer programme for the poor, who as a result were stigmatised (Lund, 2002; Coady, Grosh and Hoddinott, 2004a). On the other hand, in Jamaica, there have been attempts to project a positive image for participants of a programme (Grosh, 1994;

Coady, Grosh and Hoddinott, 2004a). These considerations are very important when dealing with the concepts of poverty (Sen, 1988).

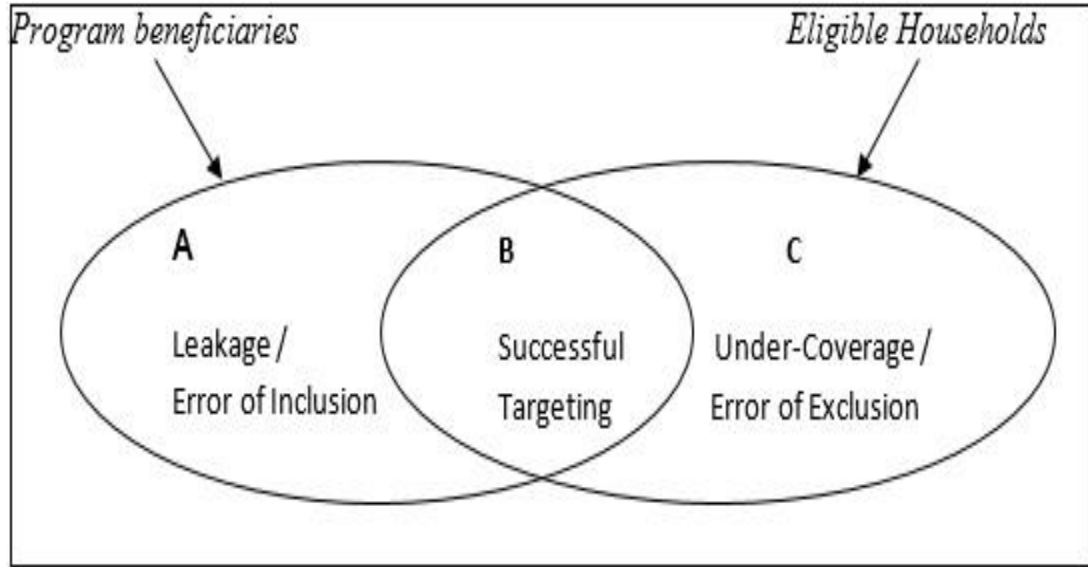
Finally, there are political costs associated with targeting methods. Narrow targeting may result in maximizing the programme's impact on poor households. However, this does not take into consideration the political processes in which the budget is determined. Choosing targeting methods and outcomes will play into those processes (Grosh *et al.*, 2008). For example, in the late 1970s, the popularity of the Sri Lankan government decreased when it introduced food stamps to target the poor more effectively to reach only the poor (Samson, Niekerk and Mac, 2010). Similarly, in Colombia, poverty targeting through a food stamp programme was eliminated due to the erosion of political support (Grosh, 1994; Gelbach and Pritchett, 1995). As Sen (1995) has pointed out, programs designed exclusively for the poor are often quite weak politically and may lack the clout needed to sustain the intervention and maintain a good quality of benefit delivery. As a result, policy-makers in low income countries may support universal programs and may be reluctant to support more refined poverty targeting programs (Subbarao, 2003), since including non-poor beneficiaries is not entirely wasteful as it generates political support (Samson, Niekerk and Mac, 2010). A central targeting dilemma is that there is always a trade-off between accuracy and practicality of implementation. In sum, when a government decides to design, reform and implement SSNPs to reach the poor, each targeting mechanism at its disposal has both strengths and weaknesses associated with a number of costs – in a broad sense. In terms of performance, most of these targeting methods have been assessed from a quantitative point of view and tend to ignore the extent to which the actual implementation phase affects performance outcomes.

2.2.4 Measuring Targeting Performance

A common and simple approach to measuring the targeting performance of a certain programme is to compare the leakage/error of inclusion and under-coverage rates/error of exclusion of this programme. Leakage/error of inclusion is the proportion of those households who are included in the programme and classified as non-poor, which is shown in area **A** of *Diagram 1* Under-coverage/error of exclusion

is the proportion of poor households who are excluded from the programme, depicted in area **C**. Area **B** shows the successful targeting that represents allocating the programme resources to the eligible targeted group (Coady, Grosh and Hoddinott, 2004a).

Diagram 1: Two errors of Targeting



Source: Adopted from Oxford Policy Management (OPM, 2009)

As shown in **Table 1**, in a given population “N”, composed of non-poor “NP” and poor “P” households, for each intervention one can observe four different situations (Besley and Kanbur, 1993), where

$$P + NP = N^c + N^{nc} = P^c + P^{nc} + NP^c + NP^{nc} = N$$

P Poor

NP Non-poor

N^c All households covered in the programme

N^{nc} All households who are not covered in the programme

P^c Poor households who are covered in the programme

P^{nc} Poor households who are not covered in the programme

NP^c Non-Poor households who are covered in the programme

NP^{nc} Non-Poor households who are not covered in the programme

In the ideal case of targeting, error of inclusion and exclusion are null,

$$P^c + NP^{nc} = N$$

In the ideal case of mis-targeting, i.e. none of the poor households are covered and all of the non-poor are

$$P^{nc} + NP^c = N$$

Table 1: Calculating the leakage and under-coverage rates

Households	Welfare status of Households		
	<i>Non-Poor</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Total</i>
Included in the programme	NP^c	P^c	N^c
Not included in the programme	NP^{nc}	P^{nc}	N^{nc}
Total	NP	P	N

Leakage error is represented by NP^c and is measured as a proportion

$$L = NP^c / N^c$$

Under-coverage error is represented by P^{nc} and is measured as a proportion

$$U = P^{nc} / P$$

The mechanism of achieving a targeted social policy programme is sensitive to both types of errors. Inclusion errors raise the cost of the programme and reduce its vertical efficiency through increasing vertical inequalities by transferring the programme's resources to non-poor households (Ravallion, 2004). Exclusion errors impede the programme's horizontal efficiency by creating inequalities between households who have the same income before the programme is put in place (Bibi and Duclos, 2007). Inclusion and exclusion errors need to be minimised; however, it is hard to reduce one without increasing the other. Thus, a tradeoff between both errors is often necessary. This approach is used to measure the programme's performance in the targeting literature (Dutrey, 2007). However, a major drawback of this quantitative approach is that it does not tend to explain why and in what ways the programme's performance is poor.

In assessing the targeting performance of a specific SSNP, some vital questions need to be answered. The first question is whether these benefits are actually reaching the poor or not. In doing so, a quantitative approach is used in order to assess the mis-targeting errors of the programme. However, this approach will not give a better understanding for the poor targeting performance. Therefore, it is important to understand the grass-roots realities of the implementation phase and to link the targeting literature with the public administration domain. As such, it is crucial to understand the bureaucratic system and the local context of each country in which the targeting system is operating. This can be done through exploring the bureaucratic structure in which the system operates in the field of public administration.

In the next section, I review the design of SSNP in public administration discourse. I then explain how the bureaucratic system and the local context of each country are central in interpreting the programme's effectiveness in reaching the poor and how they affect outcomes.

2.3 Public Administration and Targeting

Programs and policies that subsidise food in order to reach poor households are underpinned, either explicitly or implicitly, by the performance of central, regional and local government, in addition to the agents, in other words, all the actors involved in service delivery. Performance is deeply embedded in the way in which the three governmental bodies and agents are connected and shape the dominant discourse of a certain welfare programme. As aforementioned, the literature on targeting food subsidies in developing countries is characterised by numerous quantitative models and theoretical frameworks of different targeting mechanisms to reach the poor (for review; Besley, 1990; Besley and Kanbur, 1993; Grosh and Baker, 1995; Ahmed and Bouis, 2002; Coady, Grosh and Hoddinott, 2004a; Ravallion, 2009; Muller and Bibi, 2010; Samson, Niekerk and Mac, 2010; Ramadan and Thomas, 2011; Houssou and Zeller, 2011; Karami, Esmaeili and Najafi, 2012; Esmaeili, Karami and Najafi, 2013; Lang, Barrett and Naschold, 2013). It is surprising, therefore, that this literature rarely addresses the question of to what extent the performance of central, local and regional governmental bodies can affect targeting outcomes. When proposing or evaluating certain programme outcomes using quantitative factors, they fail to account for the institutional and organisational capacity involved in delivering the benefit to the poor. This section tries to review the design of SSNPs in the field of public administration in terms of NPM and governance; institutional capacity, decentralisation and private contracting which subscribes to the use of agents; networks, collaboration and partnerships in policy and government processes.

2.3.1 The Paradigm of Public Administration and Service Delivery: Models and Approaches to Public Sector Reform

Different academic disciplines offer distinct theoretical perspectives on the state and bureaucracy, both in general and more specifically with reference to service delivery. The sociological perspective of Max Weber focusses on bureaucratic structures. Economic perspectives focus on issues such as governance and institutional economics. New anthropological perspectives, such as street-level bureaucracy, offer

a focus on micro-level processes and behaviours. My thesis draws on all the above approaches, which are discussed in detail sections below.

A further set of perspectives seeks to categorise the political and institutional nature of states, including specific attributes which can be associated with “Arab states” (Luciani, 1990; Bevir, Rhodes and Weller, 2003; McCourt, 2008). For example, Bevir, Rhodes and Weller (2003) applied an interpretative approach to analyse public sector reforms, based on beliefs, traditions, and dilemmas. Their political analysis showed how the elite state actors constructed governance in general and public sector reform in particular. As such, they explored historical narratives of elite constructions to reform public sector by examining historical records and applying actor-centred sources of actions and beliefs. Another example is “The Arab State” edited by Luciani (1990). This book showed the fundamental political structure and forces of the Arab world. Ayubi’s chapter in this book describes bureaucratic structure and processes through history and how they can be used as instruments of power in exercising influence and acquiring authority. He stated that ‘Most Arab rulers and executives want to see their bureaucracies play a part in developing their countries, but in their real order of priorities, power often comes before development’ (1990, p.147). Both studies are of some contextual relevance, but are beyond the specific scope of my research.

In sum, targeting is a multidimensional topic and can be explored in different ways and from different perspectives. This aim of this study is to uncover the current bureaucratic structure of the targeting scheme through economic and anthropological perspectives. The thesis explores and answers the research questions of ‘how and why the program is ineffective in reaching the poor’. Adding a political dimension could add richness to the analysis and explain the political forces underlying the ‘how and why questions’. With that in mind, this study notes the potential for further future research in analysing targeting performance from a political lens (Further details are discussed in Chapter Three, Section 3.9).

The idealised modern bureaucratic administrative model in developing countries, just as in developed countries, is essentially the classic Weberian model of bureaucracy which is bound to the needs of the state in seeking development. The similarities across all countries include key features such as: administration is a

continuous process, predictable and rule-governed; public service employees serve public rather than private interests; the organisation's resources belong to itself, not to the employees who work in it; there is a typical division of labor and a hierarchy of people and tasks (Weber, 1946). This most influential "theory of bureaucracy", by Max Weber, shaped administrative government structures and remained very popular until the third quarter of the 20th century. His theory helped explain challenges found in administrative systems, including favouritism, personal and patronage systems of administration that were dominant prior to that. Weber set out six principals of bureaucracy as follows: '(i) existence of fixed rules and official jurisdictional areas governing the bureaucracy structure; (ii) levels and office hierarchy of graded authority whereby lower offices are supervised by the higher one; (iii) written documents and files were preserved that reflected the foundations of office management. Making up the "bureau" is through engaging officials in the local offices with the resources provided, in which public monies and equipment are segregated from the private property of the official; (iv) office management requires specialisation of functions that assume thorough and expert training; (v) permanency within which the full working capacity of the official goes into delivering the public service. (vi) stable rules used in office management, which may be more or less exhaustive but can be learnt' (Gerth and Mills, 1970, p.21-22). Knowledge of the rules can be acquired through specialised technical learning, including administrative and management practices.

Weber stressed the shift from a personal and informal organisation to a bureaucratic organisation as characterised by hierarchy and governance, with fixed rules and regulations within a given authority. Within his theory of bureaucratic administrative structures, all the importance and power is held by top level management and this has attracted a number of criticisms. Hughes described the traditional model of public administration as 'an administration under the formal control of the political leadership, based on a strictly hierarchical model of bureaucracy, staffed by permanent, neutral and anonymous officials, motivated only by the public interest, serving any governing party equally, and not contributing to policy but merely administering those policies decided by the politicians' (1998, p.22). Behn (1998) argued that hierarchical rules and rigid regulations under a centralised authority produced bureaucratic pathologies in terms of unresponsiveness, delay and

inflexibility. He further argued that ‘the traditional method for organizing the executive branch of government is too cumbersome, too bureaucratic, too inefficient, too unresponsive, and too unproductive. It does not give us the results we want from government. And today, citizens expect government to produce results. They are no longer tolerant of inefficiency or ineffectiveness. Thus, we need a new way of doing business, a new paradigm for the management of government’ (1998, p.2).

Date back to nineteenth centuries and almost as far back, public administration discourse has been widely emerged. It has been called progressive public administration and includes ideas about how to make these arrangements work in a way that is more effective and accountable, to limit corruption, waste and competence that go with it, in delivering a range of services to households (Karl, 1963). The term “accountingization” of management in the public sector was coined by Power and Laughlin, defining it as ‘... the technical neutrality of accounting practice is illusory and accounting is a potentially colonising force ... accounting is very much the vehicle for economic reason in practice ... accountingization ... expresses the sense in which accounting as method may eclipse broader questions of accountability...’ (1992, p. 132).

Accountability as a concept of progressive public administration is predicated on two fundamental management doctrines. The first is that the public sector must be kept totally distinct from the private sector in terms of business methods, organisational design, employees, incentives and career structure; furthermore, the role of the state is emphasised due to a concern that links to the private sector might compromise the integrity of Weberian bureaucracies. The second basic doctrine is the design of the rules and regulations that prevent corruption and favoritism in public services. This organisational model has been designed to reflect an underlying metaphor between the trustee and the beneficiary. It includes a complex mix of low-trust and high-trust relationships between both that reflects the degree of trust, with accounting rules that also reflect this degree of trust. For instance, public service with a high trust relationship can perform an action based on ‘word of mouth agreement across a department’, the costs of which are not accounted. Implicit to the progressive public administration assumption is that such high-trust public service with lower transaction costs makes for a more efficient service than one where each action has to be negotiated and costed on a low-trust basis. In other words, there is less need for

contractual forms of trust than would be the case in the private sector. However, it also has embodied many low-trust relationships, especially in potentially corrupt areas such as contracting, recruiting, handling cash and staffing behaviour where records have to be kept and revised (Hood, 1995b). As a result, critics of progressive administration focus on the problems of inefficiencies in using public resources and the lack of public employee accountability (Gray and Jenkins, 1995). In particular, such critics argue, progressive administrations fail to provide evidence of how different governmental departments have performed according to the planned budgets, the resources under their managerial control and the claims in relation to these resources (Guthrie, Olson and Humphrey, 1999; Lapsley, 1999; Mayston, 1999).

2.3.1.1 The Emergence of the New Public Management (NPM)

The notion of NPM, which emerged in several OECD countries in the 1980s, is an umbrella term that refers to a number of approaches to public administration and management (Larbi, 2003). The OECD (1995) claimed the characteristics of the NPM included a focus on the results in terms of quality of service, efficiency and effectiveness; decisions on resource allocation and service delivery made closer to the points of service delivery by moving towards decentralised management structures and providing scope for feedback from the households; structural flexibility that could provide different alternatives for service delivery provision, to achieve effective policy outcomes; a focus also on efficiency of the service provided through increasing productivity and a competitive environment; and the strengthening of state capacities to respond to external changes and diverse interests at lower cost. As a result of the limitations of the old public policy administration in adjusting to the demands of the competitive market economy, the NPM model was developed in order to increase government performance in delivering services to households. At the heart of NPM is cost containment, the core driver in laying out and injecting the fundamental principles of private sector management and competition (Robinson, 2015). Since 1980, in developed countries, a set of management techniques and practices have been introduced to reform governmental administration and management practices. In the 1990s, these practices and techniques were adopted in a number of developing countries as well. Henceforth, the NPM replaced progressive public administration

(for review; Hood, 1987, 1990a, 1990b, 1991; Aucoin, 1990; Pollitt, 1990). NPM proposes a new style of accountingization that involves different concepts of public accountability in terms of trust and distrust. In contrast to progressive public administration, it tries to lessen and remove differences between the private and public sectors, and relies more on contractual forms of trust. It shifts the emphasis from the process of accountability to greater elements which are performance and recorded results. In providing the public service to households, the term NPM indicates a shift in ideas about public management: from policy making to management skills, from orderly hierarchies to competitive basis functioning, from the stress on process to the stress on output and so forth. The economic rationalism involved in the ideas of NPM has been promoted by “econocrats” and “accountocrats” in the public sector (Dunleavy, 1991; Gore, 1993; Flynn, 1995; Hood, 1991, 1995a; OECD, 1995; Borins, 1997; Larbi, 2003).

There has been much discussion among scholars about NPM in its various guises and the implications for different countries (Hood, 1995b; Manning, 2001; Turner, 2002; Larbi, 2003; Batley and Larbi, 2004). Scholars have proposed various explanations with regards the emergence of the NPM. For instance, Hood (1991) explained the interrelated structure of the NPM as it included explicit standards and measures of performance, emphasis on output rather than input, a shift to disaggregation and greater competition, a stress on private sector management practices, parsimony and discipline in managing the usage of resources and hands-on professional management. As such, NPM reforms developed through a combination of different factors. These factors are governmental fiscal stress; criticism of inefficiencies and ineffectiveness of delivering public services through bureaucratic governmental organisations ; ideological shifts within the welfare state; the role of international organisations and international management consultants on reforms to government; the spread of global markets and liberalisation of the economy; and finally, the growth and use of new technology and E-governance to enhance governmental performance (Larbi, 2003). According to Larbi’s study (2003), the most significant driver was the economic and fiscal pressure on governmental budgets in the 1970s and 1980s that led to the pressure to adopt NPM to address the fiscal stress caused by massive public sector deficits, growing indebtedness and external trade imbalances in developed countries and more dramatically, in developing countries.

All these challenges led to the application of NPM to the restructuring of the public sector and the reshaping of the governmental role in delivering public services. Restructuring the public sector and controlling governments' fiscal deficit have gained prominence together with enhancing public services, for instance through contracting out to the private sector in developed countries. The second driver includes the public pressure, attitudes towards, and increasing criticism of, public service delivery as inefficient and ineffective, in terms of cost and in terms of failure to provide for the and intended beneficiaries. The third driver is seen as the ideological shift that occurred from a centralised to a free market economy, with the resurgence in the 1970s and 1980s, for instance, of Reganomics and Thatcherism, ideologies that were more pro-market and pro-private sectors. Since that time, NPM has been the ideological underpinning of welfare sustainability, through reshaping and rethinking the government and its role; repositioning and restructuring organisations ; and finally, redesigning and improving service delivery to households. Fourth is the influence of international management consultants who act as advisers and who generate, package and market the proliferation of management ideas on government reform in different countries. The role and influence of international organisations such as the World Bank and the IMF are included in this group, especially in developing countries. By advocating structural adjustment programs, predicated on certain lending conditions, they have pushed certain NPM-type reforms under their advocacy. The fifth driver is the pressure of a global economy accompanied by ideas of liberalisation, which tend towards global pro-market and pro-privatisation. Consequently, governments are forced to reshape the public sector to keep pace with the emerging global free market economy. Finally, the growth and use of information technology and E-governance have also provided an incentive for some changes to occur and to keep governments on track in enhancing its public service delivery. NPM reforms have addressed issues of performance management, management decentralisation and executive agencies of the public services, facilitated by the use of modern information technology. Moreover, it was claimed that the use of this technology tended to help governments to control and monitor its performance (Dunleavy and Hood, 1994; Ferlie *et al.*, 1996; Larbi, 2003).

2.3.1.2 The Emergence of Governance

The first mention of notion of good governance appeared in a report of the World Bank in the 1980s, when a report on sub-Saharan Africa stated that ‘Underlying the litany of Africa's development problems is a crisis of governance’ (1989, p. 60). The main features of good governance listed in the report were as follows: an efficient public service; the accountable administration of public funds; respect for the law at all levels of government; an independent judicial system and legal framework to enforce contracts; an independent public auditor; a pluralistic institutional structure, transparency, access to information (World Bank, 1989). So, while governance comprises a number of features that include efficiency and accountability, in its application, the emphasis is more on efficiency.

In Egypt, in the 1960s, the urgent need for reform of public governance included the objective of structuring a more effective and responsive administrative structure. However, these reforms collided with a pre-existing large and complex bureaucracy, legacy of state socialism governance policies, in which the government was entirely responsible for the development of the public service (Barsoum, 2017) . The impact of this legacy remained, regardless of an open door policy of moving from a centralised economy to a free market (from the 1970s) under President Sadat, the implementation of the Economic Reform and Structural Adjustment Programme (ERSAP) under IMF supervision (in the early 1990s), and numerous initiatives until the late 1990s to move towards good governance to serve the country’s needs (Handoussa and El Oraby, 2004). Nonetheless, some progress was achieved towards converting a state-regulated, unbalanced socialist economy into a pro-market economy with a greater role for the private sector (Richards, 2001).

In the late nineties, governments in developing and developed countries appeared to be experimenting with the rise of new forms of horizontal and vertical governance, for instance public-private partnerships (Osborne, 2000; Hodge, Greve and Boardman, 2010) the involvement of stakeholders, co-operation, collaboration and other forms of involvements under the governance label which has been promoted by both IMF and the World Bank (Klijn, 2012). A World Bank, study states that ‘The current prominence of public sector governance in the World Bank is a relatively recent feature of its agenda. Issues related to public sector capability have been present in Bank operations from its earliest days, above all when it came to evaluating

creditworthiness and making decisions to lend and when ad hoc institutions were designed to ensure the success of specific projects. Only recently, however, has the Bank identified governmental capability as a central obstacle to successful development and allocated an important share of its funding operations and analytical work to improving the institutional capability of borrowers, not only in the specific projects or sectors financed by the Bank, but in the overall conduct of government functions' (2008, p.11). Therefore, borrowing countries are obliged under their lending conditions to follow specified public reforms under their advocacy and underpinning ideology.

The notion of governance has gained much prominence in contemporary public administration as well, as mentioned in the previous section. It is therefore important to provide a definition. Many scholars have proposed a number of definitions; as an organising model that directs the administrator as governmental practices shift from a bureaucratic to a hollow state; as lateral and inter-institutional relations in administration; an exercise of economic and administrative authority to manage a country's resources; the sustainable coordination and coherence among a wide variety of actors; or a governing manner that functions in a liable, accountable and transparent manner grounded on the principles of efficiency (Osborne and Gaebler, 1993; United Nations, 1997; Pierre, 2000; Frederickson and Smith, 2003; Munshi, 2004). Henceforth, governance will refer to the administrative authority at all organisational levels that provides for and manages a state's affairs. It encompasses the mechanisms, processes and institutions through which civil society declares its interests, meets its obligations, practises its legal rights and mediates its differences (United Nation 2006). Most importantly, we can refer to governance as something wider than the government: it is about institutions, institutional change, steering the rules of the game for the whole system. Broadly, governance includes setting the rules, applying and enforcing them (Kjaer, 2004). Therefore, governance is the institutional capacity of a government to provide a specific service, for instance, distributing food benefit, in an effective, transparent, impartial and accountable manner, within its budgetary constraints (United Nation 2006).

Hood and Peters (2004) suggest that NPM has reached "middle age". Major concerns have been raised with regards to poverty reduction, social inclusion and the failure of governments in developing countries to meet the challenges; for instance, poverty, weak governance and bureaucratic capacity. The authors go on to argue that

gaps between theory and practice have undermined confidence in the efficacy of managerial solutions. Policy-makers in developing countries and donor agencies were questioning what should replace one-size-fits-all technocratic public-sector reforms. Given budgetary constraints, both developing countries and international donor agencies were under pressure to demonstrate “value for money”. These pressures have created incentives to still maintain the core ideas of the NPM approach, with some tinkering at the margins, while adopting approaches beyond the old NPM (Lodge and Gill, 2011; Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff, 2015; Robinson, 2015).

Both the emergence of NPM in the eighties and the notion of governance in the late nineties have been introduced and applied in the real-life world of public administration domain for delivering public services. While NPM has a more intra-organisational focus on organisational and institutional adaptation and changes within the public sectors, the focus of governance is inter-organisational, addressing the adaptation of and changes between, different agents and the government. Although the two notions emerged from two different perspectives, both have incorporated each other’s ideas, reinforced each other and complement one another in terms of administrating public service delivery (Klijn, 2012). Although the NPM is considered as a valuable approach in describing developments across different countries, policy areas and levels of government, it is an inaccurate approach if it is treated as a one fit model, as every government will have potential tensions between its perceived elements (Leach and Barnett, 1997).

Thus, the influence of NPM and the notion of governance is far-reaching: they have contributed to a consistent and enduring reform agenda, peppered by successes and failures (Hood and Peters, 2004; Pollitt and Boukhaert, 2004). NPM is mainly criticised for its singular focus on management principals in the private sector, for its failure to focus on citizens’ needs as the primary focus for public sector reform in delivering services to households, and the fragile democratic accountability that has arisen as a result of the creation of executive agencies (Minogue, Polidano and Hulme, 1998).

In the first decade of the new millennium, new approaches have started to emerge that question the efficiency of NPM and address the problems of collaboration and coherence. Referred to as “Whole-of-Government”, “New Public Governance”,

and “Digital Governance” approaches, they focus on placing the households at the center of public reform, instead of privileging competition and the market as a reform’s primary driver. All the theories and approaches after NPM do not simply offer an alternative model of public administration and therefore, NPM and governance have not been replaced as theories. Rather, these new approaches offer new and distinctive perspectives that can be built onto NPM, which focus on the role of citizens in formulating policies and producing public services (Robinson, 2015).

In 2017, the World Bank surveyed nearly 10,000 policy-makers in more than 40 countries across the world to assess their views on development issues, including opinions about public sector governance and reform. This survey confirms that governance has become a top priority in terms of national policy. The World Bank has formed a team called Governance Global Practice (GGP) to help governments improve governance. In this regard, they state on their website that ‘... GGP supports client countries to help build capable, efficient, open, inclusive, and accountable institutions that promote effective service delivery...and build citizen trust in government...’ (World Bank, 2018, p.1). A study by Guhan is a perspective from one of the critique studies of the World Bank and its ideology has states that ‘The World Bank -given its visibility, resources, prestige and leverage is, in course of time, capable of distorting the word 'governance' to make it acquire the kind of ideology-laden, question-begging connotation which it has injected into it If this goes uncontested, debate on governance will be marginalised by being confined to the narrow and warped terms set for it by the World Bank, This has already happened with 'economic reforms' and 'structural adjustment', two other mantras in the World Bank's vocabulary’ (1998, p.185). Some studies have assessed the World Bank reforms from policy to practice and pointed out that more attention should be paid to the overall policies of specific countries, focusing on their institutional framework, and the sustainability of those institutions (for review; Moore, 1993; Pleskovic and Stiglitz, 1997; Easterly, 2014; Rose-Ackerman and Palifka, 2016). Critics argue that World Bank sponsored reforms limit real participation from “problematic” stakeholders, by following a closed and carefully controlled policy process. Henceforth, the quest is establish whether some NPM and governance features are prioritised over others in practice driven by a rather selective interpretation of transparency and accountability, or whether they are forming integral components with various actors that should be

included in the policy-making and implementation process in delivering a specific service to the public.

2.3.2 Public Administration Governance of Social Safety Net Programs

Criticism of the international organisations , including both the World Bank and the IMF, encompassed a wide range of concerns but they generally focused around concern about the approaches adopted by them in designing their policies, and the way they are governed. This includes the economic and social impact these policies have on countries that avail themselves of financial assistance from these organisations , and accountability for these impacts (Andrews, 2013). Komisar (2011) interviewed with Joseph Stiglitz who was a former senior vice president and chief economist of the World Bank. He criticised the IMF and World Bank policies by stating that ‘Finance ministers and central bank governors have the seats at the table, not labour unions or labour ministers. Finance ministers and central bank governors are linked to financial communities in their countries, so they push policies that reflect the viewpoints and interests of the financial community and barely hear the voices of those who are the first victims of dictated policies. Furthermore, the World Bank's support for the "Washington Consensus," a set of policies that promote "stabilisation, liberalisation, and privatisation" of the economy, is damaging because of its emphasis on deregulation. Instead, policies should help countries develop “the right regulatory structure.” Ultimately, there must be a greater adherence to democratic principles by the Bretton Woods Institutions’.

A seminar held in April, 2012 IMF–World Bank Spring Meetings in Washington, DC to discuss the experience of countries from the MENA region and beyond in reforming subsidies concluded with the recommendation that: ‘Governments of the MENA region should address the challenges of reforming subsidies and introducing more targeted forms of social protection’ (IMF News, 2012). For four decades, a set of public management techniques and policies highly associated with the involvement of the private sector and towards the open-market, have been promoted by the World Bank and IMF to reform the public administration and management of many governments. These techniques and policies stem from NPM and governance approaches (Larbi, 2003). The World Bank neo-liberal agenda to improve governance and push forward public administration reform policies

consists of three broad areas : improving the government supply of public goods, involving the private sector, increasing the voice and accountability for households to demand better public services that deal with transparency and access to information (World Bank, 2008). This shows that the World Bank and IMF are taking an increased interest in applying NPM, post-NPM and governance to SSNPs. The rise of NPM is associated with wider neo-liberal ideologies, as a result of increasing disenchantment with the growing role of government and increasing taxes. Neo-liberal ideologies are aimed at curbing government expansion and shifting policy towards privatisation (Hood, 1991). However, the state needs to play a role, due to obvious forms of market failure in the provision of some goods and services (Brown, 1992; Dean, 2010). SSNPs are an example of this, thereby creating a dilemma for neo-liberals: the state cannot be reduced to a marginal player or just as a regulator of SSNPs. At the same time, SSNPs cannot be substantially scaled back, as they are a key means to enhance legitimacy and social peace during wider neo-liberal policy shifts. So the problem is: how can the public sector be made to be more effective? The state preferred solution is of course strong NPM and governance policies, including contracting-out to the private sector where possible. Of course, both of these paradigms look at what are inherently political phenomena as if they are amenable to technical, managerial fixes, which is a major limitation of their usefulness.

The SSNPs are institutionally complex. They are considered as a service provided by different governmental bodies to a certain category of households, and are designed to provide regular and predictable support to poor and vulnerable households. They always represent a component of the larger social protection system of each country (World Bank, 2015b). The SSNP can succeed in delivering benefits to the households if adequate attention has been paid to the institutional capacity, arrangements, organisational design and general environment of the programs (Mathauer, 2005). Beneficiary identification and targeting systems are considered as either a stumbling or building blocks for SSNPs: they enable identification of and response to different types of beneficiaries. Hence, identifying beneficiaries is an important component of institutional capacity that is required when designing and implementing particular programs (World Bank 2011). Some institutional features need to be considered during the design and implementation of a SSNP. For instance, for a food programme, it is important to consider the relative strength and influence of the main organisational actors; how weak or voiceless the beneficiaries are and

whether they have access to official complaints channels; the extent to which appropriate accountability mechanisms exist for the distribution of essential ; whether there are gaps in monitoring the delivery service that can lead to corruption; and finally, the opportunity costs that may affect the demand for the service (e.g. prohibitive distance to service application offices and service delivery shops) (Mathauer, 2005; Candel, 2014). All of this makes the application of NPM and governance to these social schemes especially challenging.

The role of governance and institutional capacity in the case of SSNPs have been attracting increasing attention due to the challenges of implementation. Since they are interrelated, many developing countries have explored the model of NPM as a potential opportunity to reform the public sector in delivering the service to the beneficiaries (World Bank, 2000). This arises from the often-heard notion that SSNP (especially food security programs) should not only focus on the technical and environmental dimensions, but should take into consideration the economic, social, institutional and political aspects in evaluating the targeted outcomes (von Braun, 2009; FAO, 2012; Wahlqvist *et al.*, 2012; Maye and Kirwan, 2013). Consequently, these programs tangle pluralistic dimensional facets of several ministerial organisations, local and regional government (local administrative structure) and agents making it hard to identify a single institutional home. Henceforth, programs cannot be designed based on theoretical and idealistic plans and strategies or through acquiring new technologies only. More importantly, they involve advanced steering strategies that encompass ministries in addition to companies and citizens (Kropff, Arendonk and Huub , 2013). In other words, they are multilateral endeavours that include public and private sectors as being reflected in the NPM approach (Osborne, 2000). These features pose important challenges for food programs in achieving their objectives, for instance, targeting the poor and assessing targeting performance outcomes. The performance of a programme depends on how effective it is in organising itself and in managing and governing the results from the relationship between both inter-organisational and intergovernmental bodies. There are matters of control, regulation, cooperation, coordination, and contracting to be addressed and more significantly, concerns about trust and communication between policy-makers and service providers. In sum, these factors have an effect on the targeting performance and have central implications for the institutional design of the

programme, entailing specific aspects of good governance that strength or weaken its institutional capacity in achieving its objective (Mathauer, 2005).

The existence of a well-functioning institutional capacity to deliver effective policies is a key prerequisite to fostering social system (Azulai *et al.*, 2014). Effectiveness is governed by the presence of a procedural and technical project cycle for the programs, that is to say, the existing mechanisms allowing to transform visions and strategic goals into well-informed, the existence of mechanisms that allow visions and strategic goals to transform into well-informed, well-organised, controlled and accountable decisions (World Bank, 1997; Milio, 2007; Luca, 2016). Yet, while there is widespread consensus about the importance of technical capacity, there is no agreement with regards to the institutional circumstances that are essential to ensuring that such technical management procedures are concretely executed and monitored. For example, if the design of a targeted SSNP model is perfect, the programme may fail during its implementation due to the distortion of the bureaucratic system and other factors, for instance, political incentives (Diaz-Cayeros, Estévez and Magaloni, 2016). These concerns are predominantly applicable in developing countries where, because societal institutions are weak, the provision of SSNPs spending is more likely to be distorted around readjusting objectives, aims and clientelistic linkages (Diaz-cayeros, Magaloni and Weingast, 2003; Knutsen, 2013; Diaz-Cayeros, Estévez and Magaloni, 2016). Díaz-Cayeros and Magaloni (2009) found that poverty generates more burdens and stresses on a government for the expansion of benefits to the poor. They hint that state capacity is also very significant and that therefore, bureaucracy and public administration management play an important role in shaping, designing and implementing social programs.

It is also important to understand the role of local government, especially in developing countries and to question whether they are forces for social change or a means of patronage (Markussen, 2011). The significance of bureaucracy in the developing world makes it essential to understand how local governments work, what explains the great difference in their performance and the implications of these links as preconditions for good governance (Manor, 1999; Bardhan and Mookherjee, 2006; Markussen, 2011). Stokes (2013) has argued that poverty is a major cause of clientelism. Decision making policies aimed at reducing poverty should in theory weaken the clientelism and welfare regimes in the West support this expectation. However, Abente and Diamond (2014) found that in developing countries, social

programs were regularly captured for clientelistic distribution of benefits. Therefore, there is no specific theoretical framework that can be applied to all countries that classifies which social programs decrease clientelism and which ones exacerbate it.

Geddes (1994) shows that in developing countries, economic development and public wellbeing are reduced by patronage-induced staffing, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and outright corruption. A study carried out by International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) researchers on arbitrage and corruption in a food subsidy programme in India shows that the level of corruption in the food SSNP depends on the degree of accountability and institutional capacity across different states in India. In states characterised by high levels of accountability, there is an increase in benefit transfers to beneficiaries with the increase of food subsidy provision, while in states that are less accountable, an increase in the benefit without an improvement in enforcement mechanisms tends to increase in the diversion of benefits and reduced transfers to their intended beneficiaries (Chakrabarti, Kishore and Roy, 2016). It is not only institutional capacity that is considered a critical factor influencing the effectiveness of a programme. Another critical factor is the dissemination of information about the food subsidy provision in each state or governorate. Mehta and Jha (2012) conducted a study about corruption, food subsidies, and opacity drawing on evidence from the Philippines. They found that opacity is considered as a severe impediment to the scalability of the rice subsidy programme run by the Philippines National Food Authority. They conclude that a top-down approach and ineffective mechanisms characterised by grievances certainly helps to foster corruption. Therefore, appropriate bureaucratic insulation and transparency are essential to curb both clientelism and corruption. Nevertheless, efforts to reform an administrative body will encounter resistance from the intermediaries who gain from manipulating the SSNP by controlling the rules of the game inside the system (Swamy, 2016) to better serve their prospects for remaining. When a government tries to reform the SSNP, it should first understand the governance environment and the other critical factors so as to choose a reform approach with the most potential to succeed given the constraints, in particular those at the national level (Bold, Molina and Safir, 2017).

The World Bank, on the one hand, has ignited a large debate in developing countries about the need to reform SSNPs, especially food programs, by targeting the benefits to the poor (Besley and Kanbur, 1993; Hoddinott, 1999; Coady, Grosh and

Hoddinott, 2004a; Grosh *et al.*, 2008). Since the 1980s, the World Bank, IMF for developing countries and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) for industrialised countries have promulgated the ideas of the NPM approach in all public administration reforms. In the 1990s and 2000s, the donors and their countries were faced with the limitations of applying the NPM approach and with its unforeseen consequences (Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff, 2015). On the other hand, the World Bank has also ignited the debate about bad governance and other social, economic and political aspects that may hinder a programme's performance in developing countries. It has developed its role as consultants to developing countries with regards to how government might achieve greater transparency, efficiency and accountability in implementing their programs (Kjaer, 2004). Many critics of international organisations such as the World Bank and IMF argue that by using a “cookie-cutter” approach to all countries, they devise administration reforms for service delivery programs that often fail to produce the projected results (Stiglitz, 2000; Easterly, 2001; Gutner, 2002). Moreover, as was intimated in Chapter One, the disconnection between research on targeting food subsidies and the targeting outcomes of certain SSNPs within the public administration discourse creates a gap between the design of the programme and its implementation. In every country, institutional capacity, poverty conditions and politico-economic context vary; consequently, the most appropriate targeting method to reach the poor will range from narrow targeting to universal schemes (IEG, 2011a). So, governmental decisions to select or target the poor always involve decisions about governance (Alatas *et al.*, 2012).

There are key challenges in applying NPM and governance when reviewing public administration reforms for any SSNP, such as transparency of information, institutional capacity, governance, decentralisation, co-ordination between different governmental levels, monitoring, and controlling of the entire social protection targeting scheme. Transparency resonates with alternative approaches to public administration, namely, NPM and Post-NPM (Christensen and Lægreid, 2002; Douglas and Meijer, 2016) and is considered a key ingredient of governance (Bassett *et al.*, 2012). Measuring the targeting outcomes are typically inferred by both specialists and policy-makers as indicators of any programme's performance ‘...directing benefits toward poorer members of the population’ (Coady,

Grosh and Hoddinott, 2004a, p.37) and requires effective institutions since it is very difficult to generate good outcomes in countries where such organisations or information are absent or lack transparency. Even the strongest advocates for targeting food programs recognise the difficulties of implementing social programs in developing countries (Dutrey, 2007). Grosh (1994) states that, in poor countries, institutional capacity is very limited and that this can make implementing targeting mechanisms even more problematic to administer.

Tekleselassie and Johnstone (2004) show that targeting the benefits using means-testing in a higher education social programme in Africa is hugely problematic due to fragile institutional capacity and absence of or limited information. It is worth noting that, in this context, where SSNPs are designed to reach the poor, such as those in sub-Saharan Africa, universal schemes are more efficient than targeted schemes. As an example, an analysis carried out by Coady, Grosh and Hoddinott (2004a) found that a median targeting programme in sub-Saharan Africa transferred 8 percent less resources to poor households than universal schemes. They attribute the bad targeting performance to the poor implementation and fragile governance rather than poor potential for such programs per se.

In Peru, by contrast, similar outcomes have been achieved in terms of good targeting performance as in richer countries such as Chile and Costa Rica. This indicates that targeted SSNPs can be useful in some, but not all, poor countries, as long as institutional systems are similar to those in Peru (Grosh, 1994; Dutrey, 2007). For instance, the *Junto* programme in Peru is a social programme designed to develop human capital and break inter-generational transfers of poverty. The institutional capacity design of this programme has been carefully thought out to bring under control a number of significant problems that has hindered the implementation of other SSNPs in Peru. These include problems of clientelism, lobbying, lack of synergies between different sectors and inadequate reach of the benefit to the poor and most vulnerable households. Key features of *Junto*'s institutional composition are: firstly, its central directorate is managed by an influential central government organisation, the Presidential Council of Ministers; secondly, the programme's mechanisms allow inter-sectoral coordination and cooperation; thirdly, a rigorous system of information is in place and its monitoring system is supervised by a checking committee; and lastly, its programme facilitators and focal points are at community-level. The programme

has been recognised as an effective SSNP, enjoying support from both international organisations and public and private institutions that are involved in its design and implementation. It has achieved an adequate reach in terms of the poorest households in the country (Jones, Vargas and Villar, 2008), suggesting that developing countries with stronger institutions or the potential to be stronger can implement targeting schemes effectively (Dutrey, 2007).

Generally, in assessing targeting mechanisms in terms of how much benefit is reaching the poor through targeting performance outcomes as measured in numbers, is an empirical question. Yet, beyond targeting advocates, little is known about how well each targeting programme performs in practice (Candel, 2014). An important question should be involvement in measuring targeting is, how crucial is it for a specific government of a given developing country to have a better understanding and evaluation of their own control, regulation, cooperation, coordination, and contracting processes between the levels of institutional capacity, governance, agents, and other influential factors of the SSNPs that can affect the programs' targeting outcomes? Furthermore, how can governments implement SSNP policies of reform while embracing NPM and governance policies and approaches to reform and maintain the status quo? Finally, when assessing a programme, it is important to consider the role of the employees who implement the programme and the influence of the working environment on the targeting mechanism. This requires factoring in human beings and working conditions as important elements that will shape the functioning of bureaucratic systems and indicate the extent to which they can affect the targeting outcomes. The next section focuses on these two elements.

2.4 Street-Level Bureaucracy (SLBy) and Targeting

Street-Level Bureaucracy (SLBy) is a sociological theory, proposed by Lipsky in 1980 by Lipsky, which seeks to account for the working practices and beliefs of front-line employees in public services. Employees in the state sector who serve households are regarded as low-level employees and yet their actions are directed at delivering government services. Most households will encounter government not through letters but by visiting one of its local offices. Thus each office represents an instance of policy delivery and it is the employees who interact directly with the households in the course of their job requirements by processing their requests, granting access to government programs and providing services to them. Lipsky refers to these employees as street- level bureaucrats (SLBs).

Lipsky makes two distinct claims within his theory. Firstly, employees in direct contact with citizens exercise discretion and behavioural performance as a critical dimension of much of their work. Furthermore, a variety of factors such as lack of time, resources, lack of experience, qualifications, information means that SLBs cannot perform their jobs as expected to the highest standards of decision-making across different fields. Instead, employees invariably develop routine practices to manage their difficult jobs and emotionally modify the household and the environment in a way that strongly influences the outcome of their efforts. This highlights the human being as an important element in shaping the functioning of bureaucratic systems. Quality of treatment and services are always influenced by the mass processing of households. According to Lipsky, all of these observations are informative in themselves and have insightful implications for public policy. He suggests that understanding the role of SLBy in public policy entails an analysis of how the unsanctioned work responses of the SLBs link with the agency's pronouncements and rules in creating what the citizens ultimately experience as the agency's performance.

Lipsky's second claim is that although the work is diverse in various fields, it is structurally similar, for instance, the work of judges, social workers, police officers, nurses and so forth. Therefore, one can combine and compare the work settings of these jobs with each other. Diversity does not occur across different jobs but each job can be seen as embodying a paradox that should be performed in different ways. This

means, there will be a tension between the policy objectives and the improvisation and responsiveness needed for each household case. In other words, the fundamental tension is seen to be between the need to keep rules relatively simple for the bureaucrats to function and the infinite variety and messiness of the real implementation process. In other words, this links to the insight that social life is inherently messy and unstructured (Blumer, 1969; O'Brien, 2009). For instance, in social programs, one can find an infinite variety of implementation processes due to the uniqueness of personal circumstances and situations of welfare claimants. This poses the question of how the targeting mechanisms of a particular service delivery will be impacted by the trade-off between the bureaucratic systems of public service delivery, on one hand, which need a structured world with specific instructions and processes and on the other, the real life of beneficiaries and applicants, characterised by being extremely unsystematic and messy. Therefore, citizens want the employees who they are dealing with to be more flexible and open to any probability of emerging special cases that they have to deal with as well. Lipsky shows that the phrase 'Street-Level Bureaucracy' is a paradox, hinting at a bureaucracy that involves a number of operational guidelines and structures of authority, and a chasm at street-level, between the point of implementation and the centre where authority apparently resides. These employees try to manage this paradoxical reality in which they are expected to treat household claims equally and simultaneously are expected to be responsive to an individual case when appropriate (Lipsky, 1980, 2010).

2.4.1 SLBy Theory and Social Policy

SLBy as a theory has provided a useful framework for other scholarly studies that extend across different interdisciplinary fields of research (Lipsky, 1980, 2010). It shows how households might experience public policies on the ground, experiences that are critical to any community's welfare. Lipsky argues that the decision made by SLBs, the routine practices they develop, the devices they use to cope with work pressures and uncertainties, effectively become the ground reality of the public policy they are carrying out. He states that public policy is best understood not as being made in legislatures but as implemented on the ground. It is a theory he has proposed in contemporary debates in many areas of social and political science. To create a comprehensive picture, he argues, one needs to understand both the place where the

policies are made together with the crowded offices that the households visit and the daily encounters of the street-level employees.

Since the term SLBy has been coined, it has been integrated into the language of organisational and social policy studies (Brodkin, 2012). This theory shows the role of policy implementation and the importance of those public officials who have direct contact with the households in implementing public policies. Indeed, Lipsky has argued that the SLBs are the real policy-makers, effectively turning the political-administrative system and policy cycle upside down. As such, SLBs of SSNPs are a case in point. The transformation of a given public policy as instigated by high strategic management levels is what the targeted households receive and perceive as public social policy. He further emphasises that the implementation of a certain policy tends to be systematically biased due to SLBs' behaviours and attitudes, compared to the strategic goals and operational guidelines. He focuses on the structural conditions that influence SLBs' actions and attitudes and shape their behaviour. Mapping onto a wide range of studies, Lipsky shows that SLBs share three similar working conditions, which are: direct contact with the targeted households and beneficiaries; chronic lack of resources in meeting the extensive demand from legislation, managers and households; wide discretion and an inclination to practise similar repertoires of behavioural responses (Weatherley and Lipsky, 1977; Lipsky, 1980, 2010). All these conditions are found in the case of the targeted schemes of SSNPs.

Lipsky's theory emphasises the structural determinants of SLB behaviours. Other academics concur, arguing that SLBs act in a uniform and predictable way due to the same structural conditions. They show that the SLB can be shaped by informal organisational norms (Sandfort, 2000; Meyers and Nielsen, 2012). For example, Brodtkin (2012) shows how, in sanctioning welfare beneficiaries and applicants, SLBs are influenced in partly unintentional, yet relatively uniform ways. Also a skilled, qualified and motivated workforce contributes a lot to achieve any programme's objectives. Also, productivity mostly depends on those qualified employees. Hence, according to the literature, the ideal scenario is that, productivity of the employees and maintaining good household relationships are the key areas of success and these are influenced by the performance of the employees (Rounok and Parvin, 2011). The employees' performance is always connected with promotion as a reward system. Promotion is relevant to the movement of employees to job requirements where they

exert great effort or take on different responsibilities. It is, therefore, seen as a great motivation for employees to deliver top performance (Amah and Weje, 2004). Reward systems are either based on seniority or merit. Promotion based on seniority has been the traditional way of distinguishing among employees who should be promoted and is usually calculated by time (Torrington, 1998). Alternatively, merit-based promotions are based on an individual's capability and competence and this type of promotion is considered the best for delivering high performance (Babura, 2004). The seniority promotion can lead unqualified and incapable managers to senior positions and therefore, be detrimental to programme performance. Although the job performance in the SLB is extremely difficult to measure, especially when the output is a service, understanding the real process can provide insights into how a certain programme works and performs (Lipsky, 1980, 2010).

SLBs behaviour, experience and qualifications are shaped by the overall administrative system as represented by executive management, limited resources, lack of monitoring of incompetent SLBs through using ICT systems, and contracting the private sector to provide certain service. Lipsky has focused on the adverse working environment of the SLB by questioning how the job can be done with insufficient resources, unclear objectives, little control and very discouraging conditions. In answering this question, he has identified general coping responses among SLBs that have both behavioural and attitudinal forms, with the latter justifying and enabling the former by decreasing cognitive dissonance from conflicts between practice and operational guidelines (Lipsky, 2010).

2.4.2 SLBs Bounce between Policy Conflict, Working Environment and Limited Resources

Lipsky points out that policy conflict can be the result of the struggle between the street-level employees and the households who challenge or submit to the applicant-processing. SLB has been used in diverse policy research fields, including education, child welfare, healthcare, workplace safety, justice, prison reform, workforce development, juvenile and more (for instance see ; Smith and Donovan, 2003; Lindhorst and Padgett, 2005; Gulland, 2011). These research studies analyse the implemented policy versus the policy as produced. In other words, what you see against what you should get. They try to fill the gap between the nominal policy and

the programme outcomes, highlighting what is actually occurring that might not have been envisaged or intended. Such studies also focus on how the rules are experienced by employees in certain governmental organisations that serve households, what latitude the employees may have when they perform their job and what other factors they experience and consider as a pressure on them. More importantly, these studies have expanded the theoretical framework that Lipsky first elaborated by collectively testing and refining his theory. They have also collectively built a fairly substantial empirical evidence base with regards to the factors that shape the SLBy and the type of adaptation that may develop under specific circumstances (Brodin, 2012).

SLBs operate in a working environment characterised by certain conditions that affect the way problems are perceived and solutions are framed, leading to particular patterns of practice. These conditions include the bureaucratic settings where these interactions occur, the resources available to provide the service, the performance oriented toward specified goals, SLBs' behaviours and actions and finally, the client seeking the service. These dynamic conditions create and formulate the implementation phase on the ground (Lipsky, 2010). Lipsky states that 'We can now restate the problem of street-level bureaucracy as follows. Street-level bureaucrats attempt to do a good job in some way. The job, however, is in sense impossible to do in ideal terms. How is the job to be accomplished with inadequate resources, few controls, in determinate objective, and discouraging circumstance' (2010, p. 82). This eloquent frame of questions succinctly portrays how policy conflict and the working conditions of SLBs can have a significant impact on service performance outcomes.

The complication in providing services through SLBs comes about because the demand of for the service increases with limited resources (Lipsky, 2010). Hence, Lipsky has shown that SLBs work in a situation where the resource problem is in most cases an unsolvable problem, which then a demand-supply dilemma in bureaucratic settings. Thus, SLBs are trapped in a cycle of better performance expectations within the available resources and responsiveness needed, given the messiness of real life situations. Lipsky shows that due to the imbalance of excessive demand and insufficient resources, SLBs tend to develop a number of behavioural coping strategies and tactics, for example, by trying to ration the demand for their services, by limiting information about services, by letting households wait and making access difficult,

and by imposing a variety of other psychological costs on households, that are revealed in their patterns of practice to manage the pressures of their working day. Therefore, the consequences of a bureaucratic system suffering from disconnections between policy design and implementation are that particular working conditions will develop that lead to certain practices and coping mechanisms among SLBs. This dynamic stressful environment will have a significant influence on the performance outcome of any service programme.

2.4.3 SLBy and its Application

Distributing food subsidies to the poor involves the applicants and beneficiaries interacting directly with the SLBs. Scholars have used SLBy in depth in disciplinary fields such as sociology, anthropology public administration and political science, rather than economics. The World Bank publications and other international organisations together with the economists in the academic research field usually address the problem of performance of targeting outcomes of food subsidy programs using quantitative approaches, as outlined in Section 2.2. To achieve better outcomes, they usually carry out evaluations and simulations and propose possible solution for better targeting the poor by focusing on the targeting method the government should use, without considering the reality of what is happening on the ground (for reference; Glewwe and Kanaan, 1989; Hoddinott, 1999; Ahmed and Bouis, 2002; Coady, Grosh and Hoddinott, 2004a; World Bank, 2010; Lang, Barrett and Naschold, 2013). Thus, targeting analysis on behalf of the World Bank is undertaken almost exclusively by economists and there is a lack of inter- disciplinary in their approach, with targeting portrayed as a relatively neat, technical process. At the same time, as discussed in Section 2.3, the World Bank is concerned with influencing reforms in developing countries for attaining good governance and applying NPM policies but these are not linked to targeting mechanisms.

There is no obvious explanation why the World Bank does not use the SLB theoretical framework in assessing the performance of SSNPs, specifically the food programs. That targeting performance of food programs has not been investigated within SLBy theory seems a significant gap. Perhaps, this sociological framework does not quite fit with the neo-liberal ideology of the World Bank and that is why

SLBy theory has not been used for explaining and understanding how the practices, behaviour and the performance of SLBs can influence the targeting outcomes of food subsidies in developing countries. Yet this approach has the potential to give government a far clearer picture of any targeting programme, and accordingly, governments could improve its existing targeting mechanisms or choose alternative ones.

Lipsky's (1980, 2010) influential SLB theory that has been providing insights about the relationship between the service users and the welfare state for more than three and half decades, has been a core reference for academics , in developed countries as well as more recently, in developing settings. The range of topics it has been applied to shows the scope of application to those issues, for instance: child welfare programs, primary health care, civil service law, Chinese bureaucracy, and forest management (for review; Križ and Skivenes, 2014; Hughes and Condon, 2016; Langbein and Sanabria, 2017; Zang, 2017; Maier and Abrams, 2018). However, the framework has not been applied to research on anti-poverty targeting programs. This identified gap is being addressed in this thesis through applying SLBy to Egypt's FSP and how its SLBs might influence the programme's targeting performance.

Given that the notion of SLB has not been utilised in the field of targeting the poor in SSNP of food programs, it is central to my theoretical framework. I explore the influence of SLBs' attitudes and behaviours on targeting outcomes of FSP in Egypt and highlight how the SLBy approach can generate new questions, insights and understanding in terms of inclusion and exclusion errors. This analysis scratches the surface of a broad and diverse literature that could be linked to the body of work examining targeting food subsidies, especially when illuminating targeting problems and governance. Although I refer to some of these studies, a comprehensive review is beyond the scope of this thesis and is proposed for further research in the next stage of developing this research area. The analysis Chapter Six shows how SLB abilities, working conditions and practices have a direct influence on how the targeting mechanism functions and how they provide a better explanation of the performance targeting outcomes of SSNPs. Although these effects may not be directly related to targeting, in my case study, they have a significant effect on the performance of SLBs in targeting the FSP benefit.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explained how ideologies play an important role in designing, restructuring and implementing SSNPs. I have discussed the trend towards universality, followed by, in the 1970s, a process of restructuring the SSNPs in response to the economic downturn. This shift was supported by international organisations with neoliberal economic reforms that targeted the benefit to alleviating poverty within fiscal constraints. Not surprisingly, the principal of providing a loan to a developing country was to perform such reforms, and henceforth embracing their ideologies without being linked to the local context. I also show that while targeting in theory and under conditions that do not take into consideration the human element and assume information will be accessible, is likely to be effective in alleviating poverty, in practice, a number of factors during the implementation of such policies work against their effectiveness. The research questions are set out to address the gaps identified in the literature. I have identified three main themes connected to the targeted SSNPs that will enable me to address the three research questions:

- 1. How effective is the targeting of the SSNP in terms of quantifying its errors?

It is important to quantify the targeting error of a particular SSNP; however, the realities of implementation can also be a significant explanatory factor contributing to its performance. From the review of the literature on targeting, I identified various methods associated with a number of costs for effective targeting to reach the poor. I explained different targeting methods: demographic targeting, community-based targeting, means testing, self-targeted method, and PMT. I also explained the different costs of targeting: administrative costs, private costs, indirect costs and political costs. I then explained that the most common approach in measuring targeting performance, quantitative approach, fails to take account of a deeper level of explanation for the realities of implementation. This is a significant gap in the targeting literature and more broadly, is the disconnection between the evaluation of targeting and proposed reforms and the realities of implementation. Therefore, there is a trade-off between the accuracy and the feasibility of implementation when assessing, choosing or promoting

a certain targeting method. To understand the practicality of implementation, it is important to understand the design of the bureaucratic structure and the policies of the SSNPs.

- 2. How are the targeting outcomes affected by the programme's bureaucratic structure and policy design?

Based on public administration concepts, literature and evidence, the performance of SSNPS is determined, either explicitly or implicitly, by the performance of central, regional, local government and agents involved in the service delivery. (A) I firstly discussed service delivery in the public administration domain. I provided a historical background to the evolution of the bureaucratic administration model and service delivery from the old Weberian model to the emergence of neoliberal models of public administration that emerged from the 1980s, namely, NPM and governance. These concepts of public administration evolved within the paradigm of the international organisations at the same time as supporting reforms toward more targeted interventions, as I explained in Section 2.2.1.

I have argued that at the heart of the emerging NPM was cost containment. It lessened and removed differences between the private and public sectors. I presented the factors that helped in the emergence of the NPM trend in the 1980s: (i) governmental fiscal stress, (ii) criticism of the inefficiencies and ineffectiveness of delivering public services, (iii) ideological shifts on the welfare state, (iv) the role of international organisations and international management consultants on reforms to government, (v) the spread of global markets and the liberalizing of the economy, (vi) the growth and use of new technology and E-governance to enhance governmental performance. In the 1990s, as the concepts of good governance and service delivery emerged, developing countries appeared to be experimenting with NPM and governance; public-private partnerships, involvement of stakeholders, co-operation and collaboration and other forms of involvements under the governance label as being promoted by both IMF and the World Bank. Indeed, part of lending conditions for borrowing countries is to follow the particular public reforms as endorsed by these organisations and their underpinning ideology. Both trends were taken up in the public administration domain with regards to delivering public services. I have shown how,

as a result, the World Bank sponsored closed and carefully controlled policy process reforms that focus on selective policies in terms of NPM and governance, ignoring the countries' local context. These injected policies might play an important role in the implementation process for delivering a service to the public.

I then described in some detail SSNPs and service delivery in the public administration domain. I show that IMF and the World Bank have played an important role in MENA by supporting targeted interventions, involving the private sector with its neo-liberal ideologies and putting pressure on curbing government expansion. However, I have argued that the state needs to play a role, as can be seen in the failure of the market to provide some good and services. SSNPs are an example of this. I explained the limitations of proposed reforms that were little more than technical, due to the complex institutional nature of SSNPs. Institutional complexities with regards to capacity, arrangements, organisational design and general environment of the programs makes the application of particular NPM and governance policies of the NPM especially challenging. I described how pluralistic dimensional facets of several ministerial organisations, local and regional government (local administrative structure) and agents are involved in these programs, making it crucial that they are all included in assessing any targeted SSNPs. In sum, all these factors significantly shape targeting performance. Much of the literature critical of international organisations argues that they offer public administration reforms of selective policies for SSNPs by using a “cookie-cutter” approach to all countries. What is needed instead is to take into account the realities of these complex institutions and other factors that affect the programs' targeting outcomes when assess the performance of certain SSNPs.

- 3. To what extent do the implementers of the programme at the local level and their working conditions influence targeting outcomes?

As I explained in the third section, drawing on Lipsky's sociological theory, the actions and the behavioural performance of SLBs is considered as a critical dimension in the implementation process. Their actions and behaviours represent the delivery of the public service to the beneficiaries and applicants. I have demonstrated how these actions are constrained by a number of factors, such as qualifications,

experience, lack of time, resources, information and other factors that are necessary to accomplish the task properly in each case. Consequently, employees develop routine practices to manage their difficult jobs within the working environment in a way that strongly influence the outcome of their efforts. Thus, from this perspective, individuals, both citizens and employees, are important components that shape the functioning of bureaucratic systems of public services. In this regard, I highlighted the fundamental tension created between the need to keep rules relatively simple for the bureaucrats to function and the infinite variety and messiness of the real implementation process. I outlined some of the challenges facing SLBs when faced with policy conflict, a stressful working environment and limited resources. All these factors are likely to have a significant influence on service delivery as they affect the behaviour, action and practices of the SLBs. In turn, this dynamic stressful environment will have an impact on the performance outcome of any service programme. While this framework has been applied to a wide range of issues in diverse disciplines, it has as yet not been applied to anti-poverty programs. This is a significant gap that this thesis sets out to fill.

The next chapter explains the research methodology and methods used for the study.

Chapter 3 – Research Methodology and Methods

‘The distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena. In brief, the case study allows an investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events-such as individual life cycles, organisational and managerial processes, neighbourhood change, international relations, and the maturation of industries’ (Yin, 2003, p.3).

According to Yin (2003), the case study approach is the most suitable research methodology when the research objectives involve ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions.

3.1 Introduction

The case study approach is powerful in social science, predominantly when seeking a better understanding of a complicated phenomenon. A case study is developed by using and collecting a variety of data sources through multiple methods, allowing the researcher to deal with the complex nature of the case while maintaining the integrity of interpretation, findings, and conclusion through adequate triangulation (Yin, 2003). Given the characteristics of this research study, the case study approach is appropriate to be used. This thesis provides a case study of the FSP, created through mixed methods. When measuring the targeting performance outcomes of food subsidies in general and the FSP in particular, quantitative methods are most commonly used. In evaluating the FSP, the food demand model, for instance, is based on a statistical analysis of survey data containing all household’s information, and can be used to create different scenarios of household food consumption (intake and waste; leakage and under-coverage) (for review; Ahmed *et al.*, 2002).

First, I was able to obtain official permission to use a restricted nationally representative secondary database issued by a governmental statistical body in Egypt.

I then measured the targeting performance by applying a more “orthodox” quantitative evaluation of targeting to present graphically the targeting errors of the FSP. I carried out my quantitative analysis outside Egypt. Quantitative methods and approaches are not usually used to capture ‘how’ and ‘why’ these errors occur. Indeed, the quantitative data analysis does not provide much explanation or the same level of refinement as qualitative data can in answering ‘how’ and ‘why’ targeting errors occur. Therefore, ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions often comprehend research studies phenomena, which are non-sequential, messy and dynamic. This study is the case.

The research methodology in this study developed iteratively, organically and was modified throughout the research process. Consequently, it became a hybrid, and quite an original hybrid at that since it contains, inevitably, elements of the grounded theory. The way I have used case study methodology, the different methods I have chosen and the ways in which I applied those methods, the way they have emerged and the way I have applied, used and related them to wider knowledge is unusual in some respects. While my thesis does not claim to give a comprehensive answer to why targeting is so ineffective, it does generate a number of insights about targeting performance and its outcomes that help to fill the knowledge gap identified in Chapter Two. These insights are only possible as a consequence of drawing on both quantitative, qualitative data, and different from those I could have obtained from other methods. It is also very interesting to put these insights alongside each other, although the resulting picture is still incomplete. Therefore, through generating insights about targeting, this thesis aims to provide a deeper explanation of the complex linkages, interconnectedness and dynamic processes that govern the targeting mechanisms of SSNP systems in the case of Egypt’s FSP.

This chapter is structured as follows: I start by presenting explicitly my positionality and discuss how it has directed and impacted on my research ideas, field techniques and methods. I then explain the research motivation through describing how data collection started with first-hand accounts about the experiences of the FSP and then, in interpreting the targeting outcomes, was developed and linked to different discourses, rather than using a solely quantitative approach. In subsequent sections, I discuss the research methods and approaches in the following order: mixed methods; fieldwork sites and sampling; research data; data management; data analysis.

3.2 Researcher's Positionality

‘It is critical to pay attention to positionality, reflexivity, the production of knowledge and the power relations that are inherent in research processes in order to undertake ethical research...’ (Sultana, 2007, p.382).

‘Interpretive research begins and ends with the biography and self of the research’ (Denzin, 1989, p.12).

Being aware of the influence of positionality on the research process, I have considered my own positionality during my fieldwork, data collection, and analysis. The decision to undertake this study is borne out of a long profession in teaching economics. Prior to undertaking this PhD study, I worked as an assistant lecturer of economics in one of the top state universities in Egypt for thirteen years. In that role, I taught different branches of economics: microeconomics, macroeconomics, development economics and international trade. Thus, much of what I learnt and taught drew purely on quantitative approaches and different schools of economic thought.

Embarking on this research represents for me not only a professional academic quest but also a personal one. During the rise of the Arab Spring in Egypt in 2011 I was moved by the chants that could be heard in the big squares of every governorate, *“Aish, Horreya, Adala Egtema’eya”* (*“Bread, Freedom, Social Justice”*). Behind these words, it seemed to me, was the desire for a roadmap, a plan, a timeline for a better life. At that time, I was thinking about my PhD research topic and so, what emerged was a series of ideas that related to the words being chanted all over Egypt, based on my background and expertise in the field of development. The first word of these chants related directly to my vested interest, since “Bread” indicated dissatisfaction with the food subsidies provided by the MSIT.

Thus, this research is borne out the Egyptian revolution as inspiration behind my research proposal about the FSP. First, I familiarised myself with the literature on targeting and then started to develop my initial ideas, using quantitative approaches, to assess the targeting performance of the programme. Initially, a quantitative approach appeared to be most suited to looking at targeting, measuring programme

performance and outcomes. This was firstly, because of the substantial existing literature on targeting using this approach, and secondly, my own scientific background and area of expertise. The latest assessment of targeting performance conducted by the World Bank, commented that the FSP ‘has evolved from an in-kind subsidy to a voucher-like system’, going on to recommend that [W]hile preliminary signals are encouraging, a robust evaluation using data from the 2016 HIECS would shed more quantitative light on the initial results’ (Abdalla and Al-Shawarby, 2018, p.132). However, I soon realised that I needed to understand the actual implementation of the programme itself. I therefore set out to find the linkage between measuring targeting performance outcomes and the grass-roots realities of the implementation phase. I did not at that time realise that the quantitative approach could not answer in any depth ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions about targeting performance.

My exposure to interdisciplinarity in the School of International Development at the University of East Anglia has enabled me to widen considerably my research skills. Additionally, I was fortunate to have two supervisors whose methodological interests complemented one another in that one of them is primarily interested in quantitative approaches while the other’s area of expertise veers more towards qualitative approaches. I was able to develop additional research skills under their supervision develop a research design and research questions that were suitable for my topic. In developing my research skills, I was exposed a range of perspectives and methods of social science research. Over time, it became apparent to me that it could be a real benefit to apply these methods and that different kinds of mind-sets and research skills lead to the undertaking of different kinds of research. Therefore, I invested considerable time extending my own repertoire of research skills. This resulted in a mixed method approach, designed to understand the realities of the FSP’s targeting mechanism, which involved understanding the complexities of the actual implementation of the programme.

As an Egyptian national, it was not too hard for me to get ethical clearance and official permission to do this research, as I have Egyptian citizenship and also I know exactly who I should visit, what exact procedures are needed, how to comply with them, and where to go to do so. The bureaucratic process of getting high level ethical clearance from the Minister of the MSIT required around four months (from September 2015 until December 2015). It was not an easy process and required

repeated visits to the MSIT over a period of three months until I was granted ethical clearance for three governorates in the fourth month. Someone who was unfamiliar with this working environment would have probably given up. Aside from getting official permission and clearance from the government as mentioned above, I also needed to ensure that this research complied with the University of East Anglia's ethical protocols. Writing my ethical application was extremely useful in terms of making me think about some of the issues I would face and methods I would use while I was out in the field. This was the first time to have seriously engaged with these research methods and thought about how I would use them in the research environment (ethical clearance application is found in the Annex).

I had no personal involvement with the FSP system but the majority of households within my social networks hold SRCs despite being considered non-poor households. This made me question the effectiveness of the programme's targeting performance. Despite having read extensively about the FSP, I came to the field with no direct experience of the whole implementation process and the targeting mechanism itself. Moreover, although prior to embarking upon my PhD study, I had worked with a number of NGOs in Egypt, I did not have any first-hand experience working with NGOs involved in providing food security or food SSNPs or in any of the thesis topics or analysis. However, working with NGOs that focus on social transformation in informal settlements with high poverty and illiteracy rates has developed my social interaction skills, and built up my confidence in working with different categories of citizens. These skills and experience have helped me in gaining the trust and openness of my respondents.

I never lost sight of my position as both an insider/outsider, despite not having previous experience dealing with FSP personnel as such, and the need to be reflexive. I often found myself engaging in a kind of double way of thinking: on the one hand listening to and writing down what the interviewees were talking about in terms of the FSP, and at the same time in the back of my mind, holding an awareness of what was going on beyond what interviewees said. I found this process quite hard to reconcile on a personal level. For this reason, it felt important not to interview anybody or anyone I knew personally.

So my position required reflexivity and continuously holding the awareness reminder of being both insider and outsider. Maykut and Morehouse describe this reflexivity as follows: 'The qualitative researcher's perspective is perhaps a paradoxical one: it is to be acutely tuned-in to the experiences and meaning systems of others—to indwell—and at the same time to be aware of how one's own biases and preconceptions may be influencing what one is trying to understand' (1994, p.123). In data collection and analysis, the recognition of my insider/outsider position enabled me to shape my positionality of what Bartunek and Louis call 'a kind of marginal lens through which to examine subject matter. Crossing experientially and cognitively different standpoints creates this lens. It requires maintaining tension and distinctness among the standpoints' (1996, p.61). With this in mind, I regularly reminded myself that while I knew a lot about the context given my insider location, there were issues about the implementation phase that I did not know.

Since most of the selected sites were less advantaged areas, I was fully aware that despite being an Egyptian national, I might be perceived as one of the privileged sections of the society as being a university staff member. I have had the privilege of a good education and I live in an elite area of Cairo. Both, the opportunity of pursuing my PhD study and my scientific background are in themselves indicators of privilege. While my positionality of being insider/outsider has enriched my research, it has also been a challenge to maintain and reconcile. Being an insider held numerous advantages, especially with regards to building trust with key-informants. Moreover, I tried to enhance my insider position through what I wore. Despite having a different socio-economic status than most of the key-informants I interviewed, I tried to dress like them during my field work. Respect towards the research participants was ensured throughout fieldwork. Being a female researcher, a conscious effort had to be made to have a backup plan for having more key interviewees from a wider pool of knowledgeable informants, in case any gender issues emerged. However, I did not face any gender issues during my fieldwork in all the three governorates. Nonetheless, on many occasions, I felt like an outsider. For example, on some occasions, I misunderstood bureaucratic wording. In the first interview, the manager mentioned the word 'separation' but did not specify if this was due to divorce, death or other causes. I was forced to confess my confusion as an outsider and when I asked what she meant by 'separation' it turned out to be referring to Separation from Parent's

Card. Eventually, I became familiar with all the bureaucratic terminology used regularly by the FSP's Ration Office (RO) managers and employees.

3.3 Research Motivation

The research study started with the collection of a first-hand set of accounts about the experiences of employees and managers responsible for processing the targeting mechanisms. As mentioned previously, in the Egyptian context there are no studies that investigate the implementation phase of the FSP, including policy-decisions and the impact of implementers on its targeting mechanism – a gap this study intends to fill by gaining a multi-faceted understanding of and insights about, poor targeting outcomes from different approaches.

I start the analysis by using a descriptive quantitative approach (further discussion in Chapter Four) to assess the targeting performance of the FSP. This analysis explains the performance outcome of the FSP and the targeting outcomes in terms of targeting errors, whether the inclusion of ineligible households or exclusion of eligible ones. This approach reveals a major problem with the FSP's targeting mechanism. In the first phase of my PhD study, the main framework was developed, as presented in the literature review. It covers the concepts and research questions about targeting the SSNPs and their administrative costs from a quantitative point of view. However, I could not capture at that time “why” and “how” these targeting errors occurred and the targeting literature did not provide answers either, claiming always the lack of evidence. So I decided to use also a qualitative approach to enable me to understand the actual implementation process of the programme and how this process might affect the programme's targeting outcomes. From this moment, the study moved away from an exclusive focus on quantitative techniques to more pragmatic reasoning about why and how FSP errors occur.

According to Robson, ‘The task of carrying out an enquiry is complicated by the fact that there is no overall consensus about how to conceptualise the doing of research. This shows in various ways. There are, for example, different views about the place and role of theory; also about the sequence and relationship of the activities involved. One model says that you need to know exactly what you are doing before collecting the data that you are going to analyse; and that you collect all this data

before starting to analyse it. A different approach expects you to develop your design through interaction with whatever you are studying, and has data collection and analysis intertwined' (2002, p.45). He outlines two main approaches to research design, fixed and flexible design. I chose to use flexible design in this study. My initial reasons for undertaking qualitative data collection and analysis were less specific: essentially, I followed a grounded theory approach and it was during fieldwork, as I collected first-hand accounts of the programme that I began to understand the implementation process. This then allowed me to compare the reality with my initial research design and adapt it accordingly.

I collected and transcribed a large amount of qualitative data over a period of approximately 18 months. I then started focusing on the data that were particularly relevant in terms of the emphasis key informants placed and their implications for the performance of targeting outcomes. At the same time, I was thinking about how I could add a conceptual and theoretical framework to these analyses and findings. From this dataset, a number of issues emerged and having identified a systematic pattern I realised the importance of concepts from two domains. Firstly, the domain of public administration seems to relate very closely to the FSP and how it can reflect and influence on targeting performance outcomes through a top-down approach. Secondly, the sociological framework proved tremendously helpful in exploring how the employees/implementers and their working conditions can influence targeting outcomes through a bottom-up approach.

As discussed in Chapter Two, the literature on the targeting performance of SSNPs, the public administration of SSNPs and implementation seem to be disconnected from each other. Thus there is a gap in the Egyptian context in terms of examining how targeting is being affected by the programme's bureaucratic structure, policy design and implementation, a gap that this study aims to bridge by investigating targeting from different perspectives. Reformulation of the research problem called for additional approaches and new concepts around public administration discourse and SSNPs. For instance, the New Public Management approach and its application to SSNPs has been identified as suited to my analysis. Therefore, the literature on targeting SSNPs needed to be supplemented with public administration models to help unpack the notion of effectiveness in this context. The literature on implementation is largely informed by a top-down approach, starting with policy decisions and trends

and examining the extent to which these policies have achieved their strategic objectives. Additionally, such studies examine the extent to which the actions of the implementing officials and targeted groups are in harmony with the policy design and objectives (Derthick, 1972; Murphy, 1973; Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973; Bardach, 1974; Van Meter and Von Horn, 1975; Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1979; Sabatier, 1980; Goggin, 1986). Based on this literature, I used a top-down approach to better understand to what extent international organisations influence government policy design for the FSP. These organisations are underpinned by a neo-liberal ideology that informs the public administration concepts they promote, and henceforth, has a bearing on the FSP policy design and decisions. The neo-liberal public administration paradigm includes decentralisation and pro-market policies and I try to link those concepts to the real implementation phase and explore to what extent these policies are linked to the targeting outcomes of the programme. Therefore, I combine targeting performance, with the bureaucratic structure of the FSP, and then bring in the realities of the implementation phase.

This reformulation took place after data collection. As a result, my understanding of how the FSP is administered and how this relates to the targeting mechanism, has increased significantly, informed also by empirical findings. Concepts and models from these different perspectives have contributed to the iterative process of rearticulating the research problem. The experiences from fieldwork, together with an evolving framework before, during and after data analysis, has made me realise the importance of these reorientations. The approach used has illuminated the connections between targeting in reality and public administration models. The focus of the study has become no longer specifically the experience of employees in administering the targeting mechanism of the FSP but has become far broader, addressing the gap in the literature regarding how public administration models are related to the grass-root reality of FSP implementation, which in turn may impact on its targeting performance.

Having completed the top-down approach, I turned to studying the interaction between the policy design, bureaucratic structure and structural decisions, and the actual implementers in shaping service delivery, thereby affecting targeting outcomes. Rather than starting with a policy decision, I started the analysis from the first chain of implementing the targeting mechanism: the employees in the ROs. Drawing on a vast literature based on a bottom-up approach of a multitude of actors who work at the

local level in certain process or programme, I focused my analysis on the strategies and behaviours pursued by local actors, along with an examination of the working conditions in place to achieve the policy's objective (for review; Lipsky, 1971; Berman and McLaughlin, 1976; Ingram, 1977; Hanf and Scharpf, 1978; Elmore, 1979; Barrett and Fudge, 1981; Browning, Marshall and Tabb, 1981; Hanf, 1982; Hjern and Hull, 1982). After familiarising myself with the themes and codes emerging from my interviews with key-informants, I used the concept of SLBs, as an extremely helpful bottom-up sociological theory to explore how the SLBs and their working conditions impact on targeting outcomes: 'In a sense street-level bureaucrats implicitly mediate aspects of the constitutional relationship of citizens to the state. In short, they hold the keys to a dimension of citizenship' (Lipsky, 2010, p.4). Data collected from low-level employees was placed in the SLB theoretical framework, helping me to frame and add value to my description of the issues faced by front-line caseworkers. Since most interviews were conducted with SLBs, low-level and front-line employees in the ROs, the action of these employees and those of RO managers are considered as the service delivery of the FSP offered by the MSIT. Thus, the sociological theory and conceptual framework that incorporated into my research came out of a grounded theory approach. If I had the knowledge that I have now, I would have redesigned my interview questions according to the SLB framework.

SLB as a sociological theoretical framework emphasises the interaction between the features of the implementation contexts of the FSP inside the ROs with the SLBs and the normative structure of the programme's policy. It is essential to clarify some core themes: the bureaucratic settings of targeting might influence SLBs' behaviour and actions; the working conditions and the variations made by those implementing the policy might affect the targeting mechanism; the disjuncture between the bureaucratic design and the real targeting settings creates a problematic service delivery; other factors may influence the outcomes of the programme's targeting performance. Therefore, a dynamic practice emerges that produces the hybrid service experienced by households; it is based on this experience that these households evaluate the relationship between the state and society.

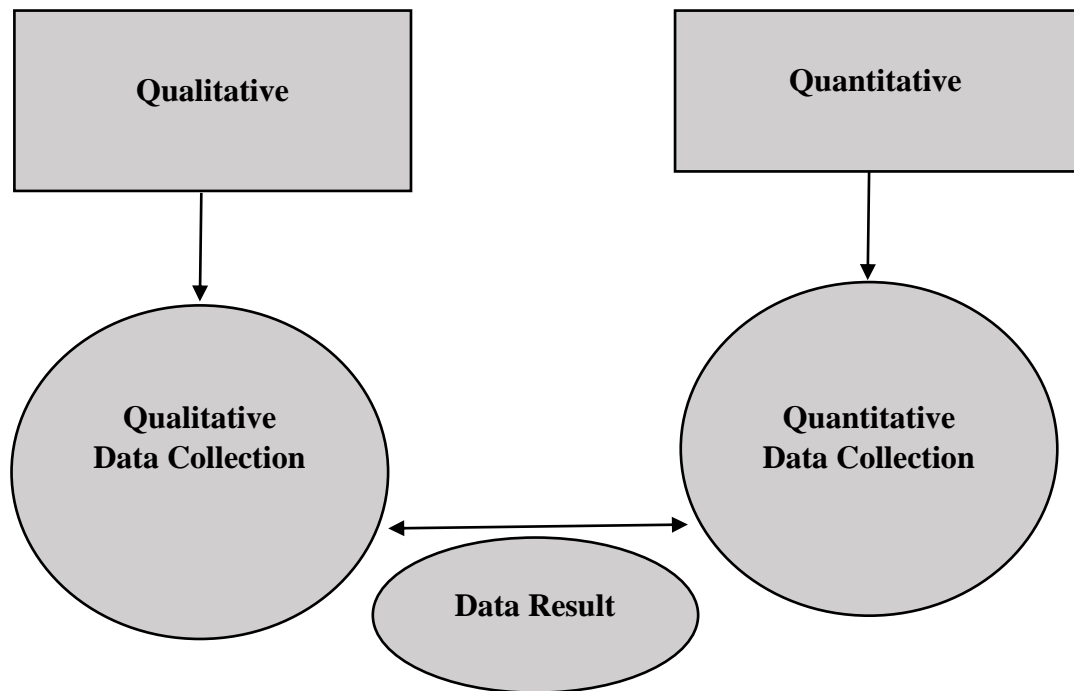
Therefore, different methods and approaches; economics, public administration, and SLBs domains, are applied to this study to explain targeting performance outcomes. These explanations and interpretations between what is

happening, and how and why the programme is incurring errors is important in determining the relevance and significance of linking the targeting literature with the implementation phase within different discourses.

3.4 Mixed Methods

A mixed method triangulation approach has been employed in this study in order to address the disconnections and gaps in the literature between the targeting performance outcomes, bureaucratic system of food subsidies in Egypt and the implementation phase of the programme inside the ROs. A mixed method approach is the integration of both qualitative and quantitative components , and has the potential of giving readers more confidence in the findings, summary, and recommendations of the study (O’Cathain, Murphy and Nicholl, 2010). Indeed, some researchers argue that the use of mixed methods is the only way to reach certain interpretations (Morse, 2003; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003) and findings (Sieber, 1973; Coyle and Williams, 2000). In order to exploit these methodological opportunities, I have combined quantitative and qualitative methods in both the study design, and the analysis and interpretation of different data from different sources (e.g. from national and local levels). Quantitative analysis describes what has happened at a macro and meso-level by measuring the targeting performance outcomes and specifying errors of targeting and at a micro level by evaluating the quality of the service offered, and access to the benefit itself. Meanwhile, qualitative analysis explains how and why these errors might occur. Therefore, quantitative data provides an important indicator with regards to quantifying the targeting error while at the level of explanation both quantitative and qualitative data are combined to generate different insights in terms of the targeting mechanism.

Diagram 2: Concurrent Triangulation Design



Source Tashakkori, Teddlie and Teddlie (2003)

I used triangulation of data in my design and chose a concurrent form of data collection in this study as shown in **Diagram 2**, as this design is used when a researcher uses two different methods in an attempt to cross-validate, confirm or/and corroborate findings within a study (Greene, Caracelli and Graham, 1989; Morgan, 1998; Tashakkori, Teddlie and Teddlie, 2003). According to Tashakkori, Teddlie and Teddlie, they have stated about the concurrent design that ‘this design generally uses separate quantitative and qualitative methods as a means to offset the weakness inherent within one method with the strength of the other method. In this case, the quantitative data collection and qualitative data collection are concurrent, happening during one phase of the research study... This design usually integrates the results of the two methods during the interpretation phase’ (2003, p.229). In this study design, the rationale and strength of using qualitative and quantitative approaches are parallelised. I aim to explain different insights about targeting by linking the real implementation phase of the programme and its design using a mixed method approach.

3.4.1 Quantitative Approach

In providing a descriptive quantitative analysis, I used two kinds of data. First, prior to fieldwork I accessed nationally representative data from Egypt, the Household Income, Expenditure and Consumption Survey (HIECS), conducted by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) of Egypt for 2012/13, to assess the errors of the current targeting system for the Egyptian food subsidy programme in 27 governorates. Second, I used this survey data to build a PMT model as a theoretical assessment exercise to identify who is eligible for the programme. Then during my fieldwork I collected regional and local data for three governorates. The empirical data tends to provide a more qualitative description of the problematic nature of the implementing FSP's targeting system. A relatively large evidence base from first-hand testimonies have emphasised that targeting performance is largely affected by the context of implementation at grass roots level. Therefore, to determine both the quality of the service being offered to obtain the benefit and the access to the service itself it was important to obtain micro-level data from every Directorates of Supply and Internal Trade (DSIT) (further details are discussed in Chapter Five Section 5.6.1.2).

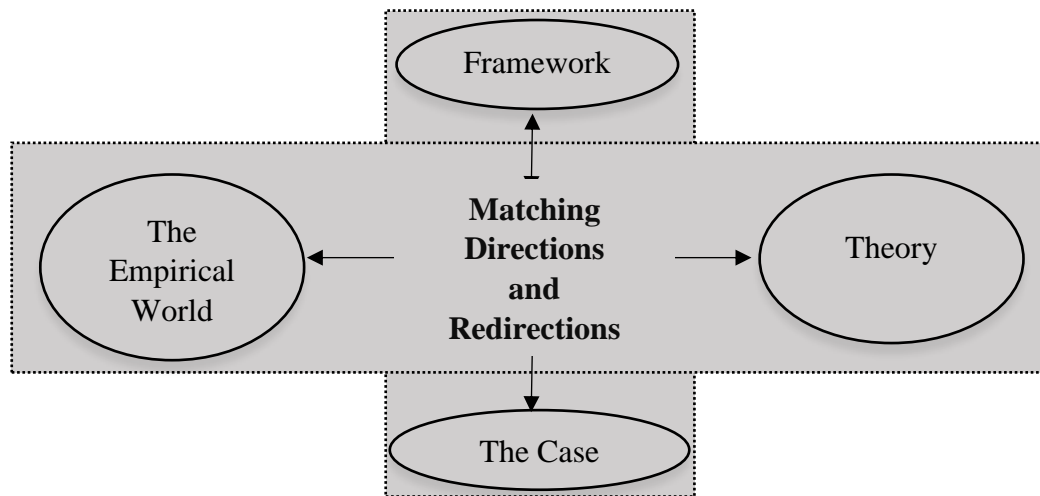
To this end, I also collected unpublished secondary data from local governmental units about the number of ROs in each neighbourhood in each governorate, the number of beneficiaries registered in each RO, the number of poor individuals in each neighbourhood, the number of private RSs in each neighbourhood and the number of public RSs in each neighbourhood. The research was designed to generate a better understanding of the context of each geographical targeting system from a quantitative perspective. I used the descriptive statistics of unpublished data collected from the three sites I visited and built some indicators that would provide better explanations about the quality of and access to the benefit. The data used in this analysis are discussed in upcoming Section 3.6.2.

3.4.2 Qualitative Approach

A qualitative approach is deemed most suitable for addressing a number of factors that can contribute to answering ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions, in this instance, questions about how and why errors of targeting occur. I use this approach to first examine how targeting is affected by the FSP bureaucratic structure and policy design, using a top-down approach and draws on concepts and theories from public administration, taking into account the growing influence of international organisations in recent reforms. As well as drawing on policy documents, this analysis uses a pragmatic approach in conducting interviews with key informants and spending 12 months in the field across three different study sites in Cairo, Alexandria and Assuit.

Additionally, given the nature of the research topic, an abductive approach was utilised. I built a thematic coding system and began the analysis with a set of deductively generated themes. I then added themes that emerged inductively as I worked with the fieldwork data. According to Dubois and Gadde, (2002), this approach, unlike deductive and inductive reasoning, can develop, explain or change the research framework before, during and after fieldwork. They state that in an abductive approach, the researcher moves back and forth between deductive and inductive reasoning to verify the hypotheses. Therefore, an abductive approach as shown in **Diagram 3** consists of a pragmatic reasoning that moves through a process of “system combining” in academic research, shown in **Diagram 3**; Dubois and Gadde (2002) model (Friedrichs and Kratochwil, 2009).

Diagram 3: Abductive Approach



Source: Dubois and Gadde (2002) model.

A qualitative approach has also been used in applying sociological concepts, particularly the notion of SLBy, to explore the dynamics of targeting at the micro-level, but through a bottom-up approach. This approach shows how the implementers of a programme at local level influence targeting outcomes and also their working conditions. Therefore, the given the nature of the research, the abductory approach is incorporated when investigating the pragmatically oriented realities of the implementation phase involving the SLBs on the one hand and the beneficiaries and applicants on the other. SLBs as a concept has been applied to diverse fields of study, but not to food subsidy targeting schemes. In building this case study, theory and previous research from other fields of study has been combined with the data collected from the field. As a result, the description of the case has been enriched by understanding the dynamic process between the SLBs and the beneficiaries, together with the applicants and how it relates to the targeting mechanism. The FSP's pragmatic targeting outcomes show the connection between targeting in reality and the real policy implementers, as represented by the SLBs. This approach provides further pragmatic interpretation that helps to fill the knowledge gap in relation to how SLBy is related to the grass-root realities of the FSP, which in turn may have an impact on its targeting performance.

3.5 Fieldwork sites and Sampling

Fieldwork was based in three governorates in Egypt: Cairo, Alexandria and Assuit. The vertical hierarchical structure of Egypt's government consists of three levels: the first level is composed of 27 governorates and I selected three of these. The second sub-divisional administrative level contains more than 300 neighbourhoods while the third sub-divisional level includes more than 200 districts and 3000 villages.

What I was intentionally trying to do was to identify, according to the information I had (Egypt poverty map 2013 and the HIECS 2013), three distinct settings within the range of experiences in Egypt in order to be representative of at least some of the diversity that characterises the country. Regarding the research site, I chose the first site to be in Cairo governorate, which is the capital and the biggest city in terms of numbers of people recorded in the HIECS 2012/13. In 2016, Cairo had 39 neighbourhoods, 67 ROs and 1,192 RSs, and recorded the highest inclusion error (further details in Chapter Four), which represents a notable error of the FSP targeting outcome. Descriptive statistics analysis of the HIECS in the second site, Alexandria, showed the highest recorded exclusion error (further details in Chapter Four). Alexandria is one of the biggest cities in Egypt, comprised of 16 neighbourhoods, 25 ROs and 824 RSs. I then decided to choose a third site with relatively high level poverty and illiteracy rates. The governorate of Assuit, located in Upper Egypt, has the highest recorded levels of poverty and illiteracy rates in comparison with other governorates and in terms of targeting outcomes, it has also recorded levels of inclusion and exclusion errors (further detailed in Chapter Four).

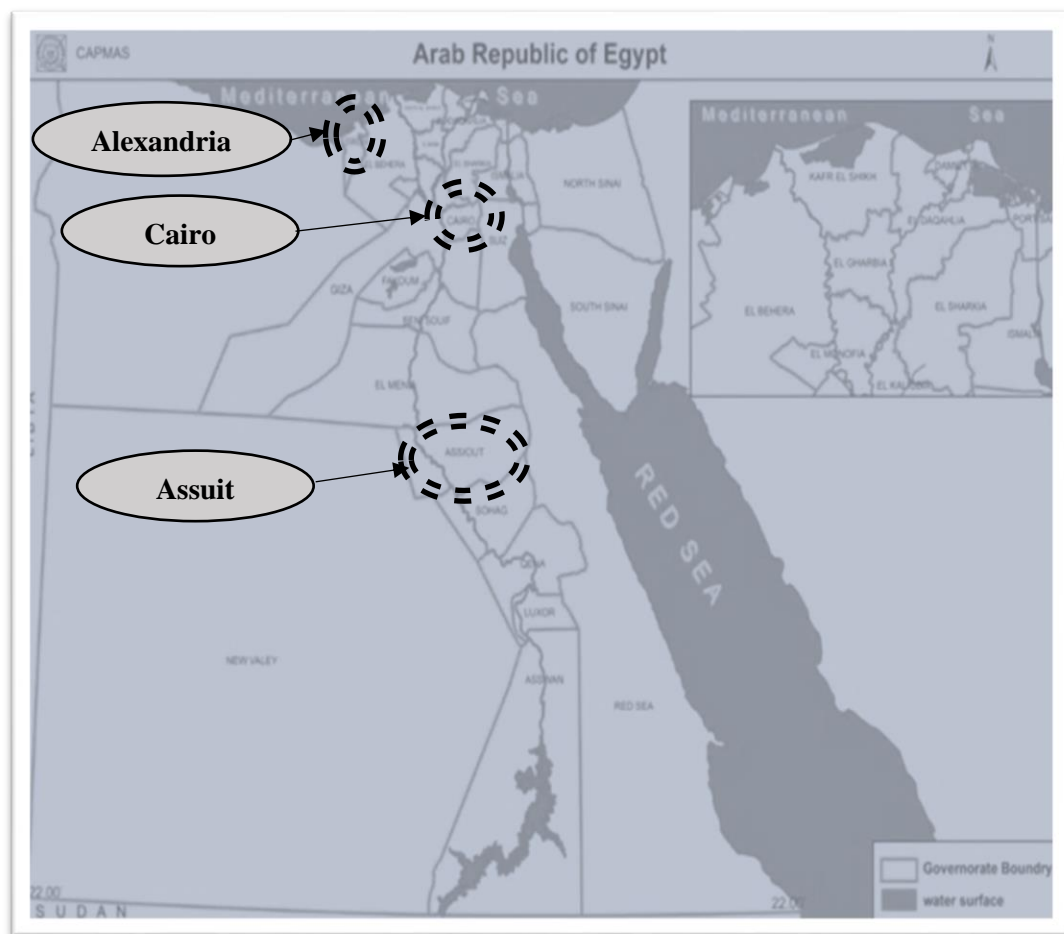
For every neighbourhood in each governorate, I divided the sample of ROs into quintiles based on the mean per capita expenditure of the latest available published poverty map of 2013. I chose the ROs of the poorest neighbourhoods in the first four quintiles, while I visited the richest ROs in the fifth quintiles. For instance for Cairo governorate, I visited 10 ROs, two in each quintile as shown in **Table 2**- the same sampling design was applied for both Alexandria and Assuit. Due to overcrowding and the huge number of beneficiaries and applicants, I had to visit each RO three to four times; in other words, it took three or four days to finish each interview.

Table 2: Selection Sample for Cairo Governorate

Neighbourhoods In Cairo	Mean Per Capita Expenditure	Poverty rate of Neighbourhood	Number of Ration Offices	Ration Offices Visited
FIRST QUINTILE				
Neighbourhood 8				
Neighbourhood 7				
Neighbourhood 6				
Neighbourhood 5				
Neighbourhood 4				
Neighbourhood 3				
<u>Neighbourhood 2</u>				RO2
<u>Neighbourhood 1</u>				RO1
SECOND QUINTILE				
Neighbourhood 16				
Neighbourhood 15				
Neighbourhood 14				
Neighbourhood 13				
Neighbourhood 12				
Neighbourhood 11				
<u>Neighbourhood 10</u>				RO4
<u>Neighbourhood 9</u>				RO3
Third QUINTILE				
Neighbourhood 24				
Neighbourhood 23				
Neighbourhood 22				
Neighbourhood 21				
Neighbourhood 20				
Neighbourhood 19				
<u>Neighbourhood 18</u>				RO6
<u>Neighbourhood 17</u>				RO5
Fourth QUINTILE				
Neighbourhood 32				
Neighbourhood 31				
Neighbourhood 30				
Neighbourhood 29				
Neighbourhood 28				
Neighbourhood 27				
<u>Neighbourhood 26</u>				RO8
<u>Neighbourhood 25</u>				RO7
Fifth QUINTILE				
<u>Neighbourhood 39</u>				RO10
<u>Neighbourhood 38</u>				RO9
Neighbourhood 37				
Neighbourhood 36				
Neighbourhood 35				
Neighbourhood 34				
Neighbourhood 33				

When visiting the sites, I was mindful that there might be interesting differences and commonalities, which was part of my research design since the three sites are quite far apart as shown in the map, *Diagram 4*. However, at that point of the research process, I was not certain whether I would carry out a systematic comparison between the three sites, thereby making a quite substantial contribution to knowledge by highlighting differences in the targeting mechanisms of the three sites or whether I would be looking at the same kind of things across the three sites.

Diagram 4: Map of Egypt



Source CAPMAS

Having chosen these three settings based on their geographical distance and statistical differences, I was struck by how similar the three settings were. As I spent time in the field, I noticed many more similarities and commonalities than differences. As a result, I did undertake a comparative analysis in this thesis: unlike the similarities, the differences did not emerge naturally, so the focus of the case and the core theme of the study became those similarities. Although it is not possible to make any grand

claims about national representativeness of the study, nonetheless you can look at the similarities, commonalities across these three settings. In fact, my aim during fieldwork was to see what the scheme of targeting looked like in those three settings. In terms of the implementation of the targeting mechanism, it turned out that the three settings were characterised by universal factors in the three very different parts of the country. For example, most ROs are located in rented flats in residential buildings; the employees are both females and males, procedures are largely the same; therefore, this mechanism is likely to be a feature of any neighbourhood in Egypt.

One of the reasons why international organisations like the World Bank and IMF are not inclined to do the kind of research undertaken for this thesis is that it is very time consuming. It is not as simple as paying someone to roll out a survey and then analysing the results using computer software. In my case for example, understanding the actual implementation process involved spending a year doing fieldwork across the three sites, four months in each governorate. For the four months I spent in Cairo, I was able to live in my own residential home; however, in Alexandria and Assuit I rented a safe place for four months each. First, I needed to visit every Directorate with the official permission letter directed from the MSIT to the DSIT and meet the heads of the DSIT in Cairo, Alexandria, and Assuit, who had to approve my fieldwork in the governorate. Thus on top of the official permission letter from the MSIT, I had to get official permission at the local level to visit the ROs under each DSIT. I then had to spend considerable time talking to other employees in the DSIT to get the contact details of the head of the ROs, along with the different addresses of every RO. Finally, after finishing my fieldwork in every governorate, I visited each DSIT and approached individual employees, using my official permission, to get their informed consent, as discussed in Section 3.4.1, to collect micro-level data (further discussion in Chapter Five and Six).

3.6 Research Data

Empirical data in this research study is broken into two categories: qualitative interviews, quantitative descriptive data, including observation, documents and grey materials.

3.6.1 Interviews

Field research was conducted over a period of twelve months in the three governorates and culminated in thirty one interviews with the managers of the Ration Offices (ROs), twenty eight interviews with employees of the Ration Offices, and five interviews with key informants at the Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade (MSIT), Directorate of Supply and Internal Trade (DSIT) and a manager of one of the Smart Card Company centres. I conducted most of these interviews face to face but on two occasions, the interview was conducted over the phone because the two ROs were in an emergency relocation site due to problems that had occurred with the owner of the residential building.

During all my visits I was mindful of making the process of interviewing as comfortable and flexible as possible, and always respectful of the interviewees, their time and commitment. I invariably checked that the time was suitable for them and offered to come at another according to their schedule. “Due to the over-crowded conditions in the ROs, many interviews had to be rescheduled several times. Often, during an interview, I would have to pause the conversation so that the key-informant could attend and respond to the needs of FSP beneficiaries. During these pauses, I always tried to observe and take notes.

All the interviews were held in the work place. For each interview, I first explained to the managers of the ROs that I would have to take notes during the interview so as to represent their opinions and views accurately and to also concentrate on the flow of the interview conversation. None of them expressed any objection. All the interviews semi-structured in the sense that I designed my key questions that covered all aspects the implementation process, but at the same time I left scope for additional issues to emerge and to be discussed. Semi-structured interviews are one of

the most convenient and effective means as ‘it has its basis in human conversation, it allows ... to modify the style, pace and ordering of questions to evoke the fullest responses from the interviewee’ (Qu and Dumay, 2011, p.246). The interviews questions were deliberately open-ended in order to understand and better explore each actor’s role in the FSP and how it might affect the targeting outcomes. A sample of the interview questions for the manager of the RO is below

Sample interview with the Manager of a Ration Office

First, Background questions to the office head:

A. How long have you been doing this job? What were you doing before?

B. What are the more pleasant and the more tough aspects of the job? Has it got easier over time?

Second, Questions related to the office policies and practices

1. What coverage area is this ration office serving?
2. What are the targeting criteria for applying to the food subsidy programme?
3. Which targeting criteria are most important? Get them to list in order of importance and give reasons.
4. How easy do you find it to put these criteria into practice? Are these criteria easy to be assessed?
5. Do you feel that some criteria are more open to abuse than others?
6. Do you think the overall current programme allows some ineligible households to receive benefit?
7. Does the ration office have the authority to change any of these criteria in accepting applications?
8. What are the procedures for application in the food subsidy programme?
9. In assessing the potential eligibility, how do you verify the documents presented? Do you rely exclusively on the presented documents? If not, what are the other forms of verifications? Do you visit them? If so, what form does the visit take?
10. How do you track any changes to the household circumstances? If so, do you rely on households to inform you about these changes, or do you proactively follow-up?
11. Are the procedures taking place within the ration office proceeded through a paper-based or a computer-based system?
12. If computer-based, are the devices used connected to the Ministry’s network or not?
13. What do you do if the computers or the system broke down?
14. Are there any controls for the right to access the data entry? Who has them?
15. How often does the ration office update the database for the applicants to the programme?

-
16. What kinds of information which is available to the potential applicants?
 17. What are the procedures for adding the newly born on the household smart card or removing the deceased ones?
 18. What are the procedures of including or excluding individuals in divorce or marriage?
 19. Do you place a maximum number of individuals to be registered on the household smart card?
 20. What are the procedures if an applicant or a smart-card holder has a complaint?
 21. How many workers does this office have?
 22. How many of workers have a direct contact with the applicants?
 23. How many applications do you receive on average per month?
 24. How many applicants do you accept on average per month?
 25. How many people does this ration office serve?
 26. Do you hand the smart cards to the beneficiaries? If not, how do they obtain them?
 27. Do you feel you have sufficient resources to manage this programme? If not, what do you think is lacking? What are the consequences of this resource shortfall?
 28. With reference to all the above, has the situation changed since 5 years ago or 10 years ago?
-

During the interview, I focused on not being rigid and strict if the key-informants wanted to talk about the system from their own point of view, without running through the questions. At the end, usually they had covered all the points I was interested in, even though these were addressed in different orders. I often asked them to elaborate more on their own experience and this prompt generated some unexpected themes and opinions about the targeting system. For instance, in my first interview, a manager of the RO in Cairo raised the issue of their lack of involvement in the decision-making process, the gaps in the administration system that could affect targeting outcomes, and the effect of private-sector involvement in the programme. As a result of this interview, I made sure that in all the other interviews, I invited additional remarks from the respondents, giving them space to reflect on their own experience. Accordingly, these reflections caused the redirections I mentioned earlier. These follow-up questions had a significant role in shaping my research. These semi-structured questions, together with the additional remarks made by the respondents, focused on the different governmental units and agencies, structurally, descriptively, and contrastively giving a better understanding of their role and investment in the entire process. Moreover, key-informants illustrated clearly the link between the

dynamic process of the FSP on the one hand, and their interactions with beneficiaries and applicants inside the RO on the other, and how this process impacted on the targeting mechanisms.

The complexity of doing research is dependent on both context and cultural norms and values. There are three issues that can contribute to complexity and sensitivity (Lee, 1993). The first issue is concerned with what is considered as private, sacred and stressful. The second are those issues related to fear or stigmatisation. The final issues are related to the presence of complexity where scholars study in areas subject to controversy or social conflict. This study is affected by these latter political issues which give it a complex context. Therefore, I decided to be very careful in terms of obtaining all the required official and stamped permissions. Three letters from the appointed minister of MSIT (at the fieldwork time) were given to permitting me to conduct my study with official key-informants only at regional and local levels and also permitting me to collect local level data from each directorate. Unfortunately, I could not obtain permission to conduct any interviews with beneficiaries. Also, I tried to conduct an interview with some officials who work in the World Bank, but there were ethical concerns that prevented this; concerns that their views may be considered as the World Bank vision, which the Bank prohibits.

The interviews were conducted only with the managers and employees of the ROs and key informants in the DSIT after being granted these official permission letters. Although preparing, conducting, transcribing, translating and analysing the empirical interview data took a substantial amount of time, it was time well spent, as in preparing, conducting, transcribing, translating, and analysing so that it became an important and integral part of understanding the actual implementation of the programme. All interviews had been agreed upon before starting my semi-structured interview questions, when their consent are secured. Before each interview, all respondents were informed about my research topic and objectives. Maintaining confidentiality of the collected data and assuring respondents about confidentiality were also an integral part before conducting any interview. I was very keen in keeping respondents' confidentiality and maintaining their trust.

3.6.2 Descriptive Data

As discussed in Section 3.4.1, I used restricted access but published data from the HIECS 2013, CAPMAS. **Table 3** shows the number of observations in the used survey is 7528 household head observations in 27 governorates in both urban and rural areas, encompassing around 32,732 individual members, which is sorted based on the serial number of each household and given a certain number for each household. This survey also contains the size of every household family that ranges from 1 to 28 individual members and a mean of 4 members. Also, the gender of the household head is included, whether male or female. The mean of the food poverty line and lower poverty line is around LE11,164 (\$1,269) and LE17,029 (\$1,918), in which the maximum are LE66,125 (\$7,514) and LE98,929 (\$11,140) and the minimum food poverty line are LE2,171 (\$244) and LE3033 (\$342), respectively. The mean of the total yearly household expenditure for the household heads is LE25,732 (\$2,924), with a minimum of LE1,616 (\$182) and maximum of LE241,411 (\$27,186). The dummy and indicator variables will be explained in details in Chapter Four, Section 4.5.3.

Table 3: Descriptive Data of the HIECS 2013 National Representative Data

Variables	Observation	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
<i>Serial Number</i>	7528	7529	4346.581	2	15056
<i>Governorate</i>	7528	10.66777	6.259162	1	27
<i>Urban/Rural</i>	7528	0.443013	0.496775	0	1
<i>Household size</i>	7528	4.348034	1.933467	1	28
<i>Household Gender</i>	7528	0.821201	0.38321	0	1
<i>Food Poverty Line</i>	7528	11164.42	4895.758	2171.531	66125.64
<i>Lower Poverty Line</i>	7528	17029.56	7618.305	3033.028	98929.07
<i>Household Total Expenditure</i>	7528	25732.68	16368.13	1616	241411
<i>Household Age</i>	7528	48.40383	13.98597	15	95
<i>Household Education</i>	7528	0.962806	0.931961	0	2
<i>Marital status of the Household</i>	7528	1.288789	0.729366	0	3
<i>Household Employment</i>	7528	0.761955	0.425915	0	1
<i>Household Receiving cash /in-kind transfer</i>	7528	0.54543	0.497965	0	1
<i>Households who have SRC</i>	7528	0.841791	0.364961	0	1
<i>Apartment or Rural House</i>	7528	0.756243	0.429376	0	1
<i>Number of rooms inside the Dwelling</i>	7528	3.623672	1.207834	1	20
<i>Dwelling Area</i>	7528	86.2314	41.21055	6	720
<i>Rented/Owned Dwelling</i>	7528	0.463735	0.736249	0	1
<i>Tap inside the Dwelling</i>	7528	0.888948	0.314218	0	1

<i>Mean of Sewerage</i>	7528	0.541711	0.49829	0	1
<i>Gas Bottle</i>	7528	0.813496	0.389539	0	1
<i>Dwelling Wall</i>	7528	0.923353	0.266049	0	1
<i>Dwelling Ceiling</i>	7528	0.856934	0.350163	0	1
<i>Dwelling Floor</i>	7528	0.721839	0.448123	0	1
<i>Dwelling Kitchen</i>	7528	0.85813	0.34894	0	1
<i>Toilet with Flush</i>	7528	0.525771	0.499369	0	1
<i>Garbage Disposal</i>	7528	0.48924	0.499917	0	1
<i>Own Private Car</i>	7528	0.05712	0.232087	0	1
<i>Own Motorcycle</i>	7528	0.068411	0.252467	0	1
<i>Have a telephone line</i>	7528	0.260893	0.439151	0	1
<i>Have Refrigerator</i>	7528	0.93212	0.251556	0	1
<i>Have Freezer</i>	7528	0.087938	0.283224	0	1
<i>Have Manual Washing Machine</i>	7528	0.637221	0.480834	0	1
<i>Have an Air Conditioner</i>	7528	0.076116	0.265201	0	1

Source: HIECS CAPMAS Data 2013

I collected unpublished data collected from the DSIT of Cairo, Alexandria, and Assuit. Looking at **Table 4**, there are 65 observations that represent the number of the neighbourhoods in the three governorates, also the area of the neighbourhood shows each neighbourhood area in square kilometres. The poverty headcount is on average 30 percent. The average number of ROs in the three governorates is almost two with an average registered SRCs amounting to 59,599, which includes around 210,700 registered individuals. Additionally, in the 65 neighbourhoods, the average population is 293,649, whereas the average number of poor individuals is 92,258. Additionally, the number of private RSs and Public RSs are provided for each neighbourhood across the three governorates.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of the Local Data Level

Variable	Observation	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Governorate	65	1.646154	0.799038	1	3
Neighbourhood	65	35.53846	19.93354	1	65
Area of Neighbourhoods KM2	65	91.18822	198.0516	0.631157	1095.531
Poverty Headcount	65	0.302407	0.199916	0.007507	0.728592
Number of ROs	65	2.384615	1.925911	1	9
Number of SRCs	65	59599.46	49535.89	2441	238697
Number of Registered Individuals	65	210700.7	172947.8	7070	841826
Population Size	65	293649.1	241428.6	23921	1314587
Number of Poor Individuals	65	92258.55	98502.76	1741.526	358186.7
Number of Private RSs	65	47.41538	48.39547	2	185
Number of Public RSs	65	4.492308	7.57282	0	51

Source: Unpublished Data Collected from DSIT of the three governorates in 2016.

A number of indicators (more details in Section 5.6.1.2) are used to show the quality of service provided and the access to the FSP benefit in accordance with the poverty headcount ratio of these neighbourhoods. These indicators show the spatial heterogeneity of distribution that influences both the quality of service in terms of crowding in the ROs and the access to the benefit in terms of the distribution of these ROs and RSs, given the area of the neighbourhood. This approach attempts to triangulate the findings of the qualitative data and to fill the gap in the literature as mentioned earlier.

3.6.3 Observation

‘Non-participant observation is a relatively unobtrusive qualitative research strategy for gathering primary data about some aspect of the social world without interacting directly with its participants’ (William, 2008, p.561).

Mills, Durepos and Wiebe, describe the observation process as ‘... a three stage funnel, ..., beginning with descriptive observation, in which researchers carry out broad scope observation to get an overview of the setting, moving to focused observation, in which they start to pay attention to a narrower portion of the activities that most interest them, and then selected observation, in which they investigate relations among the elements they have selected as being of greatest interest... Key to good non-participant observation is the taking of detailed field notes to record what has been observed’ (2010, p.610). In this study, non-participant observations were conducted over a 12 month period in the ROs, Ration Shops (RSs), Bakery Shops (BSs), DSIT, and Smart Card Companies (SCCs) centres of three governorates, Cairo, Alexandria, and Assuit (further detailed will be explained in Chapter Five Section 5.2). I observed the programme as implemented through the interactions of managers, employees with the beneficiaries and new applicants, thereby gaining an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. During the course of my visits to these places during 2016, I was able to observe the programme from different angles and as my interviews increased, so did my observation notes. However, I spent comparatively much longer in the ROs compared to other places because my main focus was around the actual implementation phase of the targeting mechanisms used inside the ROs. In all the ROs, I felt welcomed and able to make my observation notes unhindered. I also visited eighty six RSs (private and public) and seventy five BSs so as to observe the whole system. After leaving designated places, I spent time writing a detailed description of what I had heard and observed in very concrete and exact terms. After finishing every interview, I also wrote up all the gathered information, including my observations, systematically, along with my reflections about what I had heard and seen. By observing these settings, I gained a fuller sense of the implementation phase and how the reality of this phase influences the targeting performance, beyond what I had learnt from the targeting literature of the SSNPS. Using non-participant observation within the real settings of the programme’s implementation provided unique contextualised

insights into the process of targeting mechanisms and the grass-root realities of poor targeting. Moreover, it enabled me to capture the dynamics of the actual implementation system and the enrolment mechanism, together with the working environment of the system. I also collected a substantive amount of data from observation, which was the only viable way to collect it, especially since food subsidy is a political sensitive topic.

During fieldwork, I was quite aware of the challenges of doing non-participant observation. First, I tried to diminish reactivity in my study through spending longer time inside the ROs. On average, I spent around one hour in the RO settings until I reached the ROs' manager. This gave me a chance to observe the programme setting. The thesis does not include observations on discretionary behaviour by bureaucrats. As I was able to establish a set of trust relationships with informants, as discussed in Chapter three, Section 3.2, I might have contaminated the research site by discouraging discretionary behaviour after introducing myself and starting the interview. Thus, although I did not discover any discretionary behaviour in my data, this might be because I was there watching their performance, behaviour and practices. However, one of the great impediments of the system is that the discretion of the benefit distribution relies heavily only on the presented documents without cross validation from other sources (further discussion in Chapter Five, Section 5.6.1.1.1). Secondly, I addressed the subjectivity that could emerge from my own values and interpretations in two ways: firstly, I took systematic field notes every time I conducted an interview in all the ROs I visited from the three governorates. Secondly, I used triangulation through the various data sources. The data I gathered through different methods were found to be consistent, thereby increasing the credibility of my analysis and findings. I also used observation to strengthen my study design and different sources of evidence through triangulation. Also, I was fully mindful that non-participant observation cannot truly cover everything. Therefore, to overcome this challenge, I observed the RO settings as wide range of circumstances as possible, visiting several ROs across three different governorates, and spending a long time in the field. At the end of fieldwork, I found that there were more similarities than differences in the ways in which RO managers and employees acted in the various ROs. Lastly, I needed to address ethical concerns arising from the power imbalance between myself and participants in my research in describing and explaining what is

going on in the settings. In recognition of this, I increasingly drew on my aforementioned positionality (Section 3.2) of being both insider/outsider to develop a collaborative portrait of my study phenomenon.

3.6.4 Publicly Available FSP Documentation and Grey Material

In this research, documentation was understood in its broadest sense, as ‘...primarily, the written document, whether this be a book, newspapers or magazine, notice, letter or whatever, although the term is sometimes extended to include non-written documents such as films and television programs, pictures, drawings and photographs’ (Robson, 2002, p. 349). Firstly, I used the extensive literature about public administration in service delivery, especially in delivering SSNPs. I then reviewed primary documents, including reports about the FSP’s main actors, policy recommendations supported by the IMF, the World Bank, and in peer-reviewed studies. I also reviewed the United Nations and IFPRI evaluation reports. These documents helped with understanding operational aspects of the FSP and provided emerging concepts throughout the fieldwork data analysis. This initial documentation process allowed me to identify the issues that dominate the academic, policy, and public administration discourse of the FSP and its targeting outcomes. To analyse how the targeting process and the agencies involved may contribute to distorting the system and incurring errors, data collection focused on the first chain of the enrolment process of the FSP, which takes place in the ROs and involves the realities of targeting the beneficiaries. Therefore, in order to identify the management and governance of the FSP and the contracting-out process, the analysis highlights the main actors in the system and how they influence targeting outcomes.

Initial research also included newspapers. Although they are not considered as an academic source of data, and will have their own social and political agendas, they do provide first-hand accounts of experiences. Some newspapers are more reliable than others but they may still involve a great deal of bias. Therefore, in this context it was decided with my supervisors not to substantively draw on this material. Nonetheless, document information from newspapers has shed light on beneficiary experiences and this was particularly necessary when, for ethical reasons, I could not collect directly from them. Due to the difficulties of obtaining official permission from

the authorities, interviews were conducted only with the managers and employees of the ROs. Thus, using newspapers was a way of triangulating the data collected from the fieldwork, adding to the insights that underpin my argument and extending the analysis. These accounts by and large did seem to verify the narratives told by RO managers and employees together with the collected observation data. However, using different media reports as a basis for analysis is not as robust as more direct and systematic data collection with beneficiaries, but that is the only possible way to understand and verify the line of argument, so I used the media reports with caution.

A recent World Bank report about FSP and the current targeting system was published in 2018, after completion of my fieldwork. It drew on media reports and a beneficiary survey to bring in the perspectives of beneficiaries. Although most of the questions in the survey are not directly related to my research questions, I used this report in other parts of the thesis. One of the challenges again of using this material was some of it I could use to help to inform my research questions and then my research findings. Having the opportunity to attend relevant conferences, meet with academics in social policy, and with members of international organisations, including the World Bank were very useful and increased my belief that my research could make a valuable contribution to social and implementation policy research by providing new insights about targeting. Academics and practitioners who did not normally conduct this kind of research would potentially be interested in the findings of this study and this helped propel me in terms of pursuing this research study.

Part of my time in the field in Cairo, Alexandria and Assuit was spent searching for grey material and secondary data. I collected whatever relevant materials, official decrees, data and records I could find from the Directorates and ROs. Some of the important findings from the DSIT and ROs helped me build a more about the picture of the implementation process.

3.7 Data Management

In all the places I visited, interview data was collected and then later transcribed into text form in Arabic including my field notes, observations and personal reflections. Generally, I asked the questions and then wrote respondents'

answers for each question, placing them within their views, using their own wording so as to reflect accurately their own experience of the targeting system. I made sure after every interview to write up my observation notes as soon as possible, using my fieldwork notes as prompts. With respect to the interview responses, once they were gathered, the information was anonymised using numerical codes for each interview, location and dates, and then entered into an excel document. I am the only one with the original list of participants and have not shared this with anyone else. All the participants are aware that their identity is protected on my personal encrypted computer files to make sure that soft copies –notes, interview transcripts- are not accessed by anyone and will not be revealed in any presentation or publication. Additionally, the information provided throughout the interview is confidential.

3.8 Data Analysis

All the interviews conducted in Arabic were translated into English to ensure a homogenous and coherence collection of data for the analysis stage. From all the interviews and observation notes, a summary of 40,000 words of empirical qualitative data were transcribed and translated into English. This data was then transported into an excel file, and then analysed using axial coding and interpretation. As suggested by Charmaz (2006) with regards to axial coding, it enabled me to establish sub-categories and components of the main themes that developed, such as the FSP actors' roles, the application process, incentives, and the distortions that influence the programme's targeting outcomes. All data collected was anonymised for the purpose of analysis. The process of data analysis was iterative in that through the process of analysis, themes emerged as significant to the programme's targeting mechanism (as noted in Section 3.4.2). Subsequently, I adopted a thematic approach to the analysis. As suggested by Braun and Clarke, 'Analysis involves a constant moving back and forward between the entire data set, the coded extracts of data that you are analysing, and the analysis of the data that you are producing. Writing is an integral part of analysis, not something that takes place at the end, as it does with statistical analyses. Therefore, writing should begin in phase one, with the jotting down of ideas and potential coding schemes, and continue right through the entire coding/analysis process' (2006, p.86). In using the interview material in the thesis, all excerpts or

quotations are referred to by a code that represents the number of the RO I visited, the location and the date of the interview. Participants are not identified by name in the analysis.

As I read through the interview transcripts and my fieldwork notes, a number of recurring themes emerged, as did connections between these themes and the theory and literature I had familiarised myself with. First, these themes and connections shaped the analysis and there was a certain amount of redirection and reorientation between my qualitative data, the targeting literature and public administration concepts, underpinning the areas of similarities and underlining the implications of the identified gaps in the targeting literature. The coding began with a draft of concepts that helped me to interrogate the data, to identify potential public administration dimensions of Egypt's FSP and how they are linked to the targeting mechanism. Two major themes emerged from the data analysis process, with regards to the targeting performance outcomes of the programme. The first theme comprises the decentralised management, and governance process of the entitlement mechanisms of the FSP. The second theme is the private-contracting out of the service delivery. The data analysis has provided critical insights into the importance of incorporating inter-disciplinary approach when referring to the performance of the SSNPs' targeting outcomes. Ultimately, the interpretation and re-interpretation of the qualitative data focused on the analysis of core conceptual themes, to address the disjuncture between the public administration discourse and the targeting performance outcomes of the FSP.

The analysis then explores the connections between SLB theory and themes emerging from the analysis of SLBs' perspectives. By linking the SLBs with the targeting literature, the analysis has bridged a significant research gap. Another coding system was designed using axial coding to portray the links between targeting and the SLB theoretical framework. The coding began with a draft of different concepts concerning the actions, behaviours, working environment and other different factors that helped me to open up the data to identify potential interconnectedness between these concepts and how targeting works in reality. However, it was important to bring the beneficiaries' perspectives into the analysis as well through the documents by using content analysis. Krippendorff states that 'content analysis has evolved into a repertoire of methods of research that promise to yield inferences from all kinds of verbal, pictorial, symbolic, and communication data' (2013, p.23). Through

combining the analysis of the interviews as narratives, observation records and documents and newspaper articles to draw significant linkages with the targeting performance outcomes of the programme, three themes emerged: firstly, the critical role of front-line employees in the FSP; secondly, the FSP working conditions in which the benefit is delivered; thirdly, lack of access to and demand for FSP through rationalizing the service benefit. Data from initial newspapers, the interviews, observation, and fieldwork notes were incorporated within the SLBy framework. The data analysis in Chapter Five provides critical insights into the importance of incorporating the role and the effect of SLBs when referring to the performance of the SSNPs' targeting outcomes. These consequently construct a narrative, emphasizing the underlying gaps in the targeting literature of Egypt's FSP.

3.9 Limitations of the Study

A strength of the thesis is that it does not look at targeting from only one lens which is the commonly used quantitative approach as being previously discussed in Chapter one. It takes a much more holistic approach in exploring and measuring the FSP targeting performance. However, there are some aspects associated with targeting which may be significant, but are not dealt with directly in the thesis. For instance, there are deeper political forces which shape social policies. For example, a study by Gutner states 'Policy discussions about strategies to improve the system's performance run into the extreme political sensitivity of the issue of food subsidies in Egypt. Food subsidies are perceived to be important in promoting political stability and providing some legitimacy to a political system where civil liberties are limited. Egypt therefore illustrates the dilemmas facing policymakers and others contemplating food subsidy reform in developing countries where there are concerns that reform may spark political unrest' (2002, p.455). In my study, these issues are beyond the specific scope of my research due to the political and complex issues (discussed in Section 3.6.1).

Linked to this, the thesis does not provide an anthropological institutional analysis of the state that could to some extent show the impact of policy-making contexts on establishing and reforming social policies. For example, the literature on

the nature and origin of the Arab state system can contributed to understanding the political dynamics of these states. There are several reasons why I could not get deeper into these discussions. First, is that it is too complex for a thesis to add another large disciplinary element which is quite distinct. Although it is indirectly of importance for understanding the context of my research, it does not fundamentally inform my fieldwork analysis. Moreover, I was mainly interested in exploring more about how targeting is affected by bureaucratic structure and policy design, drawing on concepts and theories of public administration, complemented by sociological concepts, such as the SLB theoretical framework. Secondly, obtaining reliable data for a political analysis would require official approval that is extremely challenging both ethically and practically. Thus, the lack of engagement with these issues in the thesis (as discussed previously in Chapter Two, Section 2.3.1) has limited the range of conclusions that can be drawn from the analysis. In particular, the thesis steers away from making specific reform recommendations, recognising that the scope for this is strongly contingent on political factors.

Additionally, using a mixed method approach has its advantages as being discussed in Chapter Three, Section 3.4. However, there is a methodological challenge in relating tightly the different insights about FSP targeting performance. Hence, the findings of each approach are largely represented in separate chapters. Despite this, their different insights on targeting complement each other, offering a more in-depth understanding from a multi-disciplinary perspective about the programme's effectiveness in achieving targeting outcomes.

This study combines the top-down and bottom-up approaches with insights from the targeting literature. Chapter Five starts with exploring the formulation of decisions by the central government, the influence of the international organisations in reforming FSP and understanding its bureaucratic structure. Also, it explains how the objectives of the FSP are hindered by inconsistencies and policy conflict between the bureaucratic structure, formulated policies and realities that finally influence targeting outcomes. Chapter Six presents an implementation analysis that uses a bottom-up approach, starting from low-level employees and then examining the skills, working environment and strategies employed by SLBs and their experiences in dealing with reconciling conflicts between policy objectives and the reality of implementation which in turn also affects the FSP's targeting performance. As such,

both approaches give different in-depth insights about the causes of poor targeting performance. The mixed method approach creates, however, a need to design an approach for re-evaluating the targeting of SSNPs by combining an admittedly simplified portrait of reality. This requires further methodological development by academics.

3.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have addressed the various methods, approaches, and fieldwork techniques I have utilised in this research study. I have explained my positionality as a researcher and how it has had an impact on my research methodology and methods. I have also discussed subjectivity with regards to my role as insider/outsider. 'Subjectivity, can be suppressed by eradicating both the self and the self's situated self-understanding....Thus, the goal of every scientific investigator must be to become a dispassionate observer who is open in such a way that phenomena may be seen as they truly are in themselves.... To secure the objectivity, eliminate the personal and social distortion and this could be achieved...' by using various sources of data derived from '...observation, triangulation, so on' (Mills, Durepos and Wiebe, 2010, p.621). That said, it took me one and half years to analyse and make sense of the different narratives. Then, I engaged critically with the subjectivity of these different narratives through focusing on the testimonies that emerged repeatedly across the whole qualitative data set. Finally, I contextualised the findings from the implementation phase into wider discourses of public administration and sociology that could address the gaps in the targeting literature and provide different insights about measuring targeting outcomes.

I have outlined the development of the research from collecting first-hand accounts about the experience of implementing the FSP inside the ROs, to contextualizing the emerging themes with regards to the targeting performance of the FSP into a wider conceptual public administration framework and sociological theory. Putting together quantitative, qualitative, and various other sources of data into a mixed method triangulation approach has helped to generate a wide range of insights about targeting. I have deployed a mix of empirical data from various sources,

including semi-structured interviews, descriptive data, national and local datasets, observation, documents and grey material. I have argued that given the nature of the research study, an abductive approach, consisting of going back and forth between the theoretical underpinnings, fieldwork data, research framework and empirical world experience, was most appropriate. I have explained how and why I have used each of these approaches and methods, as well as the process of implementing each of them.

I am aware that qualitative data collected from three sites cannot be taken as nationally representative. Furthermore, I was unable to get data from the beneficiaries themselves, which is a major limitation of the research and would provide a further area of research. Therefore, I cannot claim to provide definitive answers to why targeting is so problematic. Aside from the perspectives of beneficiaries, a more definitive answer would require extremely candid interviews with important policy-makers. Therefore, this study's contribution is to provide insights rather than answers with regards to the targeting performance of the FSP.

The analysis of themes emerging from the narratives of key-informants has focussed on elements related to public administration discourse and the SLBy sociological framework. I found commonalities in the emerging sets of narratives from the three sites, providing detailed accounts of the FSP for each theme. I then used the key-informants' experiences and related them to the public administration paradigm using a top-down approach and the SLBy sociological framework using a bottom-up approach. This was done through reflecting on the common experiences that emerged in all the interviews at the three different sites. Henceforth, I aimed to address the harmony between representing the abundance experiences of the real implementation of the FSP case study inside the ROs and displaying as broad scope of findings and interpretations. The three selected governorates provide revealing insights about targeting into particular themes which are reflected in the general findings. Therefore, they should not be comprehended as directly representative of a wider qualitative data set.

In the literature about targeting food subsidies, the dominant methodology is using quantitative approaches, yet this methodology does not tend to explain satisfactorily how and why performance is poor and recommendations for reforms based solely on quantitative analysis, are equally limited. In this chapter, I have explained why using mixed methods is necessary in portraying the grass-roots realities

of implementation food subsidy programs. Therefore, a number of general insights about measuring targeting performance can be derived from this case study. Primarily, the research points to the need for policy-makers in a country like Egypt to choose carefully when introducing reforms, whether national or international by being aware of and responsive to the local context of implementation. Overall, I found that situating a quantitative approach with a public administration conceptual framework, and drawing on SLBy sociological theory so as to take into account the local context in each country, specific is crucial for a better understanding of targeting performance measurement and introducing SSNP reforms in developing countries. Data from initial documentation, the interviews, observation, and fieldwork notes have all been incorporated within the research design of the study. The data analysis has provided critical insights into the importance of incorporating inter-disciplinary approach when referring to the performance of the SSNPs' targeting outcomes. These subsequently construct a narrative, highlighting the underlying gaps in the targeting literature of Egypt's FSP.

Chapter 4 – Effective Targeting of FSP: Does it reach the poor?

4.1 Introduction

As discussed in Chapter One, food subsidies are preponderant not only in Egypt but also in the MENA. The development of the FSP in Egypt can be linked to the major ideologies of the regimes over time and can be traced back into five major segments: the pre-Nasser era (World War II-1956), President Nasser's era (1956-1970), President Sadat's era (1970-1981), President Mubarak's era (1981-2011) and the post-Mubarak era (2011-2018). The objective of providing the FSP has shifted from managing the price increase and scarcity of resources as a result of the war to better targeting the poor. Despite successive governments devoting substantial amounts of spending on benefits that target the poor, it has failed to decrease or curb the growth of poverty. Hence, it is important to establish the extent to which this benefit is reaching the poor.

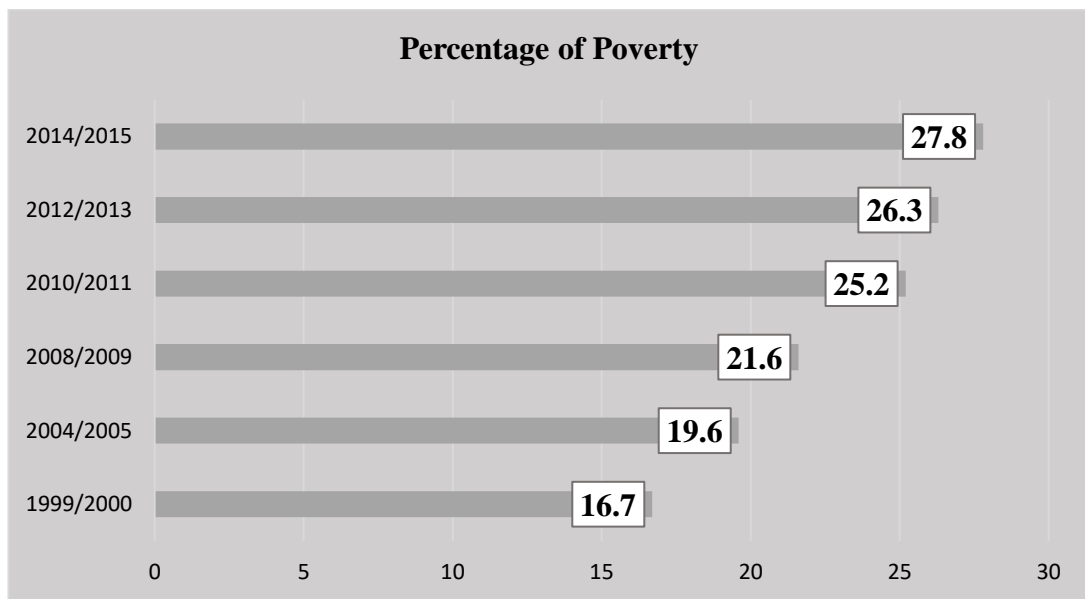
The second section of this chapter outlines the economic context of the Egypt, focusing on the macroeconomic imbalance that characterises the economy. Alongside these imbalances and within the high poverty rates, I explain the space of investigation of my current research about whether the benefits of the FSP are reaching the poor or not. Then the third section provides a chronological background of the FSP in Egypt from the first to the fourth era. The fourth section gives an overview of the current FSP system while the fifth section examines its targeting performance at a macro and then a meso level. It also builds a theoretical Proxy Means Tests (PMT) model for better targeting outcomes in terms of reaching the poor.

4.2 Economic Context

Egypt is considered a middle lower income country and, since 2005, has suffered from successive economic crises. These have resulted in high inflation, low salaries and the 2008 bread crisis, involving widespread flour shortages, long queues to purchase staples and civil unrest due to the corruption and incompetence of President Mubarak's regime (Sachs, 2012). Since the 2011 revolution, the country has experienced a lengthy political transition. In 2016, when this research study began, the Egyptian economy faced three main challenges. Firstly, the economy was suffering from macroeconomic imbalances, especially exchange rate realignment and fiscal consolidation. According to the Central Bank of Egypt (CBE, 2016), monthly indicators for December 2016 reported the official exchange rate for the Egyptian pound (LE) against the US dollar (\$) as having slipped from LE 8.88 a dollar to almost LE 20. This devaluation of the currency amounted to around 55 percent loss of its value. Given that Egypt is a major importer of commodities, including being the world's largest wheat importer (FAO, 2016) the currency depreciation was highly detrimental to the national economy.

Secondly, according to CAPMAS (2013, 2016a), at least one in every four households in Egypt is poor, and one out of every two is either a poor household or relatively poor. The PovcalNet database of the World Bank has estimated that a large percentage of the middle class population in Egypt is living very close to the poverty line. Almost 62 percent of Egyptians in 2015 were living on less than US\$5.5 a day. Moreover, in the same period, there was a decrease in income and an increase of poverty among the bottom 40 percent of the population. Also according to CAPMAS (2013, 2016a) and the WFP(2013), poverty increased from around 17 percent in 2000 to 28 percent in 2016, as shown in **Figure 2**; the poverty rate thus increased by around 66 percent. This is despite the fact that the population growth rate across the same period had increased by 34 percent (CAPMAS, 2016b). This means that the number of poor increased by more than the double for the same period.

Figure 2: Poverty in Egypt from 2000 till 2015

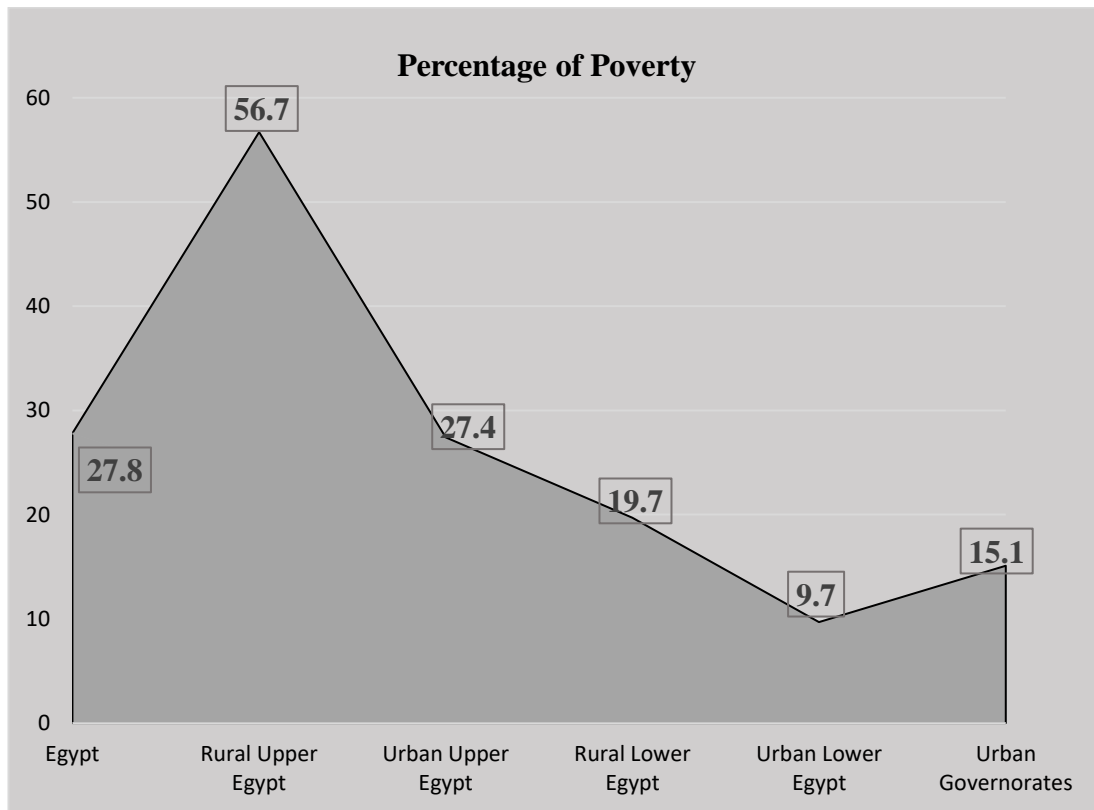


Source Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS 2016)

Therefore, Egypt is a country that is characterised by high levels of poverty and this represents a major challenge for the government to address. One way of protecting the poor and vulnerable households is through establishing and maintaining effective SSNPs. However, regional disparities in poverty levels are marked, with signs of divergence. **Figure 3** shows that in 2015, the highest percentages of poverty, 56.7 and 27.4 percent, are located in Rural and Urban Upper Egypt. In Rural and Urban Lower Egypt, the percentage of the poor are 19.7 and 9.7 percent respectively. Spatial disparities of poverty are obvious across different regions within the country.

This poses a range of questions regarding the government's initiatives toward the less advantaged regions. The increase in poverty indicates that Egypt, at both a national and regional level, is in urgent need of a more efficient and effective SSNP. This is despite the fact that the government continuously allocates a generous budget for food subsidies.

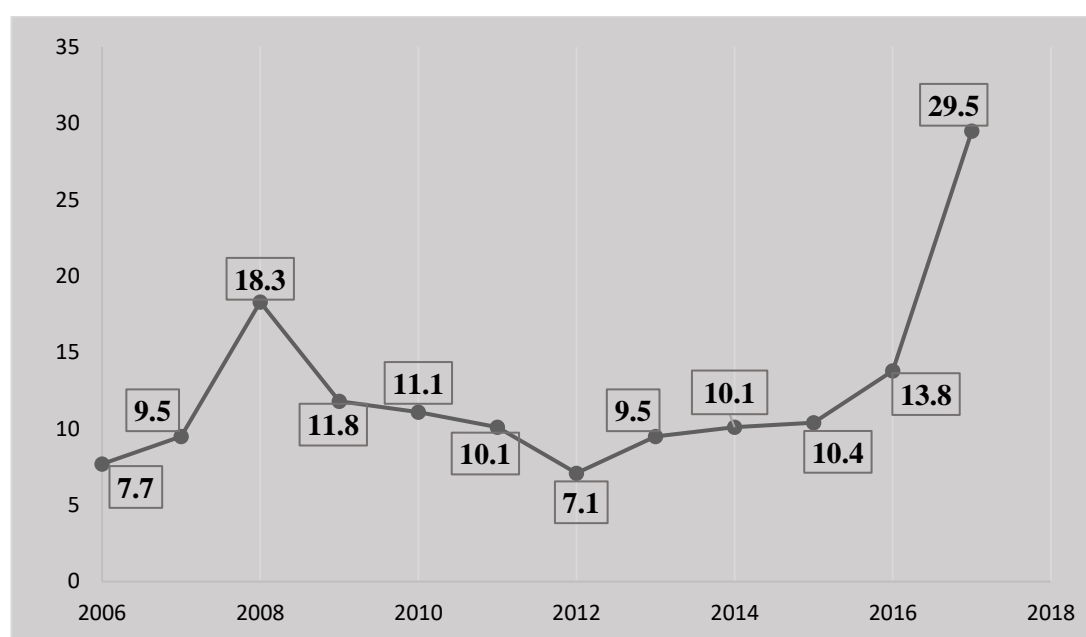
Figure 3: Poverty of different Geographical Regions in Egypt



Source Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS 2016)

The socio-economic situation in Egypt remains precarious. The inflation rate had increased from 7.7 percent in 2006 to 29.5 percent in 2017, as shown in **Figure 4**. From the period of 2013 to 2017, inflation increased from 9.5 percent to 29.5 percent, respectively. The high spike of inflation in 2016 saw the price of goods increase, especially imported food products (CBE, 2016; World Bank, 2016a). In an attempt to attack the impact of this inflation on the poor, the government devoted a permanent section of the budget for providing the FSP.

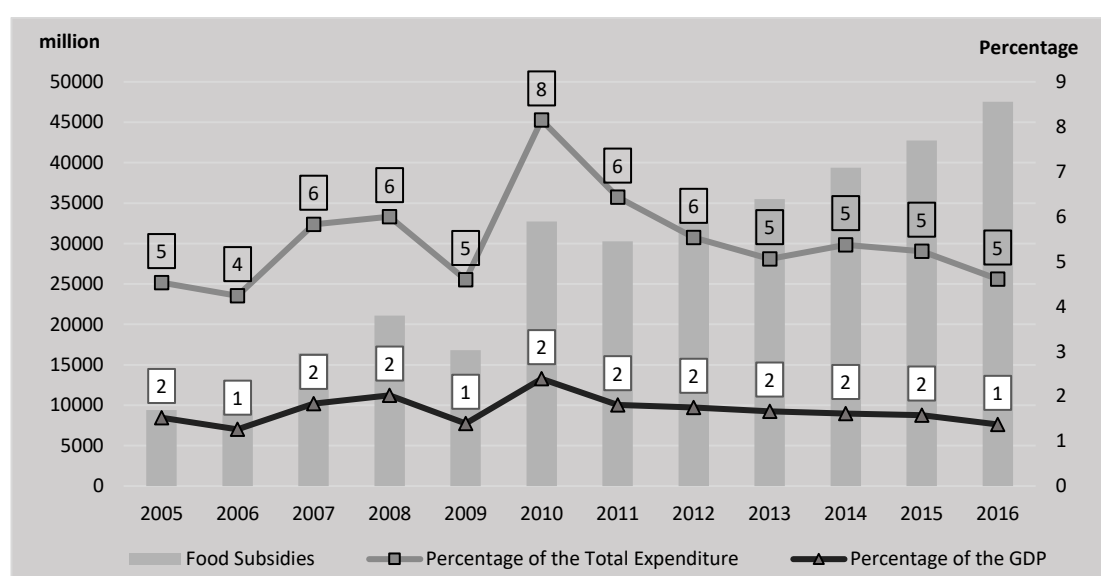
Figure 4: Percentage of Inflation from 2006 till 2017



Source Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS 2016)

Public spending on food subsidies increased from LE 9 billion (US\$1 billion) in 2005 to LE 47.5 billion (US\$5.3 billion) in 2016, accounting for an average of 2 percent of GDP and 5.5 percent of average total yearly government expenditure for years 2005 to 2016, as shown in *Figure 5*.

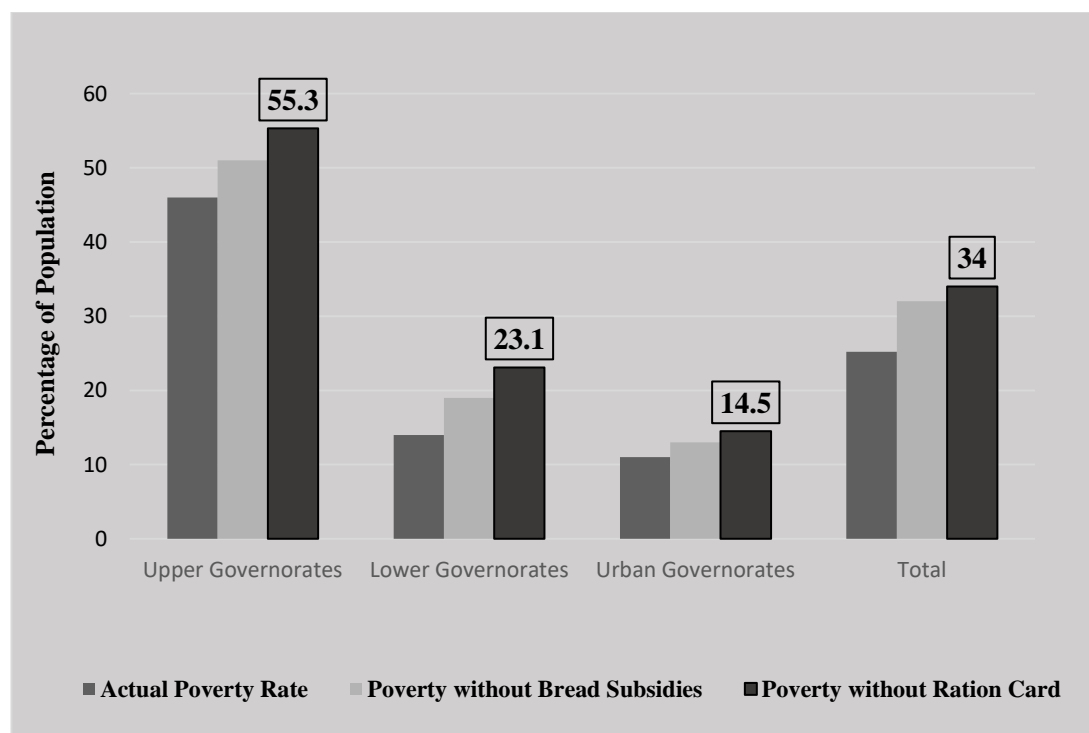
Figure 5: Food Subsidies as a Percentage of Total Expenditure and as a Percentage of GDP in Egypt's Annual Report



Source Author Calculations based on Ministry of Finance financial statements of the fiscal year from 2005 to 2016

To mitigate the impact of higher inflation and to protect the poor, the government decided to increase the monthly allowance provided by the FSP, allocated using the SRC, from LE 15 (\$ 1.70) in 2013 to LE 18 (\$ 2.00) in June 2016, then to LE 29 (\$ 3.00) in March 2017 and finally to LE 50 (\$ 5.60) in July 2017 (World Bank, 2016a). With the absence of the FSP, an estimated of 9 percent of Egyptians in 2009 would have fallen into poverty (World Bank, 2010). In 2011, according to the CAPMAS (2013), food subsidies accounted for around 4 percent of the total household expenditure on food consumption, representing 32.5 percent of the total calorie consumption of poor households (WFP, 2013). The World Bank study shows that food subsidies have shielded poor people from the impact of high food prices (World Bank, 2010; Breisinger *et al.*, 2013). **Figure 6** shows for the year 2011, the effect of the absence of the FSP on the poverty rate. The removal of the FSP benefit in this figure highlights the role of subsidies in contributing to poverty alleviation. Henceforth, the removal of the subsidies can increase the poverty level from 25.5 to around 34 percent.

Figure 6: Impact of the FSP on the Poverty in Egypt



Source World Food Programme WFP (2013) based on the Household Income, Expenditure and Consumption Survey 2010/11

This impact is very noticeable in Upper Egypt governorates, which have the highest poverty rates. Therefore, FSP plays an important role as a SSNP, especially for poor households. However, the continuous fiscal SSNP to be provided to poor households through food subsidies has failed to decrease or curb the growth of poverty. This fact creates a policy space for investigating the programme's effectiveness, in other words, how much of this benefit is actually received by the poor and how much is received by the non-poor. Before discussing the current outlook on the targeting mechanism of the FSP, the next section summarizes the historical evolution of the programme in terms of a number of milestones.

4.3 Historical Background: FSP

Egypt has maintained a large food subsidy programme for more than 60 years. It experienced an ideological transformation in providing food subsidies during World War II, when the government decided to introduce rationing with the aim of creating a social safety net to manage the price increases and scarcity of resources as a result of the war (Löfgren and El-said, 1999). Food subsidy was therefore originally provided as a universal scheme and included kerosene, textiles, sugar, cooking oil, tea and margarine. Even after the war, the FSP continued, as there had not been any significant fiscal burden during the decade following the war. The total FSP budget in 1941 was LE 1 million (US\$112 thousand) and did not exceed few million until the end of the 1950s. This is due to the existence of three main features: high food self-sufficiency rates, higher rates of growth of the GDP than of domestic consumption and low inflation rates (Hashish, 1980).

During the July Revolution 1952, under President Nasser's regime, government ideology was primarily based on a centrally controlled economy and extensive interference in food production and distribution. He set out a plan for the redistribution of income, opportunities and controlling food market prices. The FSP's objective was mainly to ensure social equity at a time of domestic shortfalls (Hashish, 1980). Subsidies are considered as a means by which authorities as represented by the government, can influence income distribution and meet the basic needs of the people in an attempt to adjust wages and prices. By 1970, food subsidies had reached around LE 11 million (US\$ 1.2). Subsidies covered commodities, services and production

inputs. However, the results were not as expected, as subsidies reflected high distortions and weaknesses in the economy; the labour force productivity decreased, the level of unemployment increased, wages were low and there was an inability to compete in international or regional trade (Harik, 1992).

In 1970, President Sadat came to power inheriting the difficulties in the Egyptian economy created under the ideology of a centralised economy, guaranteed employment in the public sector, free access to health and education and extensive price adjustment and subsidies. Sadat opened up the Egyptian economy to the free market economy by reversing the previous regime's economic and political orientation, moving closer to the West (Abdalla and Al-Shawarby, 2018). Since the mid-1970s, food subsidies have become a major problem which have led to a major drain on the government budget. According to Alderman, Von Braun and Sakr (1982), food subsidies have increased approximately 104 times from 1970 to 1976. The objective of the FSP has become to insulate the beneficiaries from inflation caused by hikes in international food prices. Reducing the FSP subsidies had stemmed from negotiations between the IMF and the Egyptian government in 1976, as part of a package of economic reforms named "Open-Door Policy". a requirement from the IMF to grant the requested loan (Ikram, 2006). To pass the "Open-Door Policy" reform, Egyptian government was under pressure to lower subsidies as a requirement. The reform was characterised by a reduction in the role of the state and tackling the expansion of the FSP was one of the main strategic changes (Ahmed *et al.*, 2002). In January 1977, the government tried to reduce subsidies by announcing a price increase for a number of subsidised food items. Since the Egyptian subsidy system was used to provide food and basic goods at affordable prices to maintain social and political stability (Khouri-Dagher, 1996), there was a public outcry, leading to widespread rioting in Cairo and other cities, during which 77 people died, 800 were injured and 1270 were arrested. The decision to increase prices was swiftly rescinded and as a result of public dissatisfaction, the subsidy bill was increased from 4.1 percent of the GDP in 1977 to 7.8 percent in 1979 (Adams, Jr., 2000). Since then, successive governments have fallen captive to the strategic vision that the FSP reforms put the country into social and political risk (Abdalla and Al-Shawarby, 2018).

By 1980, the food subsidy system covered more than a dozen food items, 'accounting for about 14 percent of total public spending' (IMF 1995, p.349). At that

time, budgetary pressures forced considerable downsizing in terms of the amount of subsidies provided to food programs. The FSP continued its expansion, reaching 8.1 percent of the GDP in 1982. Henceforth, a new wave of reform was implemented under the Economic Reform and Structural Adjustment Programme (ERSAP) in 1991 and supported by the World Bank, together with the IMF, as a conditionality for providing aid (Stokke, 2013). The objective of the FSP was to reduce poverty by moving gradually towards better targeting of low income households. Two types of reforms were implemented: first, the reform aimed at limiting eligibility (Abdalla and Al-Shawarby, 2018). President Mubarak's regime had introduced the red (highly subsidised ration cards) and green ration cards (low subsidised ration cards) to filter the households covered by the programme. In 1996-97, the food subsidy system represented 5.5 percent of public spending (Löfgren and El-said, 1999). Further tactics were made to reduce the amount of subsidies whilst avoiding popular protest, for instance, by decreasing the amount of imported wheat for subsidised bread by mixing subsidised wheat flour with the maize flour (Ahmed *et al.*, 2002). The percentage of households covered in the food programme decreased from 99 percent in 1981 to 70 percent in 2000. Both types of reforms had been implemented gradually and quietly to avoid social disruption. To some extent, the success of implementing this reform can be attributed to political repression at that time (Sachs, 2012).

In the 2000s, due to the depreciation of the Egyptian pound by 31 percent in 2003, the downtrend of the FSP was reversed. The inflation rate had increased from 3 percent in 2000 to 11.3 percent in 2004 (Kheir-El-Din, 2008). This had been accompanied with a sharp increase in imported consumer commodities and a decrease in local wheat production. Consequently, the government took action to mitigate the negative inflation effect by expanding the FSP in terms of increasing the types and quantity of commodities (Abdalla and Al-Shawarby, 2018). Around 96 percent of poor households were included in the programme; however, households in the richest quintile received 12.6 percent more of the benefit than those in the poorest quintile (World Bank, 2010). With all these efforts, the economy continued to suffer from high levels of poverty, high inflation and spatial disparities in access to health care and education and employment outcomes, igniting the 2011 revolution (Abdel-khalek, 2014) during which the slogan '*Bread, freedom and social justice*' was chanted the length and breadth of Egypt. After the revolution, the government faced two major

challenges, both requiring public administration reform: high poverty rates and food security (Ghoneim, 2014). In ensuring food security, reducing malnutrition and poverty, the FSP is one of the most important SSN programs to, providing low-income households with basic commodities. The government designs and implements this programme to protect the poor from the impact of high food prices.

4.4 Economic dynamics of the FSP: Post-2011

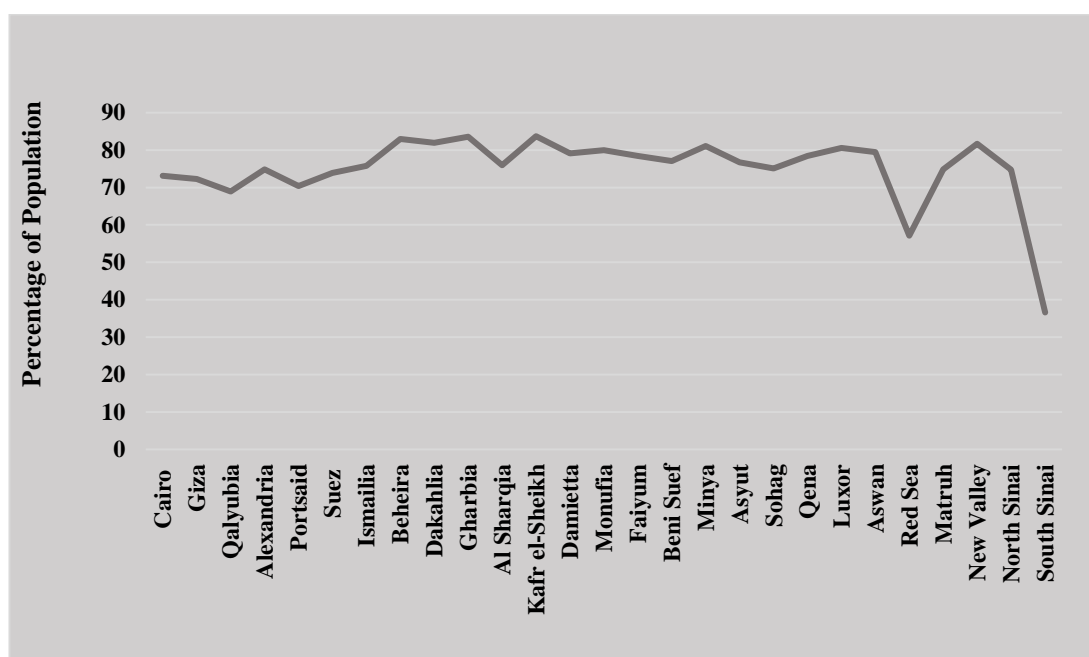
Given the politically sensitive challenge of reforming the existing FSP, the government chose to gradually move away from the old paper-based ration card (green and red cards) system and to introduce the new Smart Ration card (SRC) system, with registration undertaken using the national ID number. The current system is composed of subsidised bread, the *Baladi* bread (Egyptian flatbread; the most important subsidised food product) and licensed ration shops (RS) (i.e. small retail stores known as *Tamween*) that sell subsidised commodities to the beneficiaries. In 2013/2014, the Egyptian government introduced changes to the *baladi* bread system, by introducing an output-based financing approach to improve the supply chain. This approach is based on subsidizing the actual number of loaves of bread that are distributed by the bakeries to the beneficiaries in an attempt to offset the black market and smuggling that characterised the old system, which subsidised the flour sacks for bakeries to produce the bread. In the new system, every beneficiary has a daily quota of a maximum of five loaves of bread. If a household beneficiary with four individuals registered on the SRC system does not take his or her whole monthly bread quota of 600 loaves (say, if only 100 loaves are taken), then the unused *baladi* bread quota (500 loaves) is converted into points (500 loaves = LE 50 = approx. US\$ 5.60). These converted points can be used to buy other commodities from the RS. Thus, this process may encourage beneficiaries to consume less *baladi* bread.

More changes were also introduced to the operation of RS, by introducing an allowance-based system. In the old system, each beneficiary was given a specific quota of subsidised low-quality commodities (i.e. cooking oil, rice, sugar and macaroni) to buy from a specific RS. The old system subsidised the products in the RSs themselves, according to the number of beneficiaries that were recorded in the Ration Office (RO) ledger. Thus, if the beneficiary did not take his or her full quota,

the RS may have sold the remainder on the black market. The new SRC system permits beneficiaries to buy from any RS, and the subsidised commodities are distributed to each RS according to its sales ledger account. Beneficiaries are provided with a monthly allowance and, using this allowance, each beneficiary is free to buy any commodity from a bundle of more than 50 commodities (World Bank, 2015a).

Egypt's MSIT has sought to improve targeting to ensure the effective food subsidy allocation to the poor. **Figure 7** shows that approximately 77 per cent of the population receive the programme benefits. However, not all are poor households. In 2010, a World Bank study showed that the programme shields the poor from the impact of food price inflation; however, the system is poorly targeting the beneficiaries. The study found that the leakage of subsidised flour reached 31 per cent of all wheat flour supplied to bakeries. In addition, the leakage rates for the three subsidised commodities of oil, sugar and rice were 31.4 per cent, 20 per cent and 11.4 per cent, respectively. These figures explain the pressure on the government to ensure better resource allocation such that the benefit is focused on and received only by the targeted groups (Alderman, Von Braun and Sakr, 1982; Ahmed and Bouis, 2002; Ahmed *et al.*, 2002; World Bank, 2005, 2010; WFP, 2009; CAPMAS, 2013; Sdravovich *et al.*, 2014).

Figure 7: Population that receive food subsidies (per cent) across 27 governorates



Source Author's calculations, based on a 2014 report of the Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade, Egypt <www.msit.gov.eg/ar/files/__.pdf> (in Arabic).

Regarding the eligibility criteria for enrolment in the FSP, these are very loose and difficult to assess. One criteria covers those with chronic illnesses or with special needs. However, a list of chronic diseases associated with eligibility is not provided. Other loose criteria are, for instance, temporary seasonal employment, workers in agricultural professions, or work as a street vendor. Yet there are no specific lists or records for such forms of work within the MSIT system (Targeting criteria shown in the Annex, Table A). Consequently, it is not possible to use these criteria to measure FSP targeting performance in terms of errors of inclusion and exclusion. Rather, to assess the FSP's effectiveness, this chapter places the focus of its analysis on the specified programme objective: measures of poverty.

4.5 Measuring food subsidy targeting performance

To assess the effectiveness of the programme, this section measures the targeting performance of the FSP using the quantitative approach to identify targeting errors. The first step is the use of descriptive quantitative analysis. In this step, the analysis applies the “cost of basic need” approach. I use cross sectional data from the representative national Household Income, Expenditure and Consumption Survey (HIECS), carried out by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS, 2013) of Egypt for 2012/13 after the implementation of the new smart card system. This is used to assess the errors of inclusion and exclusion of the FSP's current targeting system across the country's 27 (local government) governorates.

4.5.1 Macro-Level Analysis

There are alternative methods to compute the poverty line and each has its own strengths and weaknesses (Bellù and Liberati, 2005; Haughton and Khandker, 2009). The two most common methods are used to calculate the poverty line threshold are the cost of basic needs and food energy intake. It is worth noting that the measurement practices of each method could affect the empirical poverty profiles using same dataset (Ravallion and Bidani, 1993; Haughton and Khandker, 2009). Therefore, in assessing the targeting performance as discussed in Chapter Two Section 2.2.4, the choice of a certain method can greatly affecting the targeting outcomes based on the chosen

thresholds produced by these two methods. A study compared the two methods using household data from Indonesia and concluded that the ‘food-energy-intake method is large enough to cause a rank reversal in all poverty measures ... while our alternative cost-of-basic needs method finds greater poverty incidence, depth and severity in rural areas, the reverse is indicated by the food-energy-intake method...we have found that our alternative poverty profile based on the cost-of basic-needs method is fairly robust to a number of other methodological choice’ (Ravallion and Bidani, 1993: p.24). Another study conducted by Wodon (1997) used household data from Bangladesh, comparing the results of estimating the poverty line using both methods. It showed that the results of using both methods could be strikingly different. It also stated that ‘The consistency and specificity of the two methods is thus a matter of degree. Each method has advantages as well as drawbacks. In what follows, we argue however that the potential drawbacks of the food energy intake method can be particularly severe. This offers a case in favour of the cost of basic needs method by highlighting a lack of consistency in the food energy intake method for poverty comparisons over time’ (Wodon, 1997: p.75). Henceforth, the basic needs approach to poverty assessment became the most commonly used method (Haughton and Khandker, 2009) and has gained acceptance in developing economies.

Based on these studies, I, therefore used the basic needs approach to establish the minimum threshold for consumption expenditure necessary to achieve a minimum standard of living. To establish this threshold, a bundle of basic needs is chosen that reflects local perceptions of what constitutes poverty. The CAPMAS calculated the poverty line by first estimating the cost of the basic food bundle needs; this gives the food poverty line (e.g. daily food that gives 2,100 kilocalories per person). Then, it estimates the allowance for basic non-food goods and services for every neighbourhood. The sum of the food and non-food allowances defines the poverty line. Also taken into consideration is the fact that the cost of the food commodities and non-food goods changes according to geographical area (UNHCR *et al.*, 2004; Hamanou *et al.*, 2005; Haughton and Khandker, 2009; WFP, 2016). Poor households are those whose consumption expenditure falls below the poverty line.

The basic need poverty line is given by:

$$Z^{BN} = Z^F + Z^{NF}$$

Z^{BN} is the Basic Need poverty line

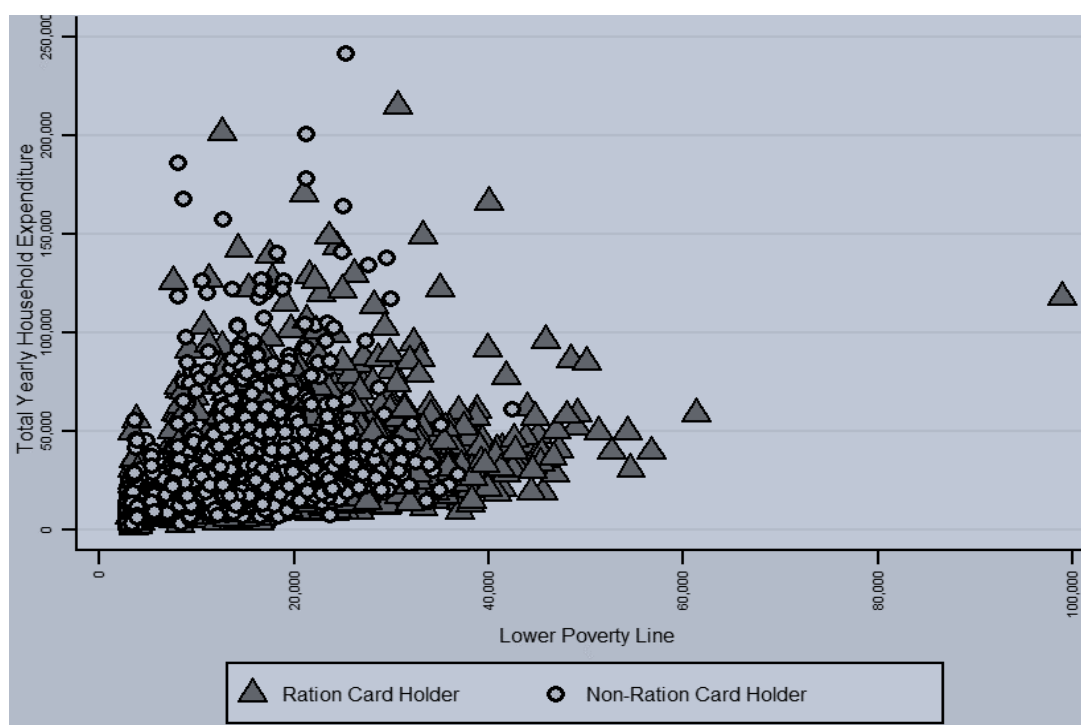
Z^F is the Food component

Z^{NF} is the Non-Food component

Z^{BN} is calculated in the HIECS for each household, comparing it against each household's expenditure to identify who is poor or non-poor. Based on this approach, I identified the poor and non-poor households, then calculated the FSP rates of leakage and under-coverage. The results of this analysis shed light on the inclusion and exclusion errors of the programme.

The cost of a basic needs approach helps in assessing the targeting performance of food subsidies in Egypt, by comparing the FSP's errors of inclusion and exclusion. There are two errors of the targeted FSP, identified using the HIECS data 2012/13 for a sample of 7,528 household heads (as a proxy for households) that comprise 32,732 individuals. The analysis of targeting is presented graphically. By using the poverty line (Z^{BN}), 6,337 out of the 7,528 households benefitted from food subsidies. Of these 6,337 households, 4,920 are non-poor (i.e. they are located above the poverty line) and 1,417 are poor. Both the 1,417 poor households included in the programme and the 1,061 non-poor households excluded are treated as successful targeting. The 4,920 non-poor households are an error of inclusion, while the remaining 130 poor households (7,258 minus 6,337 minus 1,061 = 130) are treated as an error of exclusion. Therefore, the error of inclusion rate is approximately 78 per cent and the error of exclusion rate is around 9 per cent. **Figure 8** shows the total expenditure on the Y axis, while the X axis represents the lower poverty line. The triangles represent the FSP's beneficiaries (Ration card holders: RC), while the circles show the households who do not benefit (Not having a ration card: NRC). At the same level of total expenditure, some household heads benefit from the FSP while others do not.

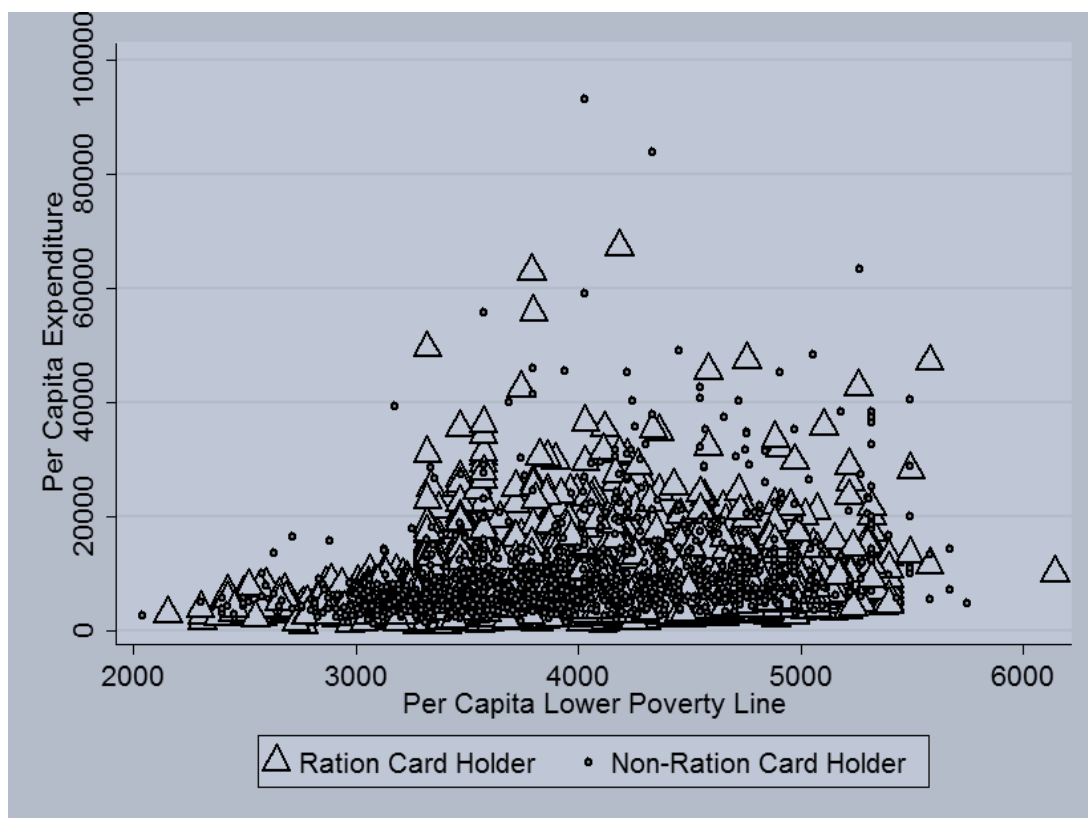
Figure 8: Total Expenditure for all households that hold or do not hold Smart Ration Cards



Source Author's calculations, based on CAMPAS HIECS Survey 2012/13.

For a more precise analysis, per capita expenditure is used across the whole sample, as shown in **Figure 9**. This figure suggests that at the same level of per capita expenditure, the FSP exhibits obvious errors in targeting; some household heads benefit from the intervention while others do not. In other words, at the same level of the per capita expenditure some households hold SRC while others do not have cards. These two graphs explain that the programme suffers from mis-targeting problem. And therefore, this reflects a noteworthy implications for targeting intervention programme system, where efforts should be directed for structural reforms of the food programme to better identify the poor (WFP, 2013). Given the results of this analysis, it is important to shed light on these results by graphically showing the exclusion errors, then the inclusion errors.

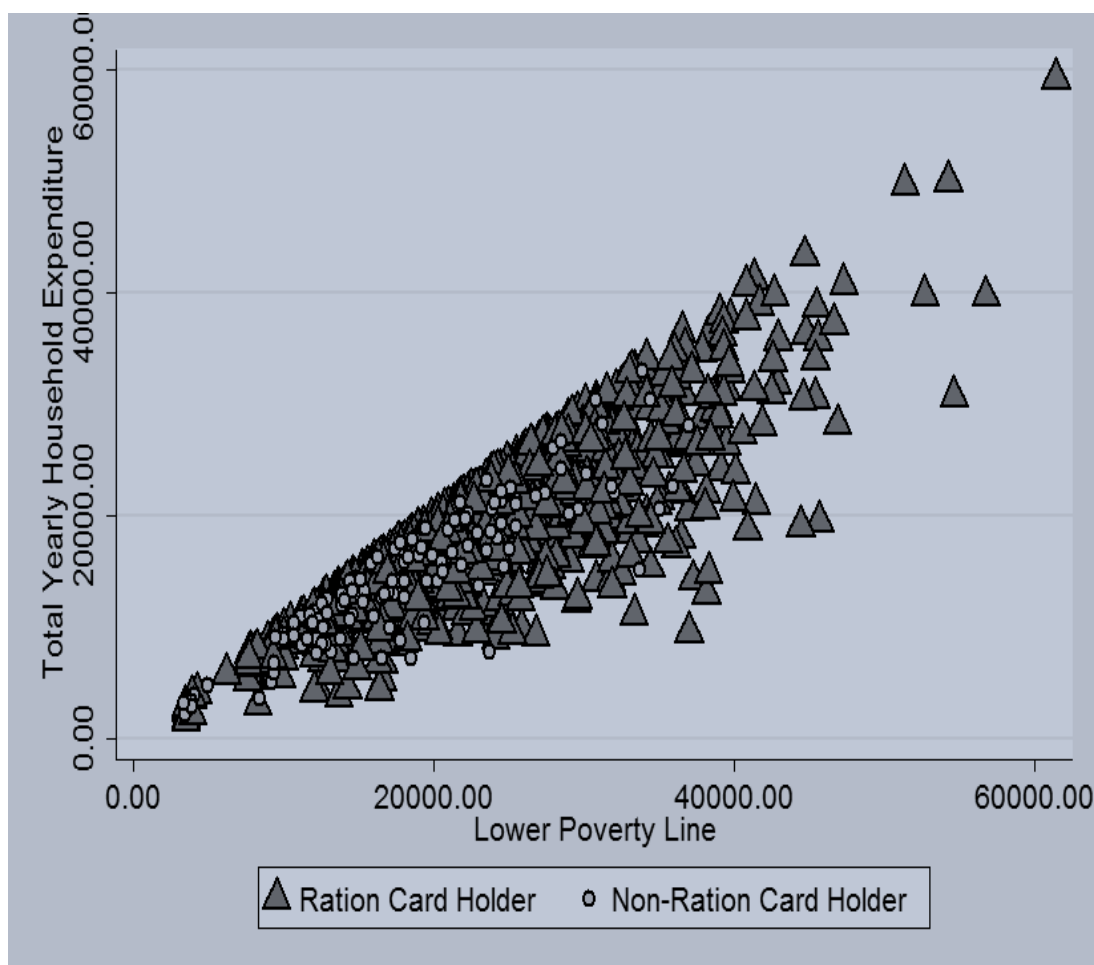
Figure 9: Per Capita Expenditure for all households that hold or do not hold Smart Ration Cards



Source Author's calculations, based on CAMPAS HIECS Survey 2012/13.

The basic framework can be further extended to graphically highlight the programme's errors of inclusion and exclusion. The whole sample of 7,528 households is classified into poor and non-poor and quantified into included and excluded from the programme. **Figure 10** shows the total expenditure among the 1,547 poor households, in addition to the distribution of ration card holders. All households in **Figure 10** are classified as poor, since their total expenditures fall below the poverty line. The triangles represent 1,417 households among the poor holding ration cards (i.e. successful targeting). The circles represent 130 poor households who are not card holders.

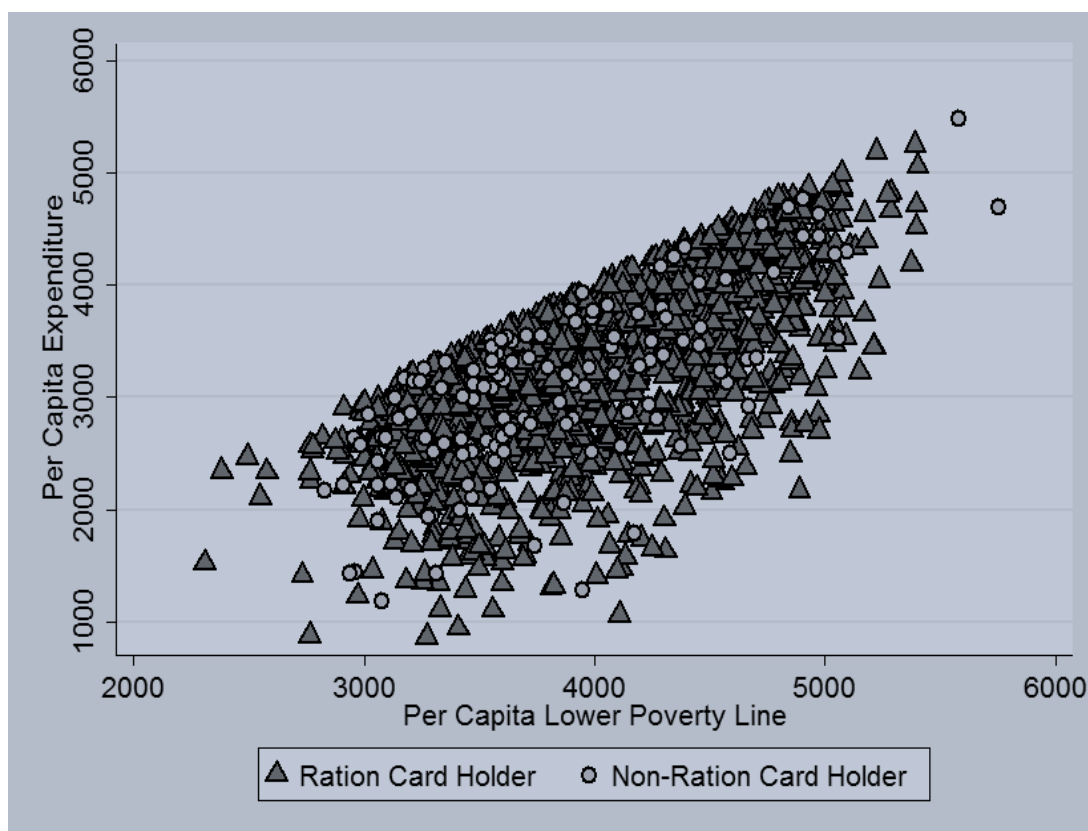
Figure 10: Expenditure for poor households that hold or do not hold Smart Ration Cards



Source Author's calculations, based on CAMPAS HIECS Survey 2012/13.

Additionally, **Figure 11** represents poor households' per capita expenditure; this is used because it shows the discrepancies of the programme more clearly seen. As with **Figure 11**, households are identified as poor if their per capita expenditures fall below the per capita poverty line. It depicts an evident exclusion error, in that at the same level of per capita expenditure, some household heads benefit from the programme while others do not.

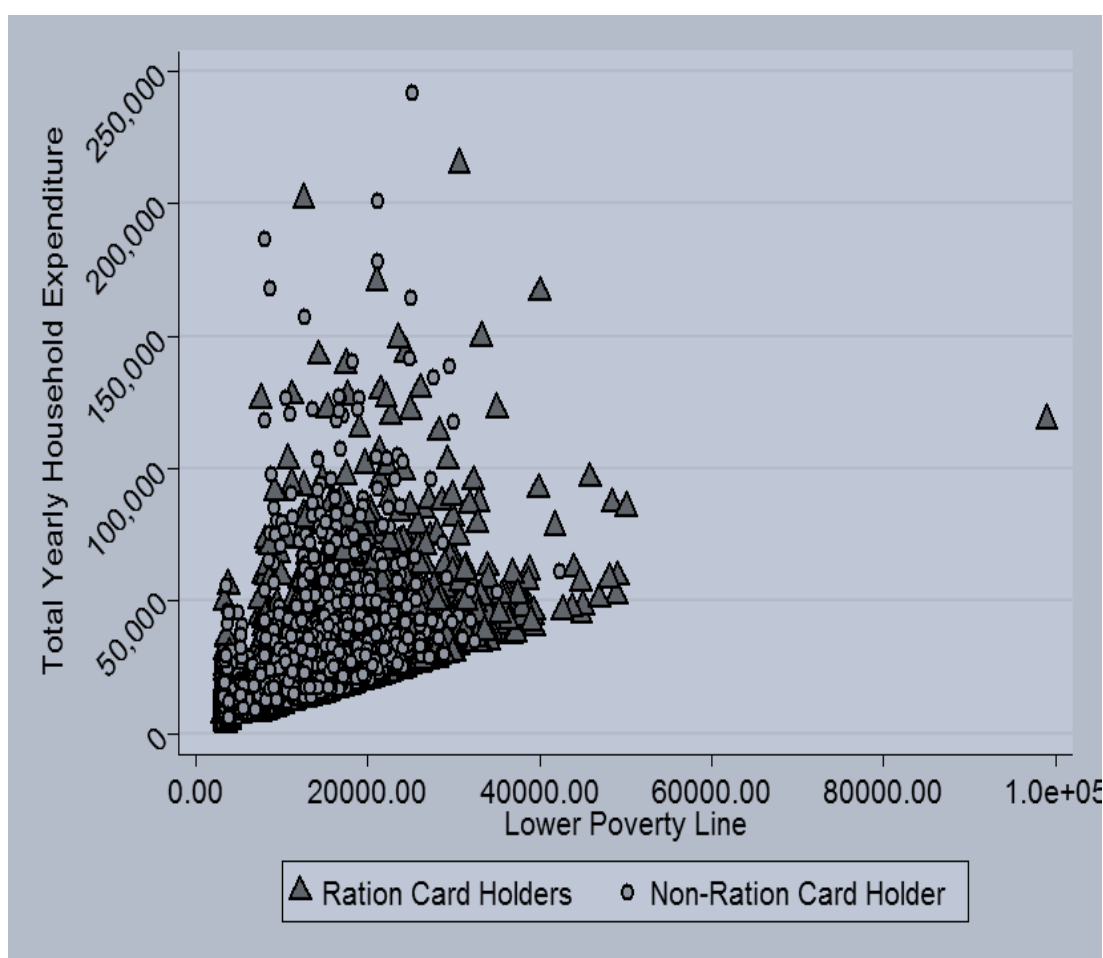
Figure 11: Per Capita Expenditure for poor households that hold or do not hold Smart Ration Cards



Source Author's calculations, based on CAMPAS HIECS Survey 2012/13.

Figure 12 shows the total expenditure for the 5,981 non-poor households and the distribution of the ration card holders. They are classified as such because their total expenditures exceed the poverty line. The 1,061 non-poor households who do not receive benefits represent successful targeting. Contrastingly, the 4,920 non-poor households benefitting from the programme are considered as inclusion errors, which represents approximately 78 per cent. This is a significant degree of leakage.

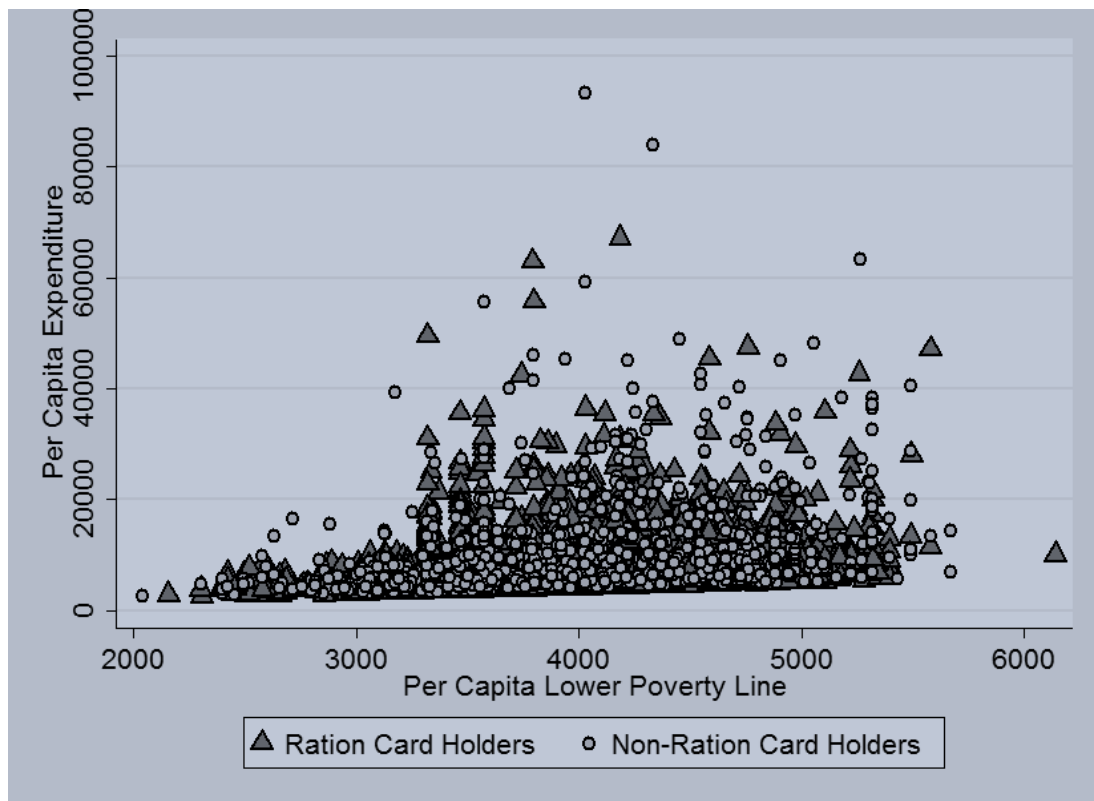
Figure 12: Total Expenditure for non-poor households heads that hold or do not hold Smart Ration Cards



Source Author's calculations, based on CAMPAS HIECS Survey 2012/13.

Furthermore, **Figure 13** represents per capita expenditure for non-poor households. At the same level of per capita expenditure, the programme succeeds in excluding non-poor households while it erroneously includes a significant number of non-poor households.

Figure 13: Per Capita Expenditure for non-poor households heads that hold or do not hold Smart Ration Cards



Source Author's calculations, based on CAMPAS HIECS Survey 2012/13.

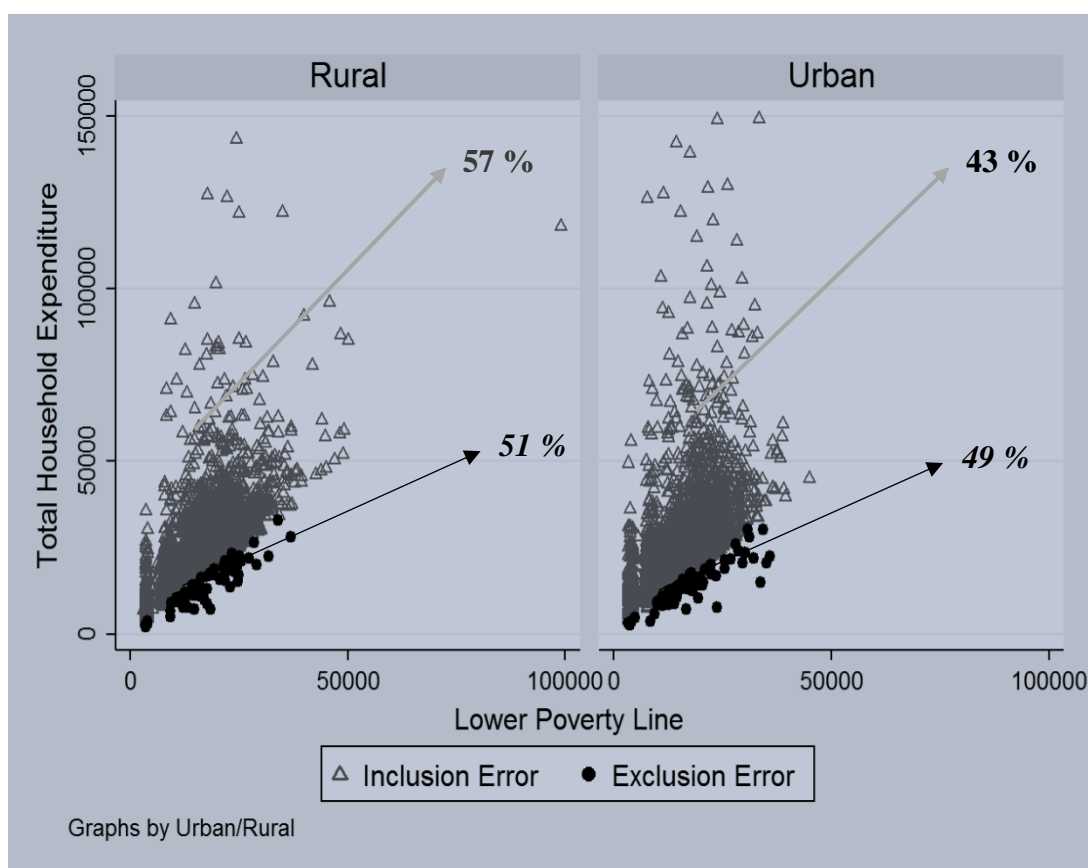
Measurements of the FSP's performance reinforces earlier observations about errors of inclusions and exclusions in the total sample. The research also shows that non-poor households are those that are mostly deriving the benefits of the programme. Moreover, there are errors of exclusion that raise the question about the underlying causes of such errors. The findings on errors in targeting provide additional justification for the need to reform the FSP, to improve its effectiveness and its ability to target the poor.

4.5.2 Meso/Governmental-Level Analysis

Wedged between the macro-level and the micro-level, meso-level analysis can offer further insights into mis-targeting in addition to those found at the macro-level. The Meso level analysis helps to examine whether there are significant differences in the distribution of inclusion and exclusion errors between rural and urban areas across the 27 governorates and also between the governorates themselves. First, the graph in **Figure 14**, shows the size of the exclusion and inclusion errors in both urban and rural areas inside the 27 governorates. Among the 6337 households who were included in the programme, 2843 non-poor households who received the benefit were in rural areas, and accordingly, the inclusion error was 57 percent of the beneficiaries identified in the survey. 2086 non-poor households who received the benefit were in urban areas, representing 43 percent of the inclusion errors. The overall inclusion errors, represented by the grey triangles in **Figure 14**, found in the rural and urban governorates were 57 percent and 43 percent, respectively.

The black dots in **Figure 14** represent exclusion errors in both rural and urban areas. Exclusion error percentages were 51 and 49 percent, respectively. The striking and encouraging finding is that there is no significant difference in percentage of inclusion errors or exclusion errors between rural and urban areas in the 27 governorates. These uniformly poor targeting results for the FSP, regardless of urban or rural context, is likely to be because the programme is being implemented uniformly, whether the local enrolment offices are located in rural or urban areas.

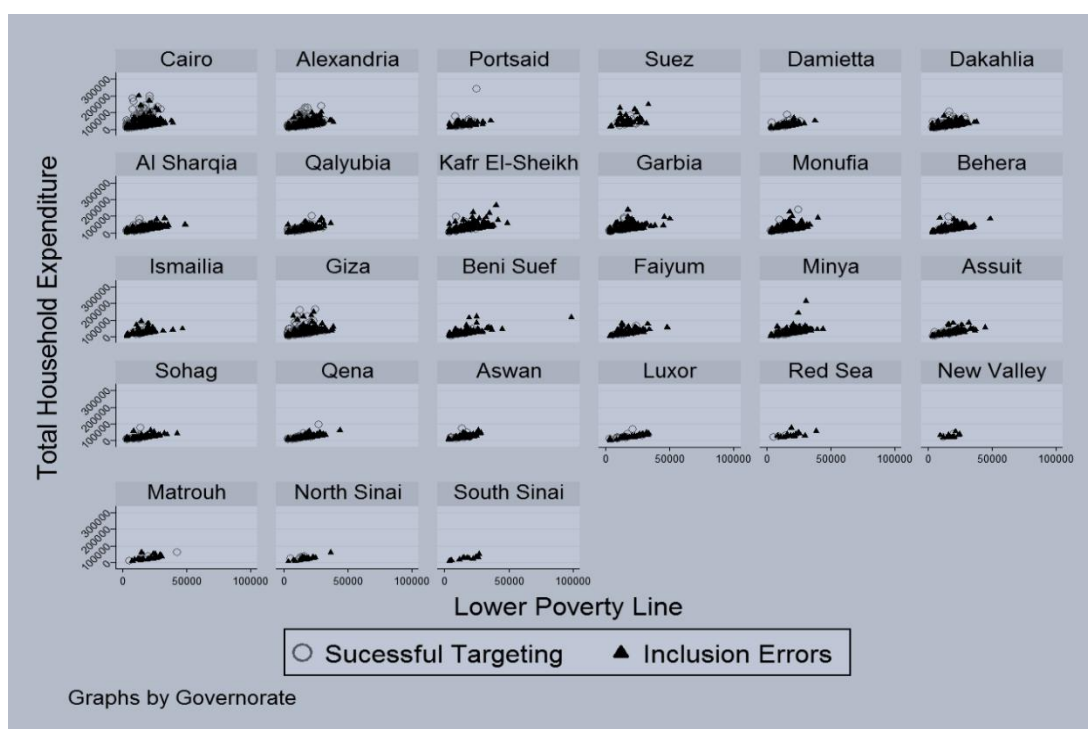
Figure 14: Inclusion and Exclusion Errors in the Rural and Urban Areas



Source Author's calculations, based on CAMPAS HIECS Survey 2012/13.

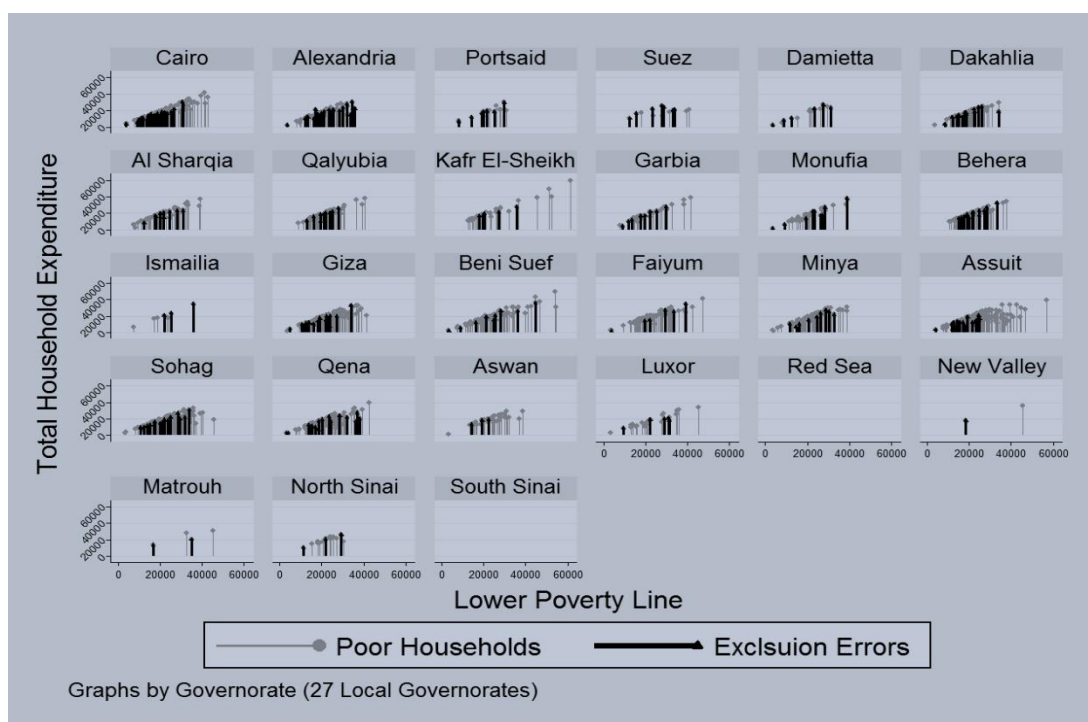
The next figure presents the findings of my assessment of the distribution of inclusion and exclusion errors between the 27 governorates. Disaggregating poor targeting performance by governorates as shown in **Figure 15**, one can see that inclusion errors were found in all governorates, with an average of between 70 to 80 percent in each governorate. Notably, Cairo recorded the highest inclusion error rate of 82 percent. This level of analysis confirms that the problem of mis-targeting exists in all the governorates. However, the highest percentages of inclusion errors, aside from Cairo, were in Alexandria, Behera, and Giza were 81 percent, 80 percent and 72 percent, respectively. This indicates that the error of inclusions are significantly existing in all the governorates.

Figure 15: Error of Inclusion across the 27 Governorates



Source Author's calculations, based on CAMPAS HIECS Survey 2012/13.

Figure 16: Error of Exclusion across the 27 Governorates



Source Author's calculations, based on CAMPAS HIECS Survey 2012/13.

As shown in *Figure 16*, according to the CAPMAS Survey 2013, exclusion errors exist across most of the governorates, exceptions being the Red Sea and South Sinai governorates. Red Sea governorate is a tourist destination with high per capita income and most of the households are classified as non-poor. In South Sinai, due to the political instabilities in this area, most poor households have migrated to other governorates, except some indigenous people who own big pieces of land. Alexandria has the highest rate of exclusion errors across the 27 governorates of 23 percent. In Assuit, which has the highest poverty rate of more than 60 percent, of the exclusion error is more than 10 percent. This implies that out of over 4 million poor households in Assuit in 2013 (CAPMAS, 2013), more than 250,000 households are excluded from the programme. Based on the information in both *Figures 15* and *Figure 16*, it can be argued that the distribution of FSP benefit has gone in favour of the non-poor compared to the poor households. Three governorates, Cairo, Alexandria and Assuit, were selected within the range of experiences in Egypt in order to be representative of at least some of the diversity that characterises the country as shown in Table 5 (as being previously discussed in Chapter Three Section 3.5). The three sites were chosen for the following reasons: (i) They are geographically located in different areas as shown in the fieldwork map in Chapter Three Section 3.5 to explore and understand targeting in three different locations in the country (ii) Understanding the diverse experience of targeting mechanisms in both urban and rural areas in each governorate; Cairo is completely urbanized, Alexandria has both urban and rural areas however the majority of population live in urban areas and finally Assuit has both urban and rural areas as well although the majority of population are living in rural areas. (iii) The inclusion rate is the highest in Cairo as explained in Figure 15 and the exclusion rate is the highest in Alexandria as discussed in Figure 16 (iv) The rate of poverty and illiteracy is the highest in Assuit in comparison to all other governorates in Egypt whereby FSP is supposed to be designed to target the poorest.

Table 5: Descriptive statistics of selected indicators in the three field sites (%)

<i>Governorates</i>	<i>Poverty</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Illiteracy</i>
<i>Cairo</i>	19	100	0	22
<i>Alexandria</i>	26	70	30	26
<i>Assuit</i>	60	27	73	55

Source: HIECS 2013, CAPMAS

In line with the results of the macro-level analysis in the previous section where one saw exclusion errors and high inclusion errors, the meso-level analysis shows no significant difference between the distribution of these errors between urban and rural areas. Moreover, inclusion and exclusion errors occur in most governorates. Both the macro and meso level analyses show that targeting is ineffective. The analysis shows that the programme's targeting mechanism is not working but these figures cannot shed much light on why and how these errors occur. Therefore, this study will try to conduct an analysis of the poor targeting performance in the three selected sites (further discussions are found in Chapters Four and Five).

4.5.3 Building Proxy Means-Tests for FSP: Theoretical Implementation

In recent years, the PMT has become the predominant targeting mechanism for SSNPs schemes across many low and middle income countries as being discussed in Chapter Two Section 2.2.3. This section applies the PMT using the CAPMAS 2013 survey, with the aim of better identifying FSP's beneficiaries. I introduce the welfare indicator that will be used to determine eligibility and discuss the explanatory variable and the results of the final model. Finally, I evaluate the prediction performance if the PMT were to be used to identify eligibility.

4.5.3.1 *Selecting an indicator for the actual household welfare*

The PMT model has been developed using the data from the CAPMAS 2013 nationally representative data that includes both urban and rural households. It contains information on a wide variety of topics, including expenditure, education, employment, and others as discussed in Chapter Three Section 3.6.2. The welfare-based indicator for identifying the poor households is proxied by using per capita household consumption expenditure. In the development literature, although data on income is available in the HIECS, per capita expenditure is chosen as the most reliable measure of the welfare of the households for two reasons: first, consumption expenditure is a better index for consumption behaviour of the households than reported income; second, the data of per capita expenditure is more stable and reliable than income data (Ahmed and Bouis, 2002; del Ninno and Mills, 2015).

Every household is assigned a score, based on the survey data that includes all variables in the PMT formula. Ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions are used to derive the scores of the algorithm of the per capita consumption expenditure on a set of variables. Due to ease of interpretation and convenience, OLS is generally used to predict welfare. The weights of the indicators are given by the values of the coefficients of the selected predictor variables. Every household has an aggregate score which is calculated as the constant plus or minus the weight on each variable, depending on the sign of coefficients. The predicted per capita expenditure or welfare shows that the lower the score, the poorer the household will be (Ahmed and Bouis, 2002).

The regression equation to derive the proxy means test

$$y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{1i} + \beta_2 x_{2i} + \dots + \beta_j x_{ji} + \varepsilon_i$$

Where y_i is the logarithm of consumption expenditure per capita, x_{ji} are the household characteristics taken as explanatory variables for consumption, and β_j are the parameters estimates and ε_i is the random error.

a. Choice of variables

The proxy set of explanatory variables were chosen based on the ultimate objective of this anti-poverty intervention exercise, which is to identify a set of targeting indicators that are (a) easy to observe and measure (b) verifiable and difficult for households to manipulate, (c) significantly correlate with the household's welfare, and (d) not numerous for feasibility and cost efficiency. Grosh and Baker, (1995) argued that for targeting more available variables in the national survey data are generally better than less. The latest study that built a proxy means test for the FSP (Ahmed et al., 2002) used IFPRI survey data over three years from 1996 to 1999. The findings of this latest study cannot be related to my results for two reasons. First, the system of the FSP has changed from subsidizing the commodities, as being used in Ahmed et al.' study (2002), to a voucher system that I used in my study (as discussed in Section 4.3). Second, Ahmed et al.'s study conducted their analysis based on IFPRI survey data (which are not available to the public, including myself) while I use CAPMAS survey. Note that, the poverty cut-off selected may result in different conclusions when applied to different datasets (see: Alkire et al., 2015). This is the case. However, the outdated data have been inherited from the old to the new voucher system without revaluation or recertification of the current beneficiaries. In other words, the registered beneficiaries of the old system are recorded in the new system without filtration (further details are discussed in Chapter Five, Section 5.6). Thus, both studies analysed the poor targeting performance of the FSP in terms of the leakage and under-coverage of the system.

I used the CAPMAS survey 2013 to build the model, starting with household composition, demographics, housing or dwelling characteristics and asset/ durable ownership. For the purposes of this research study, a set of explanatory variables are introduced using OLS regression of the algorithmic per capita expenditure based on previous empirical studies (see Grosh and Baker, 1995; Ahmed and Bouis, 2002; del Ninno and Mills, 2015).

Initially, I investigated the pairwise correlations of the dependent variable and independent variables by using Pearson correlation matrix as shown in **Table A2** to check if there would be any potential problems; no problems were found. Then, I estimated the regression model to predict household welfare. **Table A3** presents the results of the first model where the dependent variable is the household per capita

expenditure. Out of 29 explanatory variables, 5 were statistically insignificant determinants of household expenditure. Having a private car, education, marital status, possession of a dwelling, having air conditioning, were important in explaining changes in per capita expenditure, while in some governorates, gender, household receiving cash or in kind transfers, water tap inside the dwelling, and dwelling ceiling were not statistically significant. The model explains 56 percent of variation in per capita expenditure in the sample (i.e. $R^2=0.56$).

The model was revised by estimating five other regression models, each time dropping one of the insignificant variables as shown in Annex **Tables A4, A5, A6, A7, and A8**. Eventually, the model was developed to include 24 household level variables (Urban/Rural, Household age Squared, Household Size Squared, Household Employment, Household Marital Status, Household Education, Apartment or Rural House, Number of Rooms, Dwelling Area, Possession of Dwelling, Means of Sewerage, Gas Bottle, Dwelling Wall, Dwelling Kitchen, Dwelling Floor, Toilet with Flush, Garbage Disposal, Own Private Car, Own Motor Cycle, Have Refrigerator, Have Telephone Line, Have Freezer, Have Manual Washing Machine, Have Air Conditioner). After dropping all the insignificant variables as shown in Annex **Table A8**, all the other variables had statistically significant coefficients. For the final model, I conducted the hypothesis test in Annex **Table A9**, multicollinearity test **Table A10**, heteroskedasticity test **Table A11** and specification analysis; residual diagnostic plot shown in **Figure A1**, checking normality of residuals **Figure A2 (a) and (b)**

b. The Final Model

The description of the 24 explanatory variables, their average, minimum and maximum vales are presented in **Table 6**. **Table 7** provides the results of the final estimated regression model with the log per capita expenditure as the dependent variable. All the 24 variables are statistically significant at the 5% level of significance, in which the R squared (R^2) equals to 53 percent. As in any regression model using cross sectional survey data, and selecting the independent variables, this model does not fully explain the variance of the welfare indicator (dependent variable). One common goodness-of-fit measure that can assess the accuracy of the PMT formula is the R-squared (R^2), also a comparison of the regression models in the targeting literature that used the PMT in other countries indicates that this model performs quite

well in predicating the household expenditure. Grosh and Baker (1995) achieved $R^2=$ 30-40 percent in Latin America, Grosh and Glinskaya (1998) achieved $R^2=$ 20 percent in Armenia, Ahmed and Bouis (2002) achieved $R^2=$ 43 percent in Egypt, Sharif (2009) achieved $R^2=$ 57 in Bangladesh, and Pop (2015) achieved $R^2=$ 54 in Ghana.

Table 6: Description of the Explanatory Variables used in the Regression Model for PMT

Variable	Mean	Min	Max
Urban/Rural (Urban 1 , Rural 0)	0.443013	0	1
Household Age Squared (HH Age)	2538.512	225	9025
Household Size Squared (HH members squared)	22.6432	1	784
Household Employment (Employed 1, Unemployed 0)	0.761955	0	1
Household Marital Status (Married 0, Never Married 1, Divorced 2, Widow 3)	1.288789	0	3
Household Education (Did not Join School 0, Joined School but not University 1, University Degree 2)	0.962806	0	2
Apartment or Rural House (Apartment 1, Rural house 0)	0.756243	0	1
Number of Rooms (Number of Rooms inside the Dwelling)	3.623672	1	20
Dwelling Area (Area of the Dwelling)	86.2314	6	720
Possession of Dwelling (Owned Dwelling 0, Rented Dwelling 1, Given by Charity 2)	0.463735	0	2
Mean of Sewage (Connected to Public/private Network 1, Not connected 0)	0.541711	0	1
Gas Bottle (Cooking using Gas bottle 1, using Natural gas 0)	0.813496	0	1
Dwelling Wall (Cement 1 , Other: mud, stones, wood 0)	0.923353	0	1
Dwelling Kitchen (Private Kitchen 1, Shared or others 0)	0.85813	0	1
Dwelling Floor (Ordinary Tiles 1, Others: wood, Dust 0)	0.721839	0	1
Toilet with Flush (With Flush 1, Without 0)	0.525771	0	1
Garbage Disposal (Collected 1, Dumped 0)	0.48924	0	1
Own Private Car (Have Private Car 1, Have not 0)	0.05712	0	1
Own Motor Cycle (Have a Motor Cycle 1, Have not 0)	0.068411	0	1
Have Refrigerator (Have Refrigerator 1, Have not 0)	0.93212	0	1
Have Telephone line (Have a Telephone line 1, Have not 0)	0.260893	0	1
Have Freezer (Have a Freezer 1, Have not 0)	0.087938	0	1
Have Manual Washing Machine (Have a Manual Washing 1, Have not 0)	0.637221	0	1
Have Air Conditioner (Have Air Conditioner 1, Have not 0)	0.076116	0	1

Notes Number of observations = 7528 for all variables

Table 7: Results of the Final Regression for the PMT

VARIABLES NAME	Final Model
Urban/ Rural	0.0404*** (0.0129)
Household age Squared	6.21e-05*** (4.54e-06)
Household Size Squared	-0.00846*** (0.00135)
Household Employment	0.0728*** (0.0145)
Household Marital Status	
Not Married	0.399*** (0.0495)
Divorced	0.283*** (0.0503)
Widow	0.180*** (0.0201)
Household Education	
Did not Join School	-0.138*** (0.0159)
Joined School not University	-0.0979*** (0.0145)
Apartment or Rural House	0.0716*** (0.0161)
Number of Rooms	0.0365*** (0.00565)
Dwelling Area	0.00129*** (0.000154)
Possession of Dwelling	
Rented Dwelling	-0.155*** (0.0136)
Charity Given	-0.0631*** (0.0129)
Mean of Sewerage	0.0278** (0.0114)
Gas Bottle	-0.0997*** (0.0142)
Dwelling Wall	0.0574*** (0.0191)
Dwelling Kitchen	0.0508*** (0.0147)
Dwelling Floor	0.0729*** (0.0124)
Toilet with Flush	0.0824*** (0.0111)
Garbage Disposal	0.0564*** (0.00992)

Own Private Car	0.354*** (0.0232)
Own Motor Cycle	0.0911*** (0.0157)
Have Refrigerator	0.0454** (0.0204)
Have Telephone Line	0.115*** (0.0112)
Have Freezer	0.101*** (0.0178)
Have Manual Washing Machine	-0.0518*** (0.0109)
Have Air Conditioner	0.138*** (0.0211)
Constant	8.187*** (0.0454)
Observations	7,528
R-squared	0.529

Robust standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 (vce robust command has been used in STATA)

Notes F-Statistics = 217, significant at the 5 % level. R²= 53. Number of observations= 7528. Dependent variable is log per capita expenditure. T-statistics values are significant at the 5 % level

Table 8 presents the statistics for the 24 explanatory variables used in the final model for the lowest 20 percent and the highest 20 percent of the households in the expenditure distribution. A brief discussion of the set of the indicators that are produced by the final regression model for the PMT is provided below

- Urban/Rural: living in urban governorates has a positive association with household expenditure. The average percentage of households living in urban areas increased from 25 percent for the poorest 20 percent to 69 percent for the richest 20 percent. This is consistent with the evidence that the higher the expenditure, the more probability that the households live an urban area (Garrett and Ersado, 2003).
- Household Age and Size: has a very weak relation with expenditure. The household age squared tends to increase from 2189 for the poorest 20 percent to 3170 for the richest quintile. The positive and significant coefficient on the household age squared variable indicates that older heads attain higher levels of expenditure. However, the household size has a negative relation with the expenditure. Poorer households tend to be larger in terms of members. The

average household size squared declined from 36 persons in the poorest quintile to 10 persons in the richest.

- Household Employment: has a positive relation with household expenditure, increasing it 14 times from the poorest to the richest quintiles. The decrease in earning and expenditure can be explained by the correlation between employment and poverty in Egypt (Nassar and Biltagy, 2017).
- Household Marital Status: has a positive relation with the household expenditure. In the richest quintile, there was a higher incidence of being unmarried, divorced or widowed compared to incidences of marriage in the lowest quintile.
- Household Education: has a positive association with household expenditure. Education plays a crucial role in alleviating poverty in Egypt (review Datt and Jolliffe, 1999; Nassar and Biltagy, 2017). Being illiterate and/or not attending any school had a negative relation with household welfare. In the richest quintile group, the probability of being illiterate was lower (33 percent) than in the poorest group (60 percent). In other words, illiteracy rates are higher among poor households.
- Apartment or Rural House: Living in a rural house is common among poor households. The indicator increased from 50 percent in the lowest group to 92 percent in the highest one.
- Number of Rooms and Dwelling Area: both indicators increased from the lowest quintile to the richest one. The number of rooms increased from 2.4 rooms to 3.7 rooms. Dwelling Area did not increase significantly from the lowest to the richest group, as rural houses tend to be built on large plots of land and family sizes are large. The population growth rate is more significant in rural areas (Kelley, Khalifa and El-Khorazaty, 1982; Osman *et al.*, 2016).
- Possession of the Dwelling: Living in a rented dwelling has a negative relationship with the per capita expenditure. When the household expenditure is used as a yardstick to determine welfare, as it is done in many developing countries, rent is one of the variables that affects consumption, especially in Egypt with the absence of housing rental regulations (Ibarra, Mendiratta and Vishwanath, 2017). Ownership of a dwelling increases in the highest quintile in relation to the lowest one, while the opposite is for the dwelling given by the charity.

- **Means of Sewerage:** It is very common in Egypt for poverty to be associated with poor housing conditions and limited access to basic services of water and sanitation service (El-Laithy, 2009). There were marked differences in access to sanitation facilities between the highest and lowest groups, where only around 30 percent of households in the lowest quintile compared to 70 percent in the highest quintile were connected to a public/private sewerage network.
- **Gas Bottle:** The gas bottle is heavily subsidised in Egypt and used for cooking in poor areas, while the better-off households use natural gas for cooking (Mabro, 2006). The percentage of gas bottle usage declined from 93 percent in the poorest quintile to around 58 percent in the richest one. Gas bottle usage has a negative association with the level of expenditure. This indicator reveals that the poorer the household, the more likely it is to use bottled gas for cooking.
- **Dwelling Characteristics:** These include walls, kitchen, floors and bathroom with a flushing toilet. All these indicators were found to be higher in the richest quintile compared to the poorest one. The probability of living in a dwelling with cement walls, having a private kitchen, with ordinary ceramic tiles of and having a toilet with flush were higher in the highest 20 percent of households. The more rich the households were, the more amenities they had and the better their dwelling conditions were.
- **Garbage Disposal:** Disposing of household garbage through a public or private collector had a positive and significant effect on the level of household per capita expenditure. The poorer the area is, the higher the probability that garbage will be dumped in the street or in big street container. The percentage of households having a garbage disposal service increased from 28 percent in the lowest quintile to 70 percent in the highest quintile.
- **Ownership of Assets:** These included a private car, motor cycle, refrigerator, telephone line, freezer, manual washing machine, air conditioner. As expected, they were all positively related to household welfare, except the manual washing machine, which was negatively related. Poorer households tended to have a manual washing machine rather than an automatic one, do not own a car, refrigerator, telephone line, freezer or air conditioner.

Table 8: Statistics of the final set for the Lowest and the Highest Expenditure Egyptian Households

Indicator	Per Capita Expenditure Quintile	
	Quintile 1 (Lowest 20%)	Quintile 5 (Highest 20%)
Urban/Rural	0.258129	0.69103
Household Age Squared	2189.729	3170.72
Household Size Squared	36.46715	10.83189
Household Employment	0.620836	0.713289
Household Marital Status		
Never Married	0.007299	0.045847
Divorced	0.010617	0.031894
Widowed	0.088255	0.264452
Household Education		
Did not Joined the School	0.601194	0.339535
Joined School but not University	0.378627	0.37608
Apartment or Rural House	0.518248	0.922259
Number of Rooms	2.474453	3.769435
Dwelling Area	81.59522	94.15216
Possession of Dwelling		
Rented Dwelling	0.118779	0.21794
Given through Charity	0.181155	0.069103
Mean of Sewage	0.316523	0.768771
Gas Bottle	0.937624	0.58206
Dwelling Wall	0.834108	0.969435
Dwelling Kitchen	0.696749	0.949502
Dwelling Floor	0.486397	0.905648
Toilet with Flush	0.248175	0.805316
Garbage Disposal	0.288653	0.704983
Own Private Car	0.001991	0.196678
Own Motor Cycle	0.051095	0.039834
Have Refrigerator	0.87724	0.960797
Have Telephone line	0.080292	0.541528
Have Freezer	0.021234	0.220598
Have Manual Washing Machine	0.81221	0.413289
Have Air Conditioner	0.022561	0.217276

Source Author's calculations based on the CAPMAS 2013

4.5.3.2 Evaluating the Prediction Performance of the PMT Model

The PMT model predicts a certain amount of welfare-indicators, as measured by per capita expenditure for households. As explained in Section 4.5.3.1 a, since none of the PMT models for targeting, including the model I used, can accurately predict welfare indicators, it is normal to expect inaccuracies in identifying the poor. These predicted indicator levels are used to identify households as eligible or ineligible, based on an eligibility cut-off point. Hence, the accuracy of the model depends on the chosen cut-off point. In this section, I identified the cut-off points by dividing the households based on actual per capita expenditure into five equal parts (quintile), each being 1/5th (20 percent) of the range of the household per capita consumption distribution. I considered a range of five cut-off point scenarios, defined by specific quintiles of the actual per capita expenditure, for instance- the lowest 20th, 40th, and so forth— to assess the accuracy of the model (see Grosh et al., 2008; Grosh and Baker, 1995; Kidd and Wylde, 2011; Ahmed and Bouis 2002). By simulating a range of scenarios corresponding to different cut-off points in comparison to the predicted per capita expenditure, policy-makers could choose a cut-off point and take into account the corresponding errors of inclusion and exclusion that may occur. Moreover, these scenarios show the sensitivity of the model and the associated inclusion and exclusion errors in making targeting decisions to the changes of the cut-off points.

I chose the 2nd quintile as a threshold, which is consistent with the poverty rate in Egypt; also Ahmed and Bouis (2002) used this threshold in their study. According to their study, around 30 percent of the population are poor and I added 10 percent of households who are located just above the poverty line as deserving of the SRC. **Table 9** provides the results of an ex-ante evaluation of the level of accuracy of the model in predicting the poor and non-poor households. I ranked the actual per capita expenditure of sample households in descending order and used the STATA command (xtile) to define the threshold of the five quintiles. I selected the 2nd quintile as a threshold and therefore all the households located in this quintile were defined as poor households in the estimated model. Then, I predicted the per capita expenditure of the sample households from the estimated regression model. The predicted household expenditure represented total scores of the households. With the cut-off point of the 2nd quintile, any household whose predicted per capita expenditure was below this threshold was considered poor. Finally, I assessed the accuracy of the prediction by

comparing the actual poor with the predicted poor households. The results of the assessment presented in **Table 9** suggest that 82 percent of the actual poor households were correctly predicted as poor, while 18 percent of the actual poor households were misidentified as non-poor, in other words, an 18 percent exclusion error. Additionally, 64 percent of the actual non-poor households were correctly predicted as non-poor, while 36 percent of the actual non-poor households were misidentified as poor, representing the inclusion error.

Table 9 Assessing the level of accuracy of the PMT Model in predicting the Poor and Non-Poor

	<i>Predicted as Poor by the Model</i>	<i>Predicted as Non-Poor by the Model</i>
<i>Actually Poor according to the CAPMAS Survey</i>	82 % of the true poor are correctly predicted as poor households	18 % of the true poor are incorrectly predicted as non-poor
<i>Actually Non-Poor according to the CAPMAS Survey</i>	36 % of the non-poor are incorrectly predicted as poor	64 % of the true non-poor are correctly predicted as non-poor

Cut-off Point is the 2nd Quintile

Source Estimated by the Author using the 2013 CAPMAS data and the PMT Model

Using this PMT model in predicting the eligibility of the FSP benefit would result declining decrease in the actual leakage rate of the programme from 78 percent to only 36 percent in case of the theoretical scenario. By contrast, the exclusion rate increased from 9 percent to 18 percent. This trade-off between the errors of inclusion and exclusion is well explained in the targeting literature (Cornia and Stewart, 1993; Ahmed and Bouis, 2002; Coady, Grosh and Hoddinott, 2004a; Coady, Grosh and Hoddinott, 2004b; Castañeda *et al.*, 2005). However, since my focus in this thesis was on reaching the poor, I assessed another scenario using the 3rd quintile as a cut-off point and then checked the exclusion errors. I found that in the 3rd quintile the error of exclusion was less than 1 percent, as shown in **Table 10**. The results of this assessment

indicated that the error of inclusion in such a situation increased twice from 36 percent to 62 percent in order to avoid misidentification of the actual poor by using the PMT.

Table 10 Assessing the level of accuracy of the PMT Model with less than 1 percent Exclusion error

	<i>Predicted as Poor by the Model</i>	<i>Predicted as Non-Poor by the Model</i>
<i>Actually Poor according to the CAPMAS Survey</i>	99 % of the true poor are correctly predicted as poor households	>1% of the true poor are incorrectly predicted as non-poor
<i>Actually Non-Poor according to the CAPMAS Survey</i>	62 % of the non-poor are incorrectly predicted as poor	38 % of the true non-poor are correctly predicted as non-poor

Cut-off Point is the 3rd Quintile

Source Estimated by the Author using the 2013 CAPMAS data and the PMT Model

Using the PMT formula is theoretically expected to improve the ability of the FSP to target poor households. According to the second simulation, the proposed PMT corresponding to the 3rd quintile as a cut-off point might be able to include almost all the poor households in the survey data. This redistribution of the benefit would increase the equity of the FSP and would benefit the poor. At the same time, the government would achieve cost-efficiency for the programme through the decrease in leakage from 78 percent to only 62 percent. This could be done gradually to avoid political unrest in the society. For instance, the government could target excluding the richest households in the 5th quintile who are benefiting from the programme, then target the non-poor in the 4th quintile until the programme only serves the 3rd quintile and below. This method could improve the targeting outcomes if the required institutional capacities and the implementers' skills are found.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has explained how Egypt as a middle lower income country suffers from macroeconomic imbalances, devaluation of its currency and high inflation rates, particularly a high incidence of poverty that continues to be a major challenge for the government. This challenge consists of protecting poor and vulnerable households need protection through establishing and maintaining effective SSNPs. I have explained that the FSP plays an important role as a SSNP, especially for poor households. However, continuous spending on the FSP has failed to improve targeting outcomes. Therefore, the programme's effectiveness in terms of how much of the benefit actually reaches the poor has become a matter of grave concern and is the focus of this investigation.

I have discussed the historical evolution of the FSP from World War II, showing how the programme of providing food subsidies has transformed from one period to another, depending upon the dominant ideologies. Initially, the government decided to introduce rationing with the aim of creating a social safety net to manage the price increases and scarcity of resources as a result of the war. Rationing continued until 1950s due to the existence of high food self-sufficiency rates, higher growth rates of GDP than of domestic consumption and low inflation rates. In 1952 and with the revolution, President Nasser came to power with the ideology of a centrally controlled economy in which the government interfered extensively in food production and distribution. The FSP's objective was mainly ensuring social equity and income distribution. However, the system results were not as expected. In 1970, President Sadat's regime opened up the Egyptian economy to the free market economy, moving closer to the West. A package of economic reforms named "Open-Door Policy" were offered by the IMF with the aim of reducing the role of the state and tackling the expansion of the FSP. The government tried to reduce the FSP but that decision was quickly rescinded in the face of public protest. In 1982, the FSP continued to expand but was subjected to a new wave of reforms imposed by the World Bank together with the IMF as a condition of providing aid. The objective was to move gradually towards targeting low income households more effectively in order to reduce poverty. The reforms were quietly and successfully implemented, aided by a certain degree of political repression at that time that stifled social disruption. However, in the 2000s the economy continued to suffer from high levels of poverty, and was seen as

contributing to the 2011 revolution, whose defining slogan was '*Bread, freedom and social justice*'.

In 2013/2014 the government introduced the current system that is composed of subsidised bread and commodities to the beneficiaries. I have shown that approximately 77 per cent of the population receive the programme's benefits, yet only 30 percent of these households are classified as poor. Therefore, an investigation of the FSP's targeting performance is required. The FSP eligibility criteria are very loose and difficult to assess. I focused the analysis on the specified programme objective: measures of poverty. I conducted a macro-level and meso-level analysis and then built a PMT for targeting the FSP. First, the macro-level analysis showed that the programme suffers from mis-targeting, indicating that efforts at reforming the programme need to be directed at more effective identification of the poor. Second, the meso-level analysis offered further insights into mis-targeting by investigating whether there were significant distribution differences in inclusion and exclusion errors between rural and urban areas and between the governorates themselves. The findings showed no significant difference in percentages of inclusion or exclusion errors between rural and urban areas, suggesting that the programme operates in a fairly universal manner across regions and governorates. Among the governorates, Cairo recorded the highest inclusion error rate of 82 percent, while Alexandria recorded the highest exclusion rate. However, errors of inclusion and exclusion rates are very close between the highest and other governorates, indicating that errors of inclusion and exclusion are significant in all the governorates.

Due to these mis-targeting errors, I constructed a PMT using the CAPMAS survey with the aim of better identification of the FSP's beneficiaries. According to the PMT simulation, the proposed model would be able to achieve cost-effectiveness by including all the poor households and by reducing leakage from 78 percent to only 62 percent. However, in reality, the question remains whether the PMT as a preferred option now for the government to implement, is feasible, given that PMTs are embedded within a neoliberal paradigm, and therefore always prioritises lowering the spending on SSNPs. As the World Bank (2015) study suggests, the forces pushing for better targeting tend to be motivated by the imperative to cut entitlement bills and ensure financial sustainability than by a commitment to helping the poor. Therefore, a number of questions need to be explored regarding institutional capacity, governance,

accountability, decentralisation and grievance mechanisms. I take these themes forward in the next chapter.

Chapter 5 – The Design and Administration of the FSP: An epitome of NPM, Governance and Post-NPM Principles?

5.1 Introduction

High inflation in the 1970s, increased costs of welfare regimes, the failure of centrally planned economies, globalisation and the rapid emergence of new technologies could be argued to be the significant factors that led to a shift in the role of governments in the 1980s and the emergence of the NPM as discussed in Chapter Two, Section 2.3. Therefore, the role of the state began to shift from being entirely responsible for providing public services to involving the private sector and adopting pro-market strategies. As has already been discussed, this was an ideological shift that international organisations promoted. For example, the World Bank stated that the state should not be the sole provider, arguing that there was a growing ‘recognition that in many countries monopoly public providers of infrastructure, social services, and other goods and services are unlikely to do a good job. At the same time, technological and organisational innovations have created new opportunities for competitive, private providers in activities hitherto confined to the public sector. To take advantage of these new opportunities and better allocate scarce public capability governments are beginning to separate the financing of infrastructure and services from its delivery, and to unbundle the competitive segments of utility markets from the monopoly segments’ (1997, p.4).

Different mainstream reforms of targeting SSNPs have embraced the neo-liberal agenda of the international organisations that promoted the main components of the NPM, as discussed in Chapter Two, Section 2.3.2 and the use of ICT, as discussed in Chapter One, Section 1.2, without taking into account different national

contexts. Neo-liberalism exerted pressure on governments to curb expansion and shift towards privatisation (Hood, 1991). Most developing countries have accepted externally influenced reforms of public service delivery because they needed the associated finances to face the major macroeconomic imbalances and maintain national stability (Andrews, 2013). This then has created a gap between the one fits all model and the local context of each country. As discussed earlier in Chapter Four, in 2014, a significant reform for the FSP was rolled out firstly, by shifting from an input-based to output-based subsidy and secondly, by using ICT in an attempt to reach the poor and decrease benefit waste (Kamal, 2015). Output-based systems have been advocated by the World Bank to link the delivery of public services to targeted performance-related subsidies (World Bank, 2005). This reveals how the Egyptian government has followed one of the core principals of the NPM approach promoted by the international organisations in reforming the FSP. In this approach, the focus has shifted from input and process to outcome and results (Fatemi and Behmanesh, 2012; Robinson, 2015). Hence, key questions have been raised in this study about how the public administration discourse links to the FSP programme. Therefore, it is important to understand the public administration of the FSP and the institutional capacity concerns in terms of receiving application requests from both beneficiaries and new applicants and processing the FSP enrolment schemes.

This chapter discusses the principal institutions, agencies and actors that implement, administer and monitor the process of enrolment. Moreover, it explores the administrative and technical capacity involved in implementing, administering and assessing targeting schemes. As a result, the study focuses on the actors who play a key role in the administration and targeting mechanisms - more specifically, in the Ration Offices- of the FSP entitlements. Also, it examines how the core principle of NPM theory and governance is related to the broad issues of FSP implementation in Egypt. It is argued that until now, the idea of designing or reforming food subsidies in Egypt has not been properly connected to the realities of implementation, which in turn influences the programme's outcomes. Hence, the recurrent calls for social, economic and political restructuring of the FSP. Due to this disjuncture, far-reaching reforms to governance, institutional capacity and calls for the reform of public management measures have continued to be ineffective. This chapter suggests that for the FSP in a developing country like Egypt, the pivotal challenges, are governance and

institutional capacity, and how to build a design that can feed back and be connected into its implementation.

“If we could first know where we are and where we are heading to, we could better judge what to do and how to do it” (Abraham Lincoln)

This chapter is organised as follows: the first section presents the design of the FSP and the various actors involved in the system. It includes a description of the administrative decentralisation from the strategic to the operational level. It then describes how the FSP is supposed to function in theory, followed by an exploration of the grass-roots realities of FSP implementation and how this affects the targeting outcomes of the programme. As part of this exploration, qualitative analysis is used to assess the current targeting of Egypt’s FSP in terms of factors that might contribute to the quantitative measures of inclusion and exclusion errors. In doing so, two broad themes are explored: The first is the management and governance of the system, which includes the various actors of the FSP, the targeting mechanisms in practice, the application process and the enrolment of beneficiaries, the quota allocation, the accountability of the financial process, and the geographical distribution of the administrative system; the second theme is the new institutional economics that emphasises pro-market and competition and includes contracting-out to the private sector.

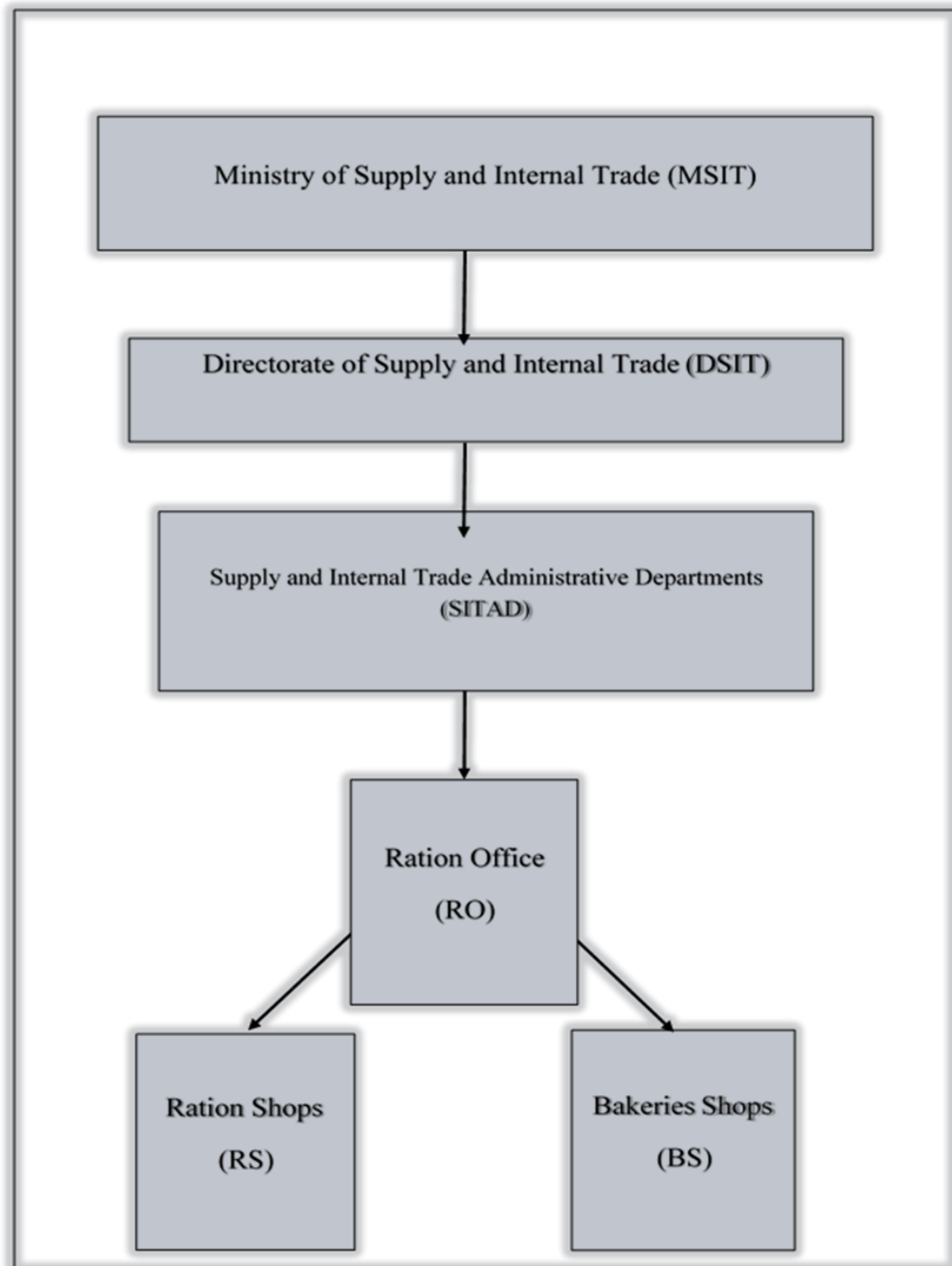
5.2 Actors of the Design and Administration Taxonomy of the FSP

Like in most countries, the general administrative structure of the Egyptian government is complex and overlapping. It encompasses thirty four ministries that includes two hundred thirty four independent agencies of public purposes, twenty three entities and a number of local units. The local administrative units are divided into twenty seven governorates and three hundred and twenty three service directorates. The complex structure of public administration in Egypt is key to understanding the status quo. The structure is large with many over-lapping layers, posing numerous institutional and governance challenges that reinforce the urgent calls for public service administrative reforms. Most of the governmental entities are characterised by a lack of co-ordination in the bureaucratic system, distortion and organisational conflict (Barsoum, 2017) .

The main six bodies that regulate the FSP, are organised hierarchically as follows: the Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade (MSIT); Directorates of Supply and Internal Trade (DSIT); Supply and Internal Trade Administrative Department (SITAD); Ration Offices (ROs); Ration Shops (RSs); and Bakeries (BSs), as shown in *Diagram 5*. The most powerful legal entity is the MSIT, responsible for distributing the benefits of the FSP. It inspects and supervises the twenty-seven Directorates across the twenty-seven governorates. Every Directorate oversees a group of Administrative Departments located in the neighbourhoods within each governorate. Within each governorate, every neighbourhood has an Administrative Department empowered by the MSIT to supervise several ROs. The Administrative Departments are authorised to manage and inspect the ROs, RSs and BSs. The Ration Offices are responsible for processing the FSP enrolment applications and inspect several RSs and BSs. The Ration Shops are divided into two kinds, private and public outlets. The private RSs are licensed by the MSIT to receive subsidised commodities from the wholesale companies. The RSs are outlets that have a longstanding arrangement of providing beneficiaries with their monthly allowance of commodities. In the 27 governorates across Egypt, according to MSIT (August, 2016),monthly report, there are 27 DSITs that encompass 296 SITADs, supervising 1419 ROs, 30198 RSs and 26511 BSs. This

structure raises several questions with regards to design and implementation of the FSP, from strategic to operational levels.

Diagram 5: Bureaucratic Hierarchal Structure of the FSP system



Source: Researcher's notes and Cairo DSIT available at
(<http://www.cairo.gov.eg/moderyat/DispHaykal.aspx?ID=10>)

5.3 Administrative Decentralisation from Strategic to Operational Level

The MSIT is the key government agency and representative in charge of issuing various decrees regarding administrating targeting and subsidies in Egypt. It plays a key role in the functioning of the criteria set for the beneficiaries' requests, for receiving and enrolling new application requests. As shown in *Diagram 6*, the decrees are distributed from the MSIT to all the DSITs across the twenty-seven governorates. Every DSIT gives out ministerial decrees to all the SITAD in every neighbourhood within each governorate. Each RO receives these decrees and puts them into practice. In some governorates, the ROs process all the application requests and supervise both the RSs and BSs, while in others, ROs supervise the RSs while SITAD supervises the BSs. Therefore, not all RO managers have the same job responsibilities across different governorates. This administrative bureaucratic structure looks like the Weberian model in the more traditional sense of public sector organisations, as discussed in this chapter, Section 5.1. Understanding the RO's role is central to understanding the targeting mechanism as it is considered the first link in the chain of processing and implementing FSP entitlements.

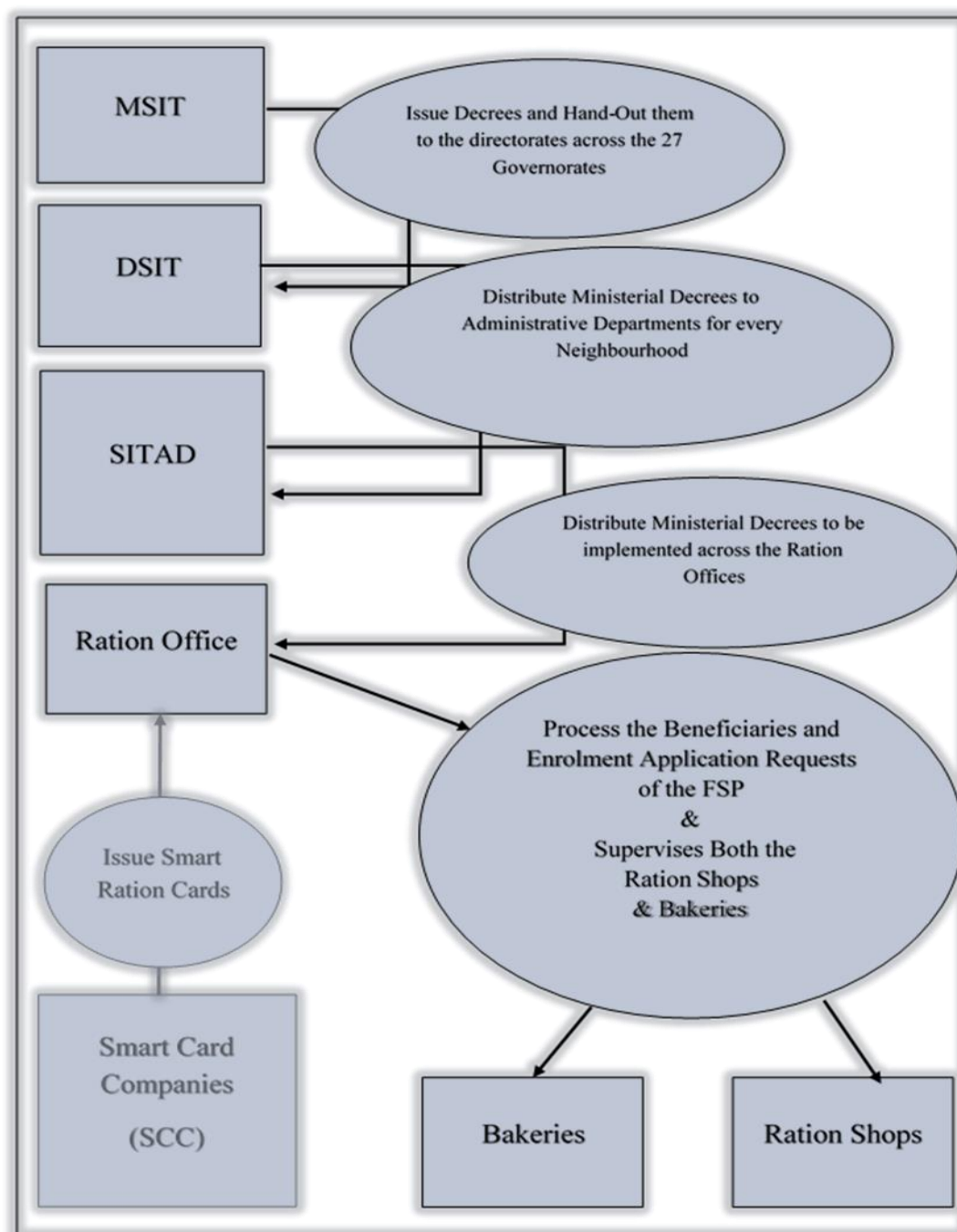
In 2013, as part of consolidating the social safety net system advocated by the World Bank, , the MSIT, as many other government organisations in developing countries, introduced SRCs issued by two different Smart Card Companies (SCCs). The system is an example a private- public partnership to develop and maintain the system, and the government plays a stewardship and financial role (Abdalla and Al-Shawarby, 2018). This is where there is a break with traditional Weberian structures in that it is underpinned by the notion that a technical fix will be the effective method of reaching the poor, in that SCCs, constitute a key part of the targeting mechanism operations. These are private sector companies appointed by the MSIT to issue SRCs for each governorate. In response to the government initiative, these companies have established a software programme to automate the FSP benefit so that beneficiaries get their benefits by using the SRC.

In 2014, the MSIT decided to implement and use SRC technology to automate the FSP system. One SCC operates its software programme in sixteen governorates,

including Cairo, while another is active operating in eleven governorates, including Alexandria. There are points of sale (POS) terminals, using card machines installed) in all RSs and BSs. This POS records the time and place where any transaction is completed RS owner can calculate the outstanding amount for each beneficiary by inserting the SRC into the card machine. At the RS, the beneficiary makes a payment to the owner in exchange for ration commodities, as stated by the MSIT LE0.7 (8 cent) per transaction, which represents a fixed amount as commission for their efforts. After receiving payment, the RS is supposed to issue a printed coupon/receipt for the transaction. For the BS, the SCC operates an automatised distribution system for subsidised bread across all the governorates. The system uses POS terminals at all BS points across Egypt and the loaves are distributed through using the SRCs. The system is designed to distribute the benefit among the beneficiaries with the SRCs and using the beneficiaries' personal identification number (PIN). Every beneficiary is required to insert their PIN in the card machine, without showing it to the baker or anyone else. So as the bakers can balance their accounts, they pay the full price for the flour and then obtain their cash subsidy daily, after reporting back on the number of loaves of bread sold, reflecting FSP's output-based approach.

Generally, consumption of subsidised bread is high due to the Egyptians' dietary customs but also, purchase more bread than they need, feeding the leftovers to their animals (World Bank, 2010; Breisinger *et al.*, 2013; Ramadan, 2015). To reduce the consumption of bread, the government created an incentive points-system in 2014, called Point of Redemption. The programme seeks to change consumer behaviour and build a new social contract by rewarding beneficiaries of the subsidised bread programme who hold the SRCs. Beneficiaries who do not fully use their daily bread quota can have their unused bread loaves turned into points exchangeable for other more than fifty other commodities (including food products such as sugar, oil, rice, macaroni, butter, tea, beans, chicken, meat, fish, and dairy products and non-food products such as detergents) at their RSs, as discussed in Chapter Four, Section 4.4.

Diagram 6: Procedures of the Targeting Mechanisms from Strategic to Operational Level

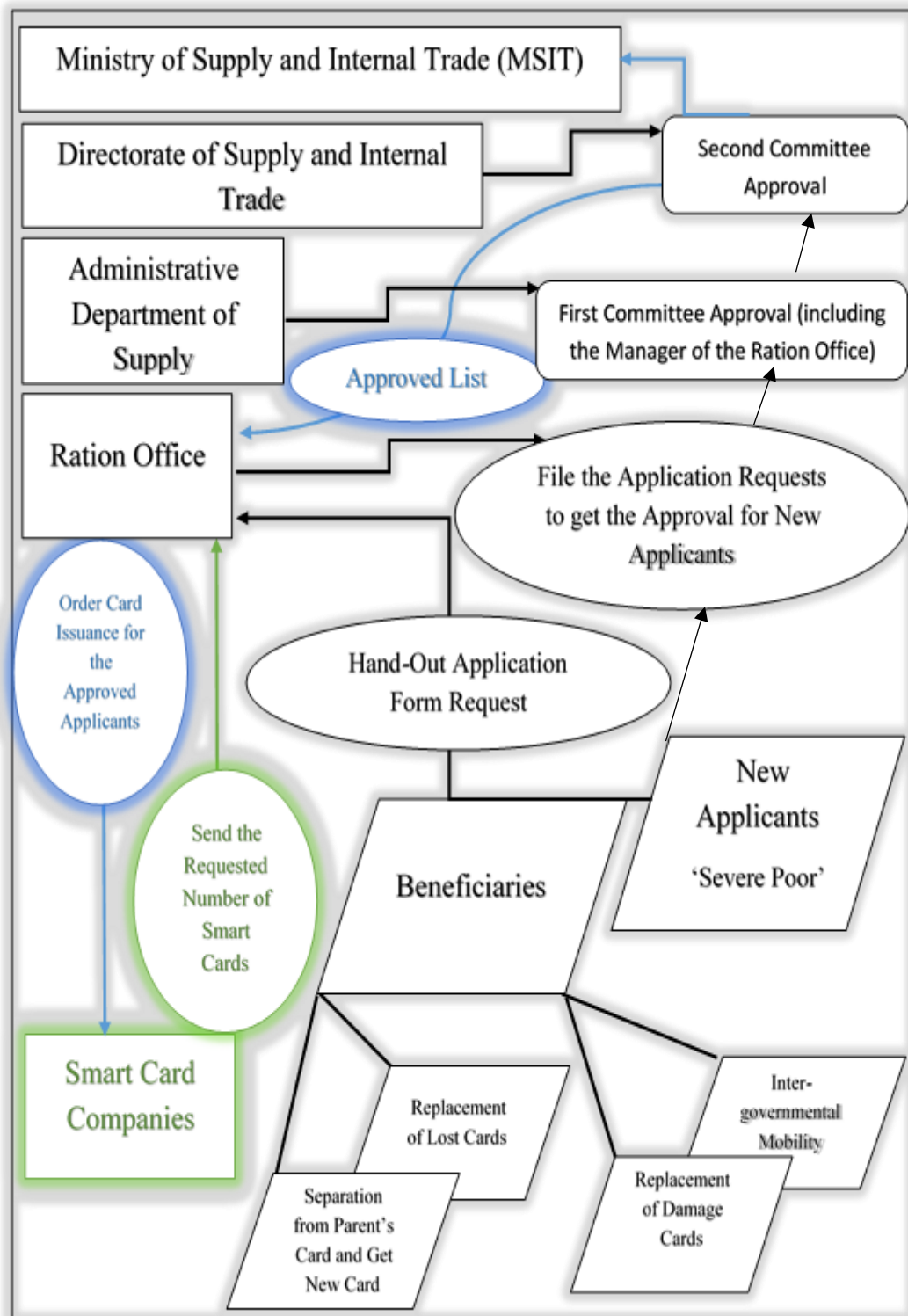


Source: Researcher's notes and Data Analysis

5.4 FSP Entitlement: Overview

This section discusses the FSP policy as it is intended to work- an idealised version. The RO receives thousands of applicant requests from both the current beneficiaries and new applicants. The ROs are powerful agents of implementation as the targeting mechanism starts with, through collecting and classifying these requests. Existing beneficiaries who visit the RO are classified into four types, as shown in *Diagram 7*. The first is called ‘Separation from Parent’s Card’ and involves those who are beneficiaries through their parents’ cards who wish to apply for their own new SRC. The second type of request is for a ‘Replacement for Lost Cards’. When a beneficiary loses the card, s/he has to file a report at the nearest police office, then take this report and a copy of their national ID number and file an application request for a replacement SRC. The third request type is ‘Replacement for Damage’ and is self-explanatory. The final type is an ‘Inter-Governmental Mobility Arrivals’ application, submitted by beneficiaries who move from one governorate to another and who are required to register at their new local RO. Requests are classified and recorded in the four ledgers inside the office, the idea being that they are then recorded on the SCC software programme inside the RO and RO managers send these to the SCCs. It is the SCCs’ task to verify the files received with the data-entry records and to issue the corresponding SRCs. Requests from new applicants who have never been enrolled before in the FSP are sent to the SITAD. In this case, a committee, comprising the RO manager, a number of inspectors and the head of the SITAD, verifies all these requests. After the first approval is granted, a second committee is held at the DSIT, including a number of staff members and the head of the DSIT who then issues the final approval. Sheets with the approved names are sent with a cover letter to the RO, these sheets are passed on to the SCCs, who are under instruction to issue the approved SRCs and hands them to the RO where they are distributed to the new beneficiaries.

Diagram 7: Targeting Mechanism as a Bureaucratic Centralised Process more than a Verification Process



Source: Researcher's notes and Data Analysis

5.5 FSP Entitlement in Practice

Having described how the process is supposed to work in the previous section, in this section I look at the potential errors that can arise due to the complexity of these arrangements are. It is only fair to point out that the process, including the requirement for two committees, is in direct response to the World Bank and IMF's reform agenda that is mainly concerned with good governance and how to improve trust. So this section asks: is there any better way to do so? And to what extent is it these complexities that affect the targeting outcomes of the FSP?

‘The food subsidy has advantages, but there is urgent need to start the reform process. In spite of several positive aspects of the food subsidy system in Egypt, mainly its significant poverty reduction impact, the study provides hard evidence on the large losses in the subsidy bill, whether in terms of leakages to non-intended beneficiaries or benefits received by non-needy groups. International experience shows that Egypt's system is not different from universal subsidies and ration programs all over the world. They are all vulnerable to leakages, suffer from errors of inclusion and of exclusion, and are biased toward urban populations. Therefore, Egypt should benefit from other countries “good practices”, on which there is a great deal of consensus’
(World Bank, 2010, p.iii).

This study conducted by the World Bank (2010) ended with a set of recommendation policies aimed at improving targeting outcomes of the FSP. A number of reforms were proposed including: the elimination of or more effective targeting of subsidies; wholesale reorganisation of the system; drastic changes to the types of commodities distributed and populations covered; replacement by entirely different programs. Recommended policy options concentrated on two specific issues: reducing system leakages and narrowing the coverage of the existing system. In order to reduce system leakages, four reforms were introduced. Firstly, Baladi bread subsidies were moved to the end of the supply chain, in other words, an output-based approach was introduced. This potentially made the distribution chain shorter and

reduced the number of transactions, thereby creating fewer for leakage. It was also intended to eliminate all incentives for agents to leak flour to the black market. Secondly, SRCs were introduced to enable beneficiaries to get their own benefits. The claim was that large savings would be made through reducing quantities of subsidised foods. Thirdly, food subsidies were to be replaced by a monthly food allowance, as a move towards phasing out the system altogether. Lastly, leakage and fraud were to be prevented by the introduction of effective institutional monitoring and evaluation (M&E) throughout the system.

To narrow coverage, firstly, geographical targeting should be introduced in the FSP distribution. In other words, the study recommended that subsidies should be allocated geographically, in accordance with levels of poverty in individual governorates. Secondly, an income-based assistance programme for the poor was recommended, and three possible targeting methods put forward: means test, proxy means and community-based. The final recommendation was that Egypt should adopt PMT to reach the poor, with information updated and brought together in a national framework with appropriate administrative systems in place. The SRC was proposed as the most effective way to improve targeting, while self-targeting of the FSP benefit using distribution outlets was proposed for better geographic targeting to neighbourhoods. Also, the report recommended using the same targeting system for a number of SSNPs and also different targeting methods for a single SSNP, to ensure good cost-effectiveness. The study emphasised that international experience showed that such reforms can result in economies of scale and in an integrated package of support for poor households that may be more effective in moving these households out of poverty. Lastly, the report, drawing on CAPMAS data 2008, argued that the need to reform the FSP was urgent due to high leakage and unduly wide coverage (World Bank, 2010).

The World Bank and IMF (see World Bank, 2000, 2010, 2015a, 2015c; IMF, 2017) have argued that their public sector reforms to SSNPs are pro-poor and progressive. However, it is worth considering the possibility that these selective policies imposed by the World Bank and the IMF can fail in their stated objectives. This section describes the FSP implementation process at grass roots level and explores how these reforms proposed by the World Bank and IMF have in practice affected the targeting outcomes of the programme. Information gathered from

previous research, presented in Chapter Two, Section 2.3, and data gathered in the field about the managerial and governance process of the entitlement mechanisms and private-contracting, suggest major weaknesses in the targeting process. By better understanding the role of all relevant actors, it is easier to understand the interest dynamics and inter relationships that characterise this process.

5.6 Implementing the FSP

If the structure is in theory complex, a further set of complexities are involved in implementing the FSP. Understanding these grassroots realities of public administration helps to explain the underlying causes of exclusion and inclusion errors. While it is difficult to know what proportion of such errors occur as a result of implementation practices, understanding the FSP in practice can be significant to these errors.

According to Larbi, (2003), the different themes and concepts of the NPM can be categorised into two broad stands. The first strand falls under governance and management at government level, which includes decentralisation and flexible organisational structures. The second strand includes ideas about new institutional economics and its pro-market emphasis on competition through contracting out to the private sector, underpinned by the rationale that this will promote efficient and effective service delivery. Thus, administrative decentralisation involves redistributing the responsibility, authority and financial accountability for providing and delivering public services in government units, while in private contracting, competitors bid to be providers of public services. What is clear is that no policy can be implemented ‘perfectly’ so that exploring administrative decentralisation and private contracting as applied to a specific programme, in this case FSP, can provide insights about what happens to the programme through implementation and how this might affect targeting outcomes. This section analyses the implementation practices using a top-down approach, looking at how decentralisation and private contracting shape the targeting mechanism inside the RO, as the place where the application process begins.

5.6.1 FSP Administrative Decentralisation in Practice

Administrative decentralisation involves the redistribution of responsibility for providing public services, and associated financial resources and authority to different levels of government. Within the NPM and governance policies, this means the transferal of different responsibilities from central government to field units of government agencies, subordinate levels of government, regional or local units to achieve the policy objective (Kalimullah, Alam and Nour, 2012). Consequently, decentralisation creates more opportunities by the delegation and segregation of responsibilities to more specialised constituencies (for instance, DSIT, SITAD, and ROs), if particular phases are taken to build local managerial and technical capacity. Therefore, decentralisation inevitably disperses influence, both institutionally and geographically. This section tries to understand how the FSP's institutional targeting mechanisms and the decentralisation process work in practice in providing the service and how they affect the programme's targeting outcomes. Moreover, it looks at the geographical distribution of different organisational units and how effective they are in undertaking the services delegated to them within the NPM and governance domain. The section is further divided into two sub-themes: bureaucratic structure and the geographical administrative system of FSP allocation.

5.6.1.1 Bureaucratic Structure of the FSP

Rather than just relying on policy documents and information obtained from officials, the following sections will start to draw more substantively on my qualitative fieldwork data, including understanding the implementation process of the targeting mechanism, the decentralisation process, quota allocation and financial accountability. Understanding the targeting process of the FSP from policy to practice helps to identify problems and potential areas for improvement, with the aim of reducing inclusion and exclusion errors and achieving the programme's main objective and vision of reaching the poor.

5.6.1.1.1 Application Request Process and Targeting Mechanism

In the FSP targeted scheme, household eligibility is based on a number of eligibility criteria. The application requests are received by the RO from either the new applicants or current beneficiaries as shown in *Diagram 7*. The new applicants ‘Primary Care Categories’ are eligible if they fulfil the eligibility criteria (see targeting criteria in Annex Table A1). From the qualitative interviews in the three governorates, most interviewees confirm that new applicants may have to wait long for the delivery of a SRC:

‘New applicants may wait one or more year to receive SCs. If the applicant is poor then it is a very difficult to keep visiting us for such long period of time. Especially they can wait long time in the queue’

(Interview with Ration Office 6, Cairo, May 2016).

Other similar quotes refer to the complexity of the process and the lack of coordination between different governmental bodies that can mean that householders spend hours queuing in front of ROs (more details are found in Chapter Six). This is due to the complexity of vetting procedures that include two committees (referred to in the previous section). However, both these committees rely on the presented documents and poor households may give up due to the long bureaucratic procedures or other factors in the system. Furthermore, these categories are either open to abuse or outdated. For instance, being unemployed makes you eligible for the benefit so that householders working in the informal sector may have high informal wages and yet still be classified as unemployed, and thus can enrol in the system. The underground economy in Egypt in 2014 was estimated to be substantial, at least 37 percent of the overall economy (Elshamy, 2015; Subrahmanyam, 2016). As a manager of a RO told me:

‘...there is another eligible criteria, who are unemployed, this criteria is open to abuse as a lot of workers, we know, are working in the informal sector and they can earn even more than the threshold margin of LE1500 (\$169)’

(Interview with Ration Office 2, Alexandria, July 2016).

These households sometimes also own a number of assets. Moreover, some IDs, do not show any profession so they can easily access the benefit as they are classified as unemployed, even if they do work:

‘The households whose national IDs do not show any profession, they can get a paper from the Ministry of Social Solidarity stating that they deserve the benefit from the FSP’

(Interview with Ration Office 8, Cairo, June 2016).

Some RO employees and managers stated that the criteria are outdated. For example, a RO manager argued that

‘The criteria for those who are newly applied to the FSP should be revised and the margin of being enrolled in the programme should be higher than LE1200 (\$135) per month for retired people and LE1500 (\$169) for the employees in the public sector. The inflation is very high in the country and we should take this fact into consideration’

(Interview with Ration Office 9, Cairo, June 2016).

These thresholds have been in use since 2005 and have never been indexed to inflation and yet inflation has increased from 7.7 in 2005/2006 to around 30 percent in 2017 (discussed earlier in Chapter Four, Section 4.2). Moreover, according to the Central Bank of Egypt, the official exchange rate has depreciated from LE7 in 2005 to LE17 in 2018 against the US\$. This means that the percentage of the depreciation is around 148 percent. Therefore, if food subsidies threshold has remained constant since 2005 the value of the threshold would have depreciated from US\$ 357 in 2005 to US\$ 147 in 2018, representing a reduction of 59 percent. This restricting criteria for new applicants shows the reality gap of the enrolment process. Clearly, some of the targeting criteria for new applicants are in urgent need of being reviewed.

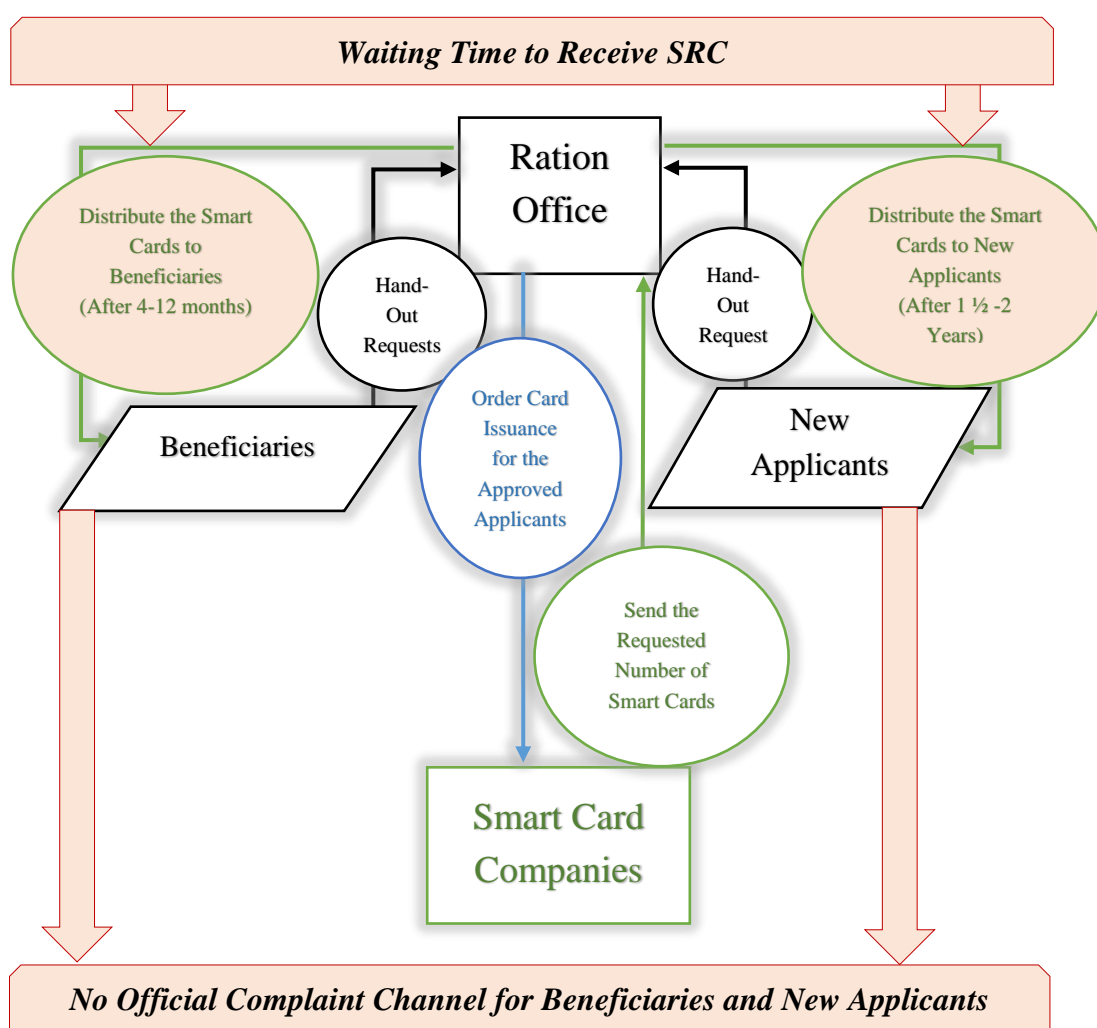
For current beneficiaries as shown in the left part of *Diagram 8*, there are four types of requests as illustrated in the previous section. With regards to the first type, ‘Separation from Parent’s Card’, a manager of one RO stated that:

‘It may take from one to six months to obtain SRC for the ‘Separation from Parent’s Card’ requests’

(Interview with Ration Office 7, Assuit, November 2016).

All the managers of the ROs, across the three governorates, confirmed that the issuance of a new SRC for the existing beneficiaries could take between four to twelve months to obtain their SRCs. The time for issuing an SRC to a new applicant is far longer.

Diagram 8: Links between the Bureaucratic Process and the Targeting Mechanism



Source Researcher’s notes and Data Analysis

Of these two types of applicants, the first type does not have to prove eligibility and can obtain a new SRC without any financial verification. Since they are already being enrolled, all be it through their parents, the system gives them the right to request a separate card and then register their family members. Therefore, all current

beneficiaries' sons, daughters, their husbands, wives, granddaughters and grandsons, automatically have the right to benefit from the current FSP system, even if they are rich households. An employee in one of the RO discusses how this system is open to abuse:

'FSP is opened to abuse by the current beneficiaries who request separation from their parent's card and then add their family members after getting married without any verification for their financial or economic status. FSP is like an automatic inherited system'

(Interview in Ration Office 2, Assuit, October 2016).

Another manager pointed out that this was the largest type of application:

'We received eighty percent of the applications' requests from the category 'Separation from Parent's Card', compared to the other categories'

(Interview in Ration Office 5, Alexandria, August 2016).

Another manager described particular households that illustrates the resulting discrepancy:

'I met a beneficiary that have been enrolled in the FSP from long time ago and he was requesting 'Separation'. He was saying that he has a business and a pharmacy. He was telling us that he earns LE6000 per day (US\$676) and he just has this SRC because his wife wanted a SRC like everyone in the family'

(Interview with Ration Office 4, Cairo, May 2016).

Thus, once households are registered, all their family members can apply without the need to verify or recertification of their eligibility. The FSP has therefore become an inherited benefit or acquired right, a clear example of leakage.

Interviewees across the three governorates noted that the 'Separation from Parent's Card' requests are the largest proportion they receive in comparison to other requests. The second and third most numerous requests are 'Replacement for Loss Cards' and 'Replacement for Damage'. An employee in a RO expressed surprise at the length of time it takes to respond to such requests:

‘I am not quite sure why a current beneficiary whose data on the system and is enrolled in the FSP, waits for four months without the monthly allowance. Where does this allowance then go? It is very surprising for me’

(Interview with Ration Office 6, Alexandria, August 2016).

She explained that beneficiaries complain about the length of time they wait without receiving their daily bread quota and monthly commodities allowance. Furthermore, monthly allowances and daily bread quotas for these current beneficiaries are not transparent and most managers claimed that they are subject to manipulation and corruption by both the RSs and BSs, together with some ROs. There have been many media reports on managers at different ROs across the governorates holding onto SRCs for months, partnering with RSs and BSs to swipe those SRCs using the POS for virtual purchase transactions and dividing the robbed public money between them (El-Fagr News, 2015; Youm7 Newspaper, 2017, 2018; Al-Arabya News, 2018; El-Dostor, 2018).

Lastly, ‘Inter-Governmental Mobility Arrivals’ requests are received from beneficiaries who move from one governorate to other. If the beneficiary moves to a governorate where its SCC is different from the one s/he already have the registration at , then the beneficiary may wait one year or more to get a SRC. This will be explained in detail as part of the discussion about private contracting. Therefore, a lot of beneficiaries complain about the lack of co-ordination within the MSIT vision. Moreover, as shown in *Diagram 8*, there is no official channel of complaint. I did not observe a single official complaint record in any RO I visited. Instead, as the red arrows in *Diagram 8* show, householders visit many places to make verbal complaints. All managers stated that there is no complaint mechanism.

Application requests and the targeting mechanism process show targeting criteria are outdated and lack of governance and control, makes them open to abuse. Through the disjuncture between the policy objective and its implementation, the FSP has become an inherited benefit or acquired right for non-poor households. Due to the extensive bureaucratic procedures, lack of co-ordination and co-operation of the whole targeting system, current beneficiaries wait long periods of time for an SRC, even when their registration information is already recorded on the system. This raises a central question: does the benefit truly reach the beneficiaries, even if it is considered

as leakage to non-poor household? The system is clearly at high risk of corruption and manipulation to the benefit of intermediary chains of administration inside the FSP. Finally, the lack of a formal complaints channel questions the government's willingness to improve service delivery.

5.6.1.1.2 Process of Decentralisation

As shown in *Diagram 8* a RO's responsibility is simply to collect requests from new applicants and existing beneficiaries. A RO manager describes the process in detail:

'We only collect the official required documents for each application request. A first committee will be conducted at the SITAD to evaluate and decide whether this applicant is eligible or not by verifying if the file documents are correct. After granting the acceptance, a cover letter with a copy of the accepted files will be sent to the DSIT. A second committee will be conducted at DSIT for further higher level verification. Once the second committee accept the applications, a copy of this acceptance, including the number of the individuals for each household to be enrolled in the FSP, is sent to the DSIT. This acceptance letter from the DSIT is the link between the RO and the SCC to issue the SRCs'

(Interview with Ration Office 1, Cairo, April 2016).

This role to collect and file application illustrates that the RO's function can be classified as a deconcentration of the decision-making process, which is considered to be the weakest form of decentralisation. Deconcentration is frequently defined in terms of responsibilities and function, for example 'One of administrative decentralisation which redistributes decision-making authority and financial and management responsibility among levels of the central government; there is no real transfer of authority between levels of government' (Gregersen *et al.*, 2004, p.4). Hence, ROs have a limited function and do not have any authority to contribute to decision-making or even to give feedback regarding to the enrolment process. It is not only the ROs who solely rely on presented documents. A key DSIT informant in Alexandria stated that

‘As we are considered as a second committee, the verification process is to check whether the required documents are in the file or not’

(Interview with key-informant, Alexandria, July 2016).

Before the interview, there was a staff member in the committee room verifying requests. He introduced himself and told me he was verifying some SRC requests and proceeded with the task while I interviewed the key informant. I observed a pile of files in front of him; he opened each file and checked if all the required documents existed in each file or not then signed it off. This verification of requests is required for applications, as aforementioned. However, this level of verification does not differ much from the one that is carried out in the SITAD.

One of the limitations of the entire enrolment process is the heavy reliance on presented documents. More than twenty RO managers expressed their anger about the deconcentration of the decentralisation of the FSP and their lack of power and authority or even access to a feedback mechanism in the enrolment process. They have pointed out that most employees in each neighbourhood are very aware of the financial circumstances of individual households, as this is easily known and is observable. They argue that they should have at least limited power to verify information or filter beneficiaries by reporting to higher authority for further verification of those beneficiaries who should clearly not be enrolled in the programme. As one RO manager reports:

‘We know that some merchants/owners for a business have SRCs. These businessmen had been enrolled long time ago before they opened their own businesses. The problem is that we all knew they should not benefit from the FSP. However, by following the MSIT decrees, they are eligible’

(Interview with Ration Office 2, Cairo, April 2016).

Another RO employee points out that

‘It is not logic an owner for a shop, any business or a manager at the bank to have a SRC and those poor households who should be enrolled in the FSP do not have. Poor households cannot afford the private costs (visiting many times

the office due to the delays of handling the SRCs) this may lead that the poor household applicant prefer not to pay more cost and at the end won't have a SRC'

(Interview with Ration Office 1, Alexandria, July 2016).

These comments emphasised the inflexibility of the FSP-static and rigid. Managers living in particular neighborhoods can easily observe a household's financial circumstances but there is no channel through which an official letter can be sent to the regional government highlighting these anomalies and no decree that allows RO managers to make comments regarding eligibility. Although RO managers are included in the first committee, there is no decree or guidelines stating their function or role in verifying eligibility beyond checking the documents presented by the householder, for example through a home visit. Thus the FSP as a bureaucratic system seems to be static and centralised, rather than being dynamic, and is characterised by many loopholes. In other words, the FSP system can be described as being in a state of decentralisation rather than in the process of becoming so. The inability of managers to feed back into the system contributes to this decentralised rigidity (see Fesler, 1965; Treisman, 2002; Prud'homme, 2003). Therefore, a main contributing factor to high levels of exclusion errors could be lengthy and rigid bureaucratic procedures, also ROs that are located far from many poor households, as I will further explain in this chapter, Section 5.6.1.2.

Heavy reliance on applicants providing documents for verification, including the application form and supporting documentation, can lead to poor targeting outcomes and may be ill-suited in particular to householders who earn income in the informal economy or who have savings in the form of assets or other non-financial assets. In addition, the process is vulnerable to. Clearly, the enrolment process should be considered as one of the major factors contributing to inclusion and exclusion errors.

Additionally, the FSP system does not have a process of recertification for continuing eligibility. From visits conducted at different ROs across the three governorates, there were no observable mechanisms for tracking the evolving financial situation of beneficiaries. When RO employees were questioned about tracking FSP beneficiaries, all replied that they are not allowed to do so. Some managers stated that

they knew a lot of beneficiaries who owned businesses located in the same area in which the RO serves them. Beneficiaries who have been enrolled in FSP for an extended period, sometimes for decades, and whose financial status may have improved, are still able to benefit from the programme, without any need of recertification. Owing to loose targeting criteria, it is suggested that there is no incentive to track and re-certify beneficiaries to ensure that the programme's objective are being met: to target poor households. This explains the high inclusion errors.

All of these aforementioned drawbacks, explained in detail later in Section 5.6.2, have been exacerbated by the appearance of three other cards, other than the SRC: The first is a paper card (stamped written paper with the name of the household and the number of registered individuals) which is a temporary replacement for the SRC. A decree was issued in June 2015 stipulating that the paper card could be used till the new SRC was received but this decree was then suspended in December 2015. Most managers told me that this reason the decree was suspended was that MSIT found that many of these paper cards were fake, with fake names. Moreover, they claimed that some RSs were adding fake names to the lists they provide at the end of each month in order to obtain a higher subsidy quota.

The second type is the so-called "blackmail card"- as all the managers and employees named it. This card is found under two circumstances: (i) when a beneficiary's SRC stops working, they go to the RO and ask for a replacement. At that point they have to hand the SRC that is not working to the RO. The RO then collects all these SRCs and sends them back to the SITAD, then to the SCC, where they are ostensibly disposed of. However, these SRCs can be reactivated and used in the market, by individuals other than their owners. Consequently, two SRCs with the same details are benefiting from the system; (ii) when a certain beneficiary's SRC details are used to issue another card, two cards exist with the same beneficiary details but one only would be working. Of these two cards, one is carried by the original owner and the other by a 'fraudulent' owner. Every month, one deactivate the SRC of the other, since both cannot benefit in the same month. Managers reported that they could not track these blackmail cards. The last category is referred to as the ghost card. These are counterfeited cards with counterfeit/fake names and details. Since there are major software gaps (further details will be discussed in Section 5.6.2), a number of ghost cards have appeared and are being sold on the black market, with a price ranging

from LE 500 (US\$59) to LE1000 (US\$118) (based on different testimonies from managers inside the ROs). All these practices would affect the targeting performance outcomes of the FSP.

5.6.1.1.3 FSP Quota Allocation

When seeking relevant data about the administrative process of the FSP's quota allocation across the 27 governorates, information about the administrative distribution of subsidies was not clear. However, during my fieldwork, at a seminar entitled "*Economic and Social Justice in the 2017/2018 State Budget*" Dr. Mohamed Mayet (appointed in 2018 as the Minister of MOF) (Seminar, 2016) stated that the value of the food subsidy benefits would double due to the deflation of the Egyptian pound and an estimated rate of inflation of more than 30 percent according to (CAPMAS, 2016a). He added that the provision of the FSP is assessed based on the annual needs plan report, which is estimated using the benefit usage based on population growth. However, this estimated measure does not take into consideration the economic conditions that each governorate may face or even the baseline conditions. Accordingly, each DSIT in each governorate, in turn, provides local input in the preparation of the annual needs report by collecting the SITAD's needs level and forming a collective needs report for each DSIT and sending it to each designated governorate council, forwarded to the MSIT. The DSIT then receives the FSP quota for distribution to the SITAD of each neighbourhood/district. However, it is the programme committee at the MSIT that has the final authority to allocate exact quotas to each governorate. I argue that there are two reasons why an input based approach is adopted rather than an output based approach: firstly, in allocating FSP quota, it estimates both the supply and demand side; secondly, the market does have a number of counterfeited cards other than the SRC, so it is hard to estimate according to the official records. An RO manager told me:

‘ We do not send a need report for the SITAD, however, we only send the number of beneficiaries recorded in our office and the directorate can estimate the required quota for each SITAD depending on both supply and demand side’

(Interview with Ration Office 9, Cairo, June 2016).

Many RO managers reiterated this point to me. Therefore, during the implementation process, the regional levels as represented by the DSIT in each governorate, determine the exact quota that the whole governorate needs based on the actual number of beneficiaries recorded in each RO. It is still unclear the subsidy quota per unit of Egyptian pound for each governorate is calculated at local (SITAD), regional (DSIT) and national level (MSIT) (cost of supplying the total stock level for all food commodities, buffering stock operations, transport, overhead expenses, so forth) and what parameters they have used. During an interview I asked about these parameters, a key informant told me that it is the Ministry of Finance that is responsible for estimating the subsidies provision, based on the needs reports and that these reports in turn, depend on estimates from previous years. Detailed administrative costs were not available, however, only the aggregated budget and actual spending.

5.6.1.1.4 FSP Financial Accountability

Arising from this discussion was the question as to whether and how the RO and the SITAD maintain checks and balances in their role of supervising RSs and Bakeries accounts. This supervisory process is crucial to FSP accountability so I wanted to know whether there were any precise regulations governing, or control of the accounting procedures. Governance issues at this level that weaken the programme's capacity to achieve its objective. The RSs are under supervision of the ROs, while Bakeries are under the SITAD in some governorates and ROs in others. First, the basis upon which each RS is given its quota and how much each procurement is, can be calculated and obtained. Based on primary data from the three governorates, each RS obtains its monthly food allocation by reporting on the number of beneficiaries that visited the RS in the past month. Based on this report, a food allocation cheque is issued. By contrast, in the computerised official digital system, each RS has a virtual record of a certain number of beneficiaries and at the same time, the actual system allows any beneficiary to buy the monthly allowance from any RS in his/her neighbourhood. This digitisation of the FSP creates a vacuum of accountability, making the basis upon which the RO can verify the checks and balances with each RS, very unclear. What was very evident from the fieldwork is that the manager was giving deposits of food allocation from the major food warehouse

based on a rough estimate for the required amount. Twenty seven out of thirty one RO managers confirmed that there is lack of financial accountability in the FSP system. Here are similar statements from the heads of ROs:

‘...unfortunately, the owners of the RS’ accounts have not been verified for two years’

(Interview with Ration Office 6, Cairo, May 2016).

‘Some owners of RSs have become very rich as there is no concrete verification in the form of checks and balances of accounts’

(Interview with Ration Office 5, August 2016).

These quotes zoom in on the finance accountability of the FSP system between the ROs and the RSs. Then there are, the Bakeries, which theoretically are inspected and supervised by the SITAD. I observed 75 bakeries across the three governorates, and saw that inspectors only visit the between 8 and 11 am.

For the issue of flour, the MSIT applies an output-based approach, whereas the BSs are accounted for in terms of the number of loaves produced. I observed that the size of a loaf varies hugely from early morning to late afternoon, and also varies across neighbourhoods. When I asked one of the RO managers about this variation, he replied:

‘Since, the accountability for BSs has been shifted from input-based approach (providing the flours sacks every morning) to output-based approach (providing the flour based on the number of the loaves produced), BSs intend to decrease the weight of each loaf of bread from 110 grams of diameter 20cm to around 80 grams. Therefore, at the end of each day, they would be able to sell a full sack of flour in the black market at the full market price’

(Interview with Ration Office 8, Alexandria, October 2016).

Another manager states

‘...per sack of flour, 1200 loaves should be produced, therefore for every 1200 loaves baked, the bakery would be given a sack of flour plus his marginal profit. That was an incentive to decrease the official weight, and thus, he baked

1200 loaves with around 1/2 of the sack and the rest was sold on the black market’

(Interview with Ration Office 9, Assuit, December 2016).

These excerpts indicate that an output-based approach has not curtailed the stealing, smuggling and selling of flour on the black market and anecdotal evidence suggests that managers across the three governorates inside the ROs are aware of such practices. Lack of supervision and inspection opens the system to manipulation. Another manager, referring to lack of accountability, identified further loopholes in the system:

‘BSs’s accounts are not verified from two years. You can imagine how much waste of the public fund provision for food subsidies. Each SITAD in each governorate has designed check and balance account for each BS to be accountable for the procurement obtained, however, they protested in the MSIT and the decision was postponed until now’

(Interview with Ration Office 10, September 2016).

These quotes confirm that there is a desire for the FSP to be accountable. In the implementation phase, both the RSs and the BSs are considered as distribution outlets, whereby the owner takes the food cheque each month without checking the end balance of the commodities for this month. Therefore, this lack of governance creates considerable scope for corrupt practices.

Accountability has been considered as a core driver of many NPM reforms (as discussed in Chapter Two , Section 2.3); with an effective vertical managerial accountability, the argument goes, better performance would follow (Hughes, Foyer and House, 2012). The absence of a concrete standardised accounting system is key to the gaps in the FSP system across neighborhoods as is the role of patronage and clientelism in the distribution of the benefit.

These findings contain important new insights with regards to the low level of accountability of the FSP system at grassroots level, and how unreliable the annual needs reports are at regional and local levels. The urgent need for the FSP’s disaggregated data and dissemination of information becomes self-evident when one looks at the pre-conditions for good governance for the FSP and when one understands the way in which the whole system functions and the need for reform to tackle these

issues. Moreover, a disaggregated analysis would provide the data needed in order to thoroughly examine the whole FSP policy, in the quest for reducing the rocketing food subsidy bill to acceptable levels. But more important than how the calculations of the total subsidy of the FSP are made is the question of whether all of this subsidy actually reaches the intended beneficiaries.

5.6.1.2 The Geographical Administrative System of Allocation of the FSP

Contextual information about the geographical distribution of Ration Offices and Ration Shops is piecemeal, unplanned, and largely uneven, which has ultimately exacerbated disparities between governorates. Targeting outcomes of the FSP can be undermined by many issues, such as overcrowding of the service delivery units and access to the service, whereas the objective of the programme is not reflected in the implementation process nor in the technical and managerial capacity of governmental units. Given previous reforms the Egyptian government has undertaken to better reach the poor, it is important to understand how the current FSP enrolment and distribution works geographically; the effect overcrowding of the ROs has, and the geographical heterogeneity of FSP in terms of the distribution of ROs, and the private and public RSs.

5.6.1.2.1 Overcrowding in the Ration Offices

High caseloads in the Ration Offices have a significant detrimental effect on targeting outcomes. Given the limited number of caseworker employees in proportion to the number of registered beneficiaries and new applicants, caseloads are excessive and the resulting workloads unmanageable, a key contributor to poor outcomes. To ensure equitable workload distribution, in terms of the average number of beneficiaries that the ROs serve, MSIT should accurately measure, track and report on the average daily caseloads of caseworkers; specifically, the daily average of cases for employees who are case assignable and carrying a full workload. This raises the question about the distribution of the number of beneficiaries across different ROs in each neighbourhood at each governorate, which has a bearing on the quality of service and

access to these ROs. In the absence of the specific guidelines for allocating a certain number of beneficiaries for each RO, the density of registered individuals in each RO is likely to differ greatly. However, for the purposes of this study, I can only discuss overcrowding in the ROs that are located in the three case study governorates, Cairo, Alexandria and Assuit. Most RO managers I interviewed complained about the workload and the insufficient number of employees in relation to the caseloads; consequently, work is invariably taken home, especially the book keeping with RSs (further detailed discussion is found in Chapter Six).

During fieldwork in the three DSIT I visited, I gathered disaggregated data about the neighbourhoods in terms of the number of beneficiaries recorded in each RO. In Cairo, there are sixty-seven ROs in 39 neighbourhoods serving 1,996,471 Smart Card Holders, which constitute around 6,844,655 individuals. **Figure 17** shows the average number of the actual registered individuals in each RO in each neighbourhood in Cairo and the average number of the poor individuals that should be assigned to each RO in each neighbourhood. This has been calculated as follows

$$AVR_{RO}^{RI} = \sum_{i=1}^N \left(\frac{RI_i}{RO_i} \right)$$

AVR_{RO}^{RI}	Average Number of Registered Individuals at each RO
N	Number of the districts in each Neighbourhood
RI	Total Number of Registered Individuals in all the RO in each Neighbourhood
RO	Number of Ration Offices in each Neighbourhood

$$AVR_{RO}^{PI} = \sum_{i=1}^N \left(\frac{PI_i}{RO_i} \right)$$

AVR_{RO}^{PI}	Average Number of Poor Individuals who should be assigned to each RO
N	Number of the districts in each Neighbourhood
SRC	Number of Poor Individuals in each Neighbourhood
RO	Number of Ration Offices in each Neighbourhood

I have combined two neighbourhoods together, since one RO serves both of them. I have also combined three neighbourhoods for the same reason, therefore, 36 neighbourhoods are included in the analysis. According to the CAPMAS (2016), the population in Cairo in September 2016, was estimated to be 9,510,880 individuals. Using the latest available poverty map of 2013, the poverty rate in Cairo amounts to around 20 percent. The programme outcomes show that 72 percent of the population receiving the FSP benefit. As such, the distribution of FSP benefits indicates a clear mis-targeting as shown in **Figure 17**. Given that ROs are understaffed and that the geographical public administration of the FSP is uneven, questions arise regarding the quality of service that is being provided and how this affects the programme's targeting outcomes. In other words, how the ROs can process such high numbers of applications, given the number of existing beneficiaries recorded in the RO for each neighbourhood. The data shows that, although the workloads are uneven the average number of beneficiaries in each RO for every neighbourhood is high this statistical bias might undermine the government's FSP. The graph shows how the government does not have a standard or baseline for each RO in each neighbourhood for serving households, in terms of the maximum number of beneficiaries each office should serve, in terms of employee numbers. For instance, as the figure shows, neighbourhood 29 recorded the highest number of SRC and registered beneficiaries and yet this neighbourhood has only one RO serving 90,056 SRC beneficiaries which involves 295,662 registered individuals plus the new applicants that tend to visit the RO every day. Nine employees work in this RO of which only four are front-line employees.

The manager of this RO described the situation thus:

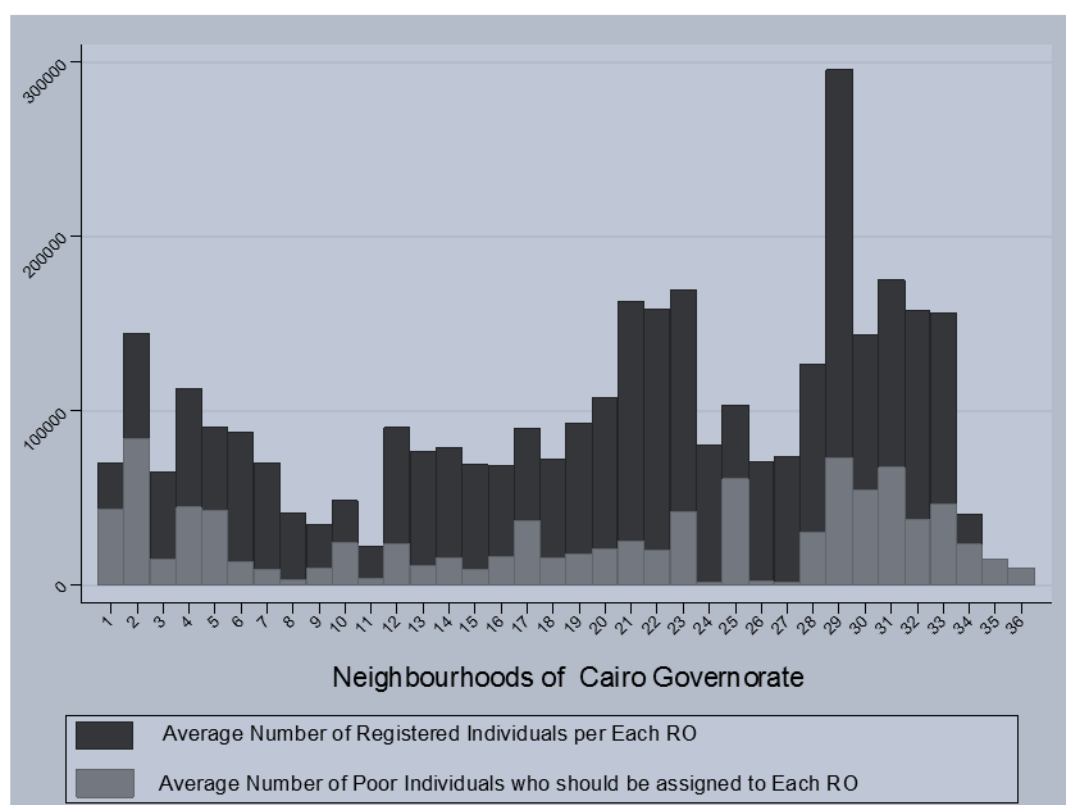
'We suffer from lack of employees, how come a single RO serves around 300,000 individuals, the government does not have a strategic plan in establishing a number of ROs in accordance with the number of beneficiaries.

I take some of my work to finish it at home, sometimes a lot of cases wait long time to be registered in the computer software and the ledgers as well'

(Interview with Ration Office 6, Cairo, May 2016).

The range of employees in all the ROs I visited was between three to nine. The actual implementation process and the quality of service that may affect targeting outcomes is first and foremost contingent on the number of requests, waiting time and caseloads for each RO. If we consider the average number of beneficiaries registered in each RO as an indicator of service quality, this figure shows variation of provision across different neighbourhoods in Cairo and highlights the relationship between quality of service and management capacity in terms of human resources. Moreover, if we look at the average number of registered individuals in each RO in respect to the average number of poor individuals that should be assigned to each RO, there is clearly considerable leakage in each neighbourhood which adds to the caseloads in each RO and influences the targeting mechanism.

Figure 17: Distribution of Average number of Beneficiaries for each RO across Cairo Neighbourhoods



Source: Own calculations based on 2016 official data collected from Cairo DSIT during my fieldwork visit

In Alexandria, there are twenty-five ROs in 16 neighbourhoods serving 1,007,406 SRC households which includes 3,642,165 individuals. According to the CAPMAS, 2016b, the population in Alexandria in September 2016, was estimated to be 4,939,093 individuals. Therefore, 73 percent of the population are receiving the FSP benefit and yet using the latest available poverty map of 2013, the poverty rate in Alexandria is around 26 percent. This indicates huge mis-targeting. As in Cairo, it is difficult to see how all these beneficiaries and new applicants can receive quality of service. The relationship between quality of service and targeting errors is discussed in detail in the following chapter. **Figure 18** shows the average number of registered individuals in each RO for each neighbourhood in Alexandria and the average number of poor individuals that should be assigned to each RO for every neighbourhood. As in the graph of Cairo, there is considerable variation in terms of beneficiaries served by each RO in each neighbourhood, depicted by the significant peaks in the bar chart. For instance, **Figure 18** shows a significant peak in the number of beneficiaries in

neighbourhood 13, covering around 587,974 individual households. The neighbourhood's one RO which I have visited serves 116,915 SRC households which includes 399,631 registered individuals, plus the new applicants that tend to visit the RO every day. It took me around 30 minutes, despite not standing in a queue, to talk to the manager in order to schedule a meeting. This RO serves the largest number of beneficiaries out of all the ROs in Alexandria, Cairo or Assuit, showing that variations are significant in Alexandria as well as Cairo.

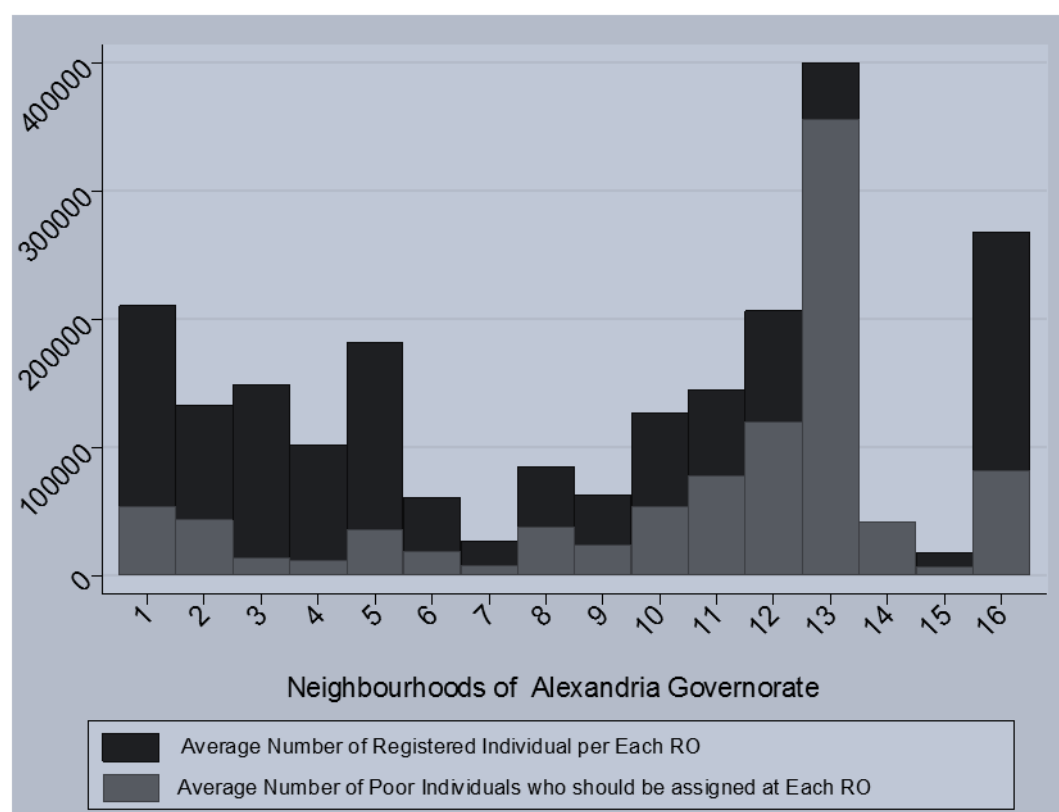
It is difficult for a single RO to serve these large numbers of beneficiaries. The qualitative data indicates that there is a significant phenomenon that has been found in Alexandria and is particularly acute in that there are simply not enough front-line employees in relation to the number of beneficiaries and new applicants. A RO manager told me:

‘Some young men on the wooden desk outside the RO, they are not hired from the MSIT but they help in facilitating the administration process of filing the requests and I cannot stop them. They have been here from ages ago, they used to make the files for the applicants and beneficiaries and take money for this service around LE10 (\$1.12). The worst part is that some of them are gyping the applicants and trying to convince them that they have relationship with me, therefore, they deceive them and take more money in an attempt to facilitate and accelerate the process of receiving the SRCs. They may take LE1000 (\$113). For me this is more bluntly as bullying and forcing the people to make applications and pay an extra fees. This phenomena is all over Alexandria ’

(Interview with Ration Office 10, Alexandria, September 2016).

These informal persons who charge applicants a few in exchange for writing the applicant requests can be observed in front of every RO I visited in Alexandria. Moreover, due to the crowding in front of the RO, some RO managers have placed computers outside the RO, in private shops, SITAD or other places outside the RO. For instance, one RO is located in a very narrow street and the queues get very long so the manager decided to move four computers to another place. Based on my fieldwork, I can say that the quality of service provided is compromised as a result of these practices, as is the supervision of these targeting and processing mechanisms.

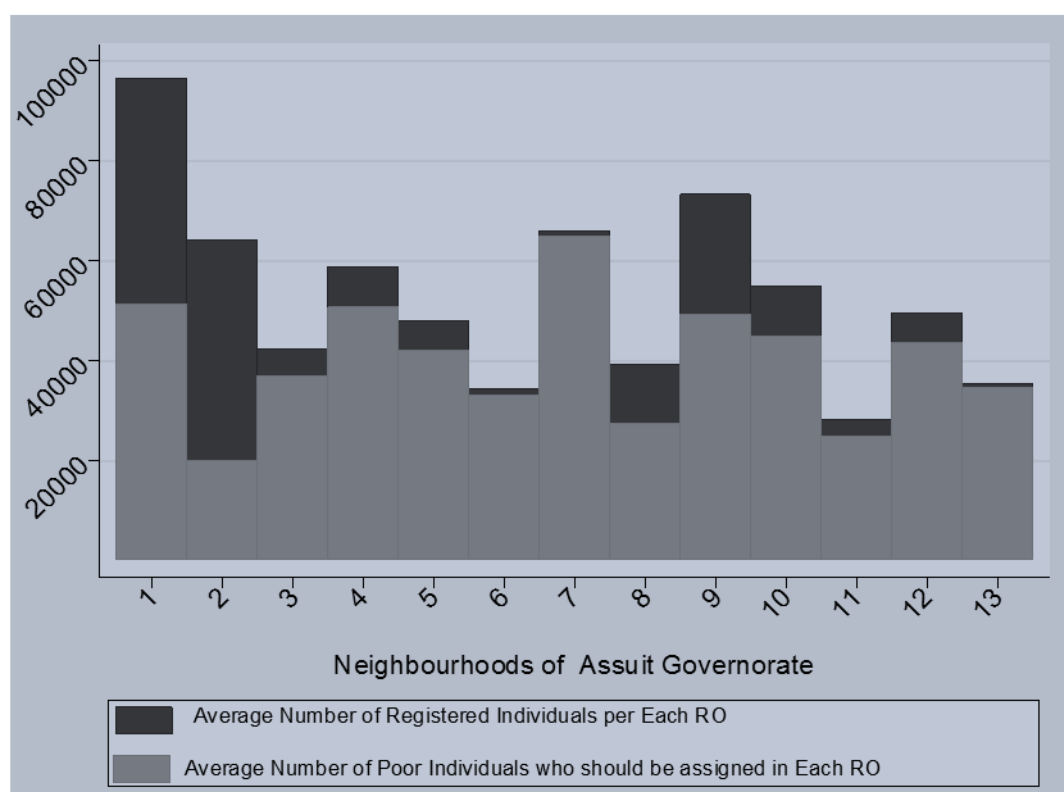
Figure 18: Distribution of Average number of Beneficiaries for each RO across Alexandria Neighbourhoods



Source: Own calculations based on 2016 official data collected from Alexandria DSIT during my fieldwork visit

In Assuit, there are sixty-seven ROs across 14 neighbourhoods serving 882,041 SRC households, which amounts to around 3,251,820 individuals. I have excluded one neighbourhood with a population and beneficiaries of only a few hundred. According to the CAPMAS, 2016b, the population in Assuit in September 2016, was estimated to be 4,417,102 individuals. Therefore, 74 percent of the population receive the FSP benefit. Using the latest available poverty map of 2013, the poverty rate in Assuit is around 60 percent. This indicates that mis-targeting margins in Assuit are far better than in Cairo or Alexandria. **Figure 19** shows the average number of actual registered individuals in each RO, in each neighbourhood in Assuit and the average number of poor individuals that should be assigned in each RO for every neighbourhood. The graph shows a high degree of symmetry between the actual beneficiaries and the poor at each RO in each neighbourhood; however, there is still a variation in terms of the service provided across different neighbourhoods.

Figure 19: Distribution of Average number of Beneficiaries for each RO across Assuit Neighbourhoods



Source: Own calculations based on 2016 official data collected from Assuit DSIT during my fieldwork visit

In sum, although there is mis-targeting in all governorates, leakage is far less in Assuit than in both Cairo and Alexandria. Additionally, there are no standards in terms of quality of service provided to the beneficiaries, since there are no specific standards and threshold caseloads for each RO in serving beneficiaries in Cairo, Alexandria and Assuit. In Egypt, the government appears to have overlooked the importance of geographical distribution for maintaining the quality of service provided in accordance with the number of beneficiaries, which in turn might have a significant effect on the FSP's targeting outcomes.

Despite the claimed benefits of the NPM, governance and post-governance in terms of public service delivery, when I look at the geographical distribution of ROs, there is no rational vision or governmental policy that regulates this distribution. Consequently, the fundamental question that can highlight the generic aspect of the FSP administration and the quality of service, which is being discussed further in the following chapter, may be stated as follows: To what extent does the MSIT have a

rationale in allocating households to ROs? Given the impact the overcrowding in front of ROs has on service delivery, this qualitative study investigated the factors influencing this overcrowding. One of the crucial factors, given the limits in capacity, is the absence of a unified strategy for managing each RO, in terms of the minimum and maximum number of beneficiaries for each RO and this has serious implications for the FSP targeting outcomes.

5.6.1.2.2 Geographical Heterogeneity of FSP across the Three Governorates

Since the ROs represent the local cabinets of the FSP where applicants begin enrolment, , if the targeting of the FSP to the poor is the goal, then the pattern of RO allocation should correspond to the geographical distribution of poverty among the three governorates. This analysis shows that uneven geographical distribution of the ROs and access difficulties play an important role in undermining the programme's targeting outcomes.

5.6.1.2.2a Distribution of the Ration Offices

While the previous section discussed how overcrowding in ROs impacts on service quality, the analysis in this section measures the density of the ROs in each neighbourhood in relation to the registered beneficiaries in the same neighbourhood, hence, measuring physical access to the FSP enrolment service. The selected density indicator indicates physical access to the ROs and their localities, which is considered an important factor in access to the benefit itself. **Figure 20** shows the density of the ROs in each neighbourhood to the density of registered individuals (beneficiaries) in the same neighbourhood, distributed by the poverty headcount (P_0) of the neighbourhoods in the three governorates, Cairo, Alexandria and Assuit. The density of ROs in each neighbourhood to the density of registered individuals (beneficiaries) in the same neighbourhood is calculated as follows

$$Den_{RI}^{Ro} = \sum_{i=1}^N \left(\frac{RO\ i}{Area\ i} \right) / \left(\frac{RI\ i}{Pop\ i} \right)$$

Den_{RI}^{Ro} Density of the Ration Offices to Density of the Registered Individuals (Beneficiaries)

N Number of Districts in each Neighbourhood

RO Number of Ration Offices in each Neighbourhood

$Area$ Area of the Neighbourhood in Square Meters

RI Number of Registered Individuals (Beneficiaries) in Each Ration Office in each Neighbourhood

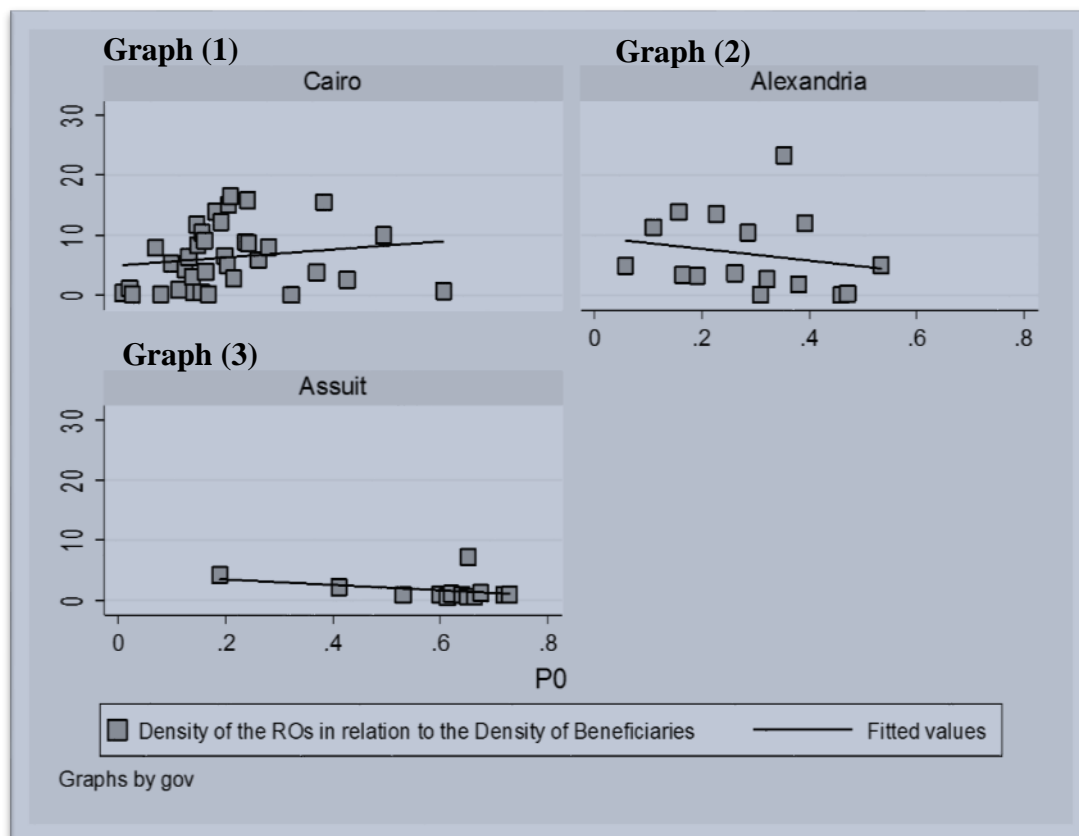
Pop Population Size of all the Districts in Each Neighbourhood

Findings in terms of the Den_{RI}^{Ro} distribution in accordance with the poverty headcount between Cairo, Alexandria and Assuit are varied, with distribution inclined towards pro-non-poor neighbourhoods in Cairo and Alexandria, as shown in the first and second graphs, compared to Assuit in the third graph. Cairo has the highest Den_{RI}^{Ro} that is mostly realised through clustering and concentrations of ROs in the richer neighbourhoods. In other words, Cairo has the highest number of ROs scattered in relation to the geographical area of the neighbourhoods, in accordance to the density distribution of beneficiaries if compared with other governorates. Moreover, graph one and two in **Figure 20** show that with a substantial decline in the poverty headcount ratio, the skewness and density of ROs increase and closely cluster in these neighbourhoods in Cairo and Alexandria governorates. In contrast, in Assuit, the Den_{RI}^{Ro} is very low compared to the other governorates yet the number of beneficiaries and population are approximately the same as in Cairo and Alexandria. Even with the low Den_{RI}^{Ro} in Assuit, the distribution of ROs is towards pro-poor neighbourhoods.

This heterogeneous pattern of distribution suggests a lack of strategic vision in designing the FSP in correspondence to its actual implementation across the governorates. It shows an urban bias in allocating ROs, undermining the programme objective, and shows that the realities of the context of implementation are not taken into account and therefore the implementation process is uneven. Indeed, this heterogeneity might be one of underlying causes of leakage (pro-non-poor) and under-coverage errors, since the Den_{RI}^{Ro} distribution is very high in the non-poor

neighbourhoods in Cairo and Alexandria and the Den_{RI}^{Ro} is very low in one of poorest governorates in Egypt, with more than 60 percent poverty.

Figure 20: Density of ROs to Density of the Registered Individuals by Poverty Headcount



Source: Own calculations based on 2016 official data collected from Cairo, Alexandria and Assuit DSITs

Moreover, to examine the strength of the relationship between the Den_{RI}^{Ro} (dependent variable) and the poverty headcount (independent variable), correlations in the framework of the bivariate regression analysis is calculated as rough reference points to measure how the two variables change together, simultaneously, across the three governorates. The formula is as follows

$$Den_{RI}^{Ro} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 P_0 + \epsilon_i$$

The results in **Table 11** shows a one point increase of the $\text{Den}_{\text{RI}}^{\text{Ro}}$ (density of allocating the ROs in accordance to the geographical area to the number of beneficiaries in the same neighbourhood) is associated with a 6.729 decrease in the P_0 for the same neighbourhood. The analysis results indicates that there is a negative relationship between the $\text{Den}_{\text{RI}}^{\text{Ro}}$ in a neighbourhood and how poor this neighbourhood is. In other words, the lower the poverty headcount ratio of the neighbourhoods, the more $\text{Den}_{\text{RI}}^{\text{Ro}}$ distribution in the same neighbourhood. Accordingly, the government should establish and distribute the ROs more towards the pro-poor neighbourhoods. Therefore, this should not be the case, it should be that the higher the poverty headcount ratio of the neighbourhood, the higher the $\text{Den}_{\text{RI}}^{\text{Ro}}$ distribution of ROs.

Table 11: Density of the Ration Offices to Density of the Registered Individuals

Poverty Headcount	-6.729*** (2.485)
Constant	7.527*** (1.125)
Observations	65

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Source: Own calculations based on 2016 official data collected from Cairo, Alexandria and Assuit DSITs

This analysis indicates a critical impediment in the geographical density distribution of ROs in accordance with the poverty headcount ratio of neighbourhoods. I have considered a further analysis between the top RO and the other ones in the three governorates, but I was unable to identify any distinctive differences due to the limited number of available variables used. I sent a couple of emails to key informants in the MSIT and checked the policy documents of the FSP to understand the status-quo. However, I have not found any rationale explaining why the density distribution of ROs are low with the evident statistical discrimination of this distribution, while the poverty headcount ratio of these neighbourhoods is high. This analysis reflects how outdated the FSP design is, how disconnected it is from the implementation process and the need for a strategic vision that relates to grass-root realities.

5.6.1.2.2b Distribution of the Ration Shops

There are private and public RSs. Public RSs are operated by Food Industries Holding Company in Egypt, a governmental company. These public RSs are more like supermarkets and are called consumer complexes, stocking a range of commodities and good quality products. Private RSs receive their rations from government wholesale companies operated by the MSIT and commodities are limited compared with public RSs. Given the heterogeneous distribution of ROs, I wanted to know whether the geographical distribution of RSs is also uneven in the three governorates. This analysis also focuses on physical access to the subsidised commodities distributed through the RSs, which is predicated on the extent to which distribution and delivery of the benefit through private and public RSs favors neighbourhoods with high poverty ratios. I measured the density of private RSs for each neighbourhood in relation to its geographical area, distributed in accordance with the number of beneficiaries of this neighbourhood in respect to its population size. In other words, the calculation shows the density of distribution of private RSs in a certain neighbourhood, given the area and the number of beneficiaries in that neighbourhood and therefore, the variation of these densities across different neighbourhoods with different poverty headcount ratios, to ascertain the relationship between these densities and the neighbourhoods with low poverty headcount ratios. This indicator is called Den_{RI}^{PrRS} and its formula as follows:

$$Den_{RI}^{PrRS} = \sum_{i=1}^N \left[\left(\frac{PrRS\ i}{Area\ i} \right) / \left(\frac{RI\ i}{Pop\ i} \right) \right] \quad G$$

Den_{RI}^{PrRS}	Density of Private Ration Shops to Density of Registered Individuals (Beneficiaries)
N	Number of Districts in each Neighbourhood
$PrRS$	Number of Private Ration Shops in each Neighbourhood
$Area$	Area of the Neighbourhood in square meters
I	Number of Registered Individuals in Each Ration Office in each Neighbourhood
Pop	Population Size of all the Districts in Each Neighbourhood
G	The density of private RSs in the three Governorates, Cairo, Alexandria and Assuit

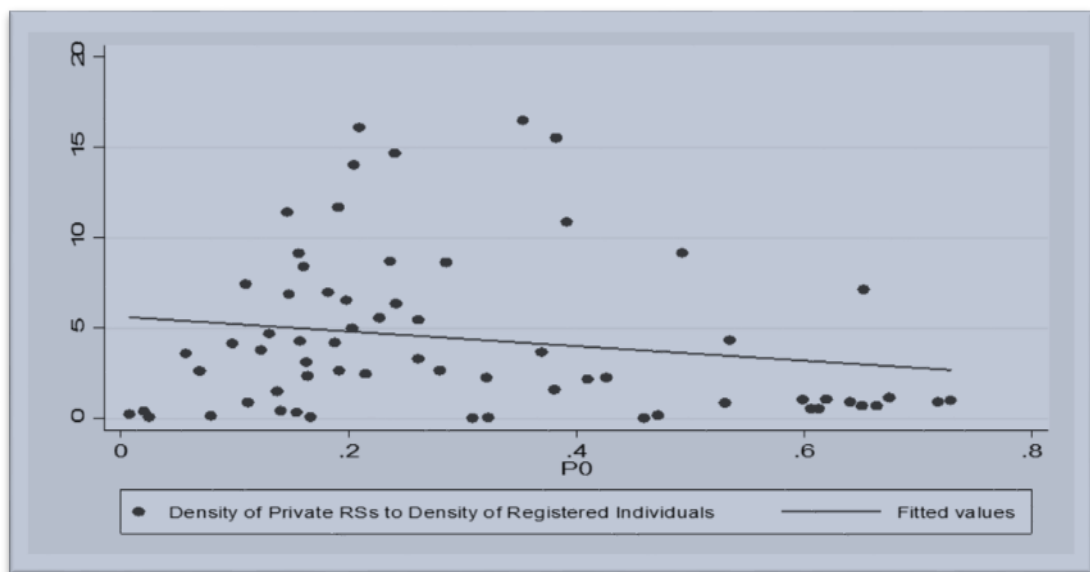
Another indicator measures the density of public RSs for each neighbourhood in relation to its geographical area, distributed according to the number of beneficiaries of this neighbourhood in respect to its population size. This indicator is also used to ascertain physical access to the public RSs across different neighbourhoods in relation to the poverty ratio. This indicator is called Den_{RI}^{PubRS} and its formula as follows:

$$Den_{RI}^{PubRS} = \sum_{i=1}^N \left[\left(\frac{PubRS_i}{Area_i} \right) / \left(\frac{RI_i}{Pop_i} \right) \right] \cdot G$$

Den_{RI}^{PubRS}	Density of the Public Ration Shops to Density of Registered Individuals
N	Number of Districts in each Neighbourhood
$PubRS$	Number of Public Ration Shops in each Neighbourhood
$Area$	Area of the Neighbourhood in square meters
RI	Number of Registered Individuals in Each Ration Office in each Neighbourhood
Pop	Population Size of all the districts in Each Neighbourhood
G	The density of private RSs in the three Governorate, Cairo, Alexandria and Assuit

Both indicators, Den_{RI}^{PrRS} and Den_{RI}^{PubRS} , show the density distribution of RSs by poverty headcount, as shown in *Figure 21 and Figure 22*.

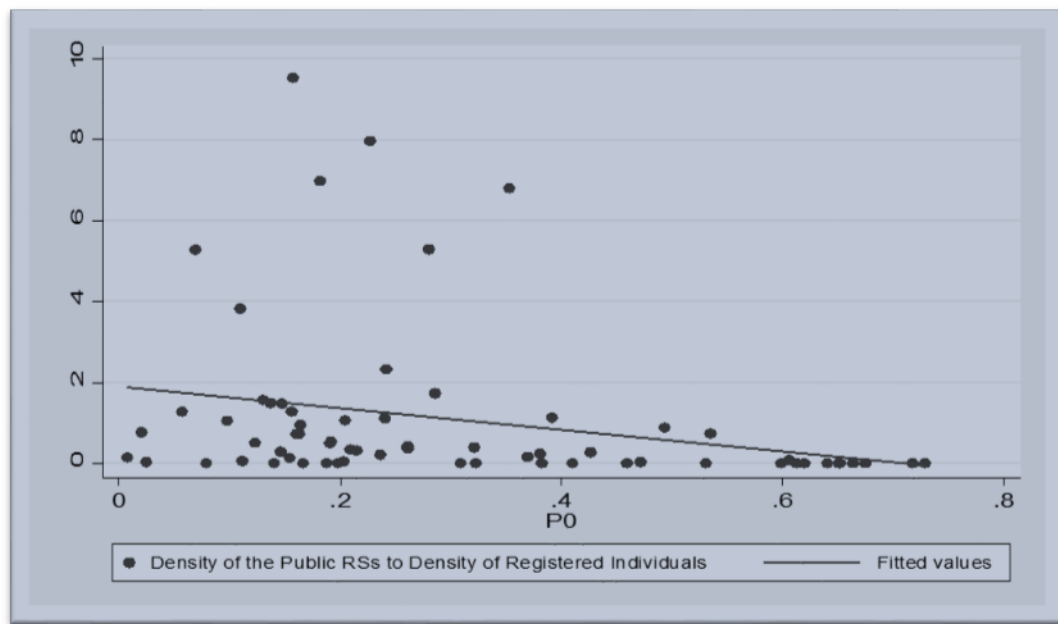
Figure 21: Density of Public RSs to Density of the Registered Individuals by Poverty Headcount



Source: Own calculations based on 2016 official data collected from Cairo, Alexandria and Assuit DSITs

Figure 21 shows that the higher distribution density of private RSs tends towards the richer neighbourhoods. **Figure 22** depicts that the more poor the neighbourhood is, the less the distribution density of public RSs, whereas in Assuit, public RSs do not exist at all.

Figure 22: Density of Public RSs to Density of the Registered Individuals by Poverty Headcount



Source: Own calculations based on 2016 official data collected from Cairo, Alexandria and Assuit DSITs

Figure 21 and **Figure 22** confirm that the RS distribution across the three governorates is very uneven with respect to poverty measurement. To understand the strength of the relationship between the $\text{Den}_{\text{RI}}^{\text{PrRS}}$ (dependent variable) and the poverty headcount (independent variable), bivariate regression analysis is used in **Table 12**. Also, **Table 13** show the relationship between the $\text{Den}_{\text{RI}}^{\text{PubRS}}$ and the poverty headcount, as done previously for the distribution of the ROs. The results in **Table 12** shows that one point increase of the $\text{Den}_{\text{RI}}^{\text{PrRS}}$ is associated with 4.065 decrease of the P_0 . Hence, there is a negative relationship between the density of private RSs to the density of beneficiaries ($\text{Den}_{\text{RI}}^{\text{PrRS}}$) and the poverty headcount of the neighbourhoods in the three governorates. Similarly, the results in **Table 13** shows that one point increase of the $\text{Den}_{\text{RI}}^{\text{PubRS}}$ is associated with 2.664 decrease of the P_0 . So, there is a

negative relationship between the density of public RSs to the density of beneficiaries (Den_{RI}^{PrRS}) and the poverty headcount of the neighbourhoods in only two governorates: Cairo and Alexandria. In Assuit, there are no public RSs in any neighbourhood, which raises a question about MSIT's priorities in distributing public RSs throughout the governorates.

Table 12: Density of Private Ration Shops to Density of Registered Individuals

Poverty Headcount	-4.065*
	(2.109)
Constant	5.630***
	(0.928)
Observations	65

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Source: Own calculations based on 2016 official data collected from Cairo, Alexandria and Assuit DSITs

Table 13: Density of Public Ration Shops to Density of Registered Individuals

Poverty Headcount	-2.664***
	(0.828)
Constant	1.896***
	(0.465)
Observations	65

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Source: Own calculations based on 2016 official data collected from Cairo, Alexandria and Assuit DSITs

This analysis reflects regional variations in the distribution of both ROs and RSs across the three governorates. It is perhaps worth noting that these governorates not only give a rational geographic spread of the ROs and RSs based on poverty headcount, but also reflect a negative relationship between distribution and poverty. Consequently, leakage and under-coverage may be attributed to this spatial

differentiation and its effect on access to the ROs and RSs, as they tend to be concentrated more in the non-poor neighbourhoods than the poor ones. This has implications for private costs and opportunity costs (disregarding daily wage) that the poor households cannot afford. Despite the public administration rhetoric about the impact of NPM and governance on performance and results in public service delivery, the FSP's design and its implementation in terms of performance and outcomes represents a significant disjuncture in terms of reaching the poor.

5.6.2 Private Contracting Out

Some developing countries have commenced plans and strategies for establishing E-government, as a way to promote development and reduce poverty. These plans and reforms can enhance the government's performance and public administration. They can contribute to solving administrative problems in developing countries characterised by limited capacity, ineffectiveness, poorly-trained employees and inefficiencies (Schuppan, 2009). Also, in Egypt reforms to the FSP have focused on the reorganisation of public service delivery based on new ICT. To support long-term reforms that would improve targeting the poor, the government launched an initiative in 2005 for a Unified National Registry (UNR), a national database platform supporting the consolidation of all SSNPs and facilitating coordinated targeting and delivery mechanisms. The MSIT's administrative capacity is unable to undertake the data-driven building of a national database and provide public services. This is particularly critical in so far as the NPM and governance reform package is concerned. Lack of administrative capacity, pro-market and open economy are used as the basis for NPM reform approaches such as contracting-out, privatisation and corporatisation (Elias, 2006). The government does not have the full capacity to create E-government for the FSP. Thus, according to NPM and governance, using the private sector to deliver public services is an important component in moving towards a reformed government, especially in developing countries. The aim is to contain costs, improve quality and increase productivity (Johnston and Seidenstat, 2007). With regards to the FSP, the government has contracted-out the service of establishing the required ICT to two Smart Card Companies (SCC). However, it is questionable, whether by contracting out, the policymakers' objective was to follow the mainstream and involve

the private sector to enhance service delivery, or whether their primary goal was to deploy ICT without taking into consideration the local bureaucratic context, as discussed in Chapter One, Section 1.2. The findings tend suggest the latter is the case.

A key informant in the MSIT stated that:

‘The MSIT was not administratively capable to set up the E-government of the FSP. The choice was to contract-out with private sector after many failure attempts with the regional and local governmental units. Now, we have two Smart Card Companies that are responsible to supply the MSIT with the automated national database for the FSP’

(Interview with Key-Informant, Cairo, DSIT, April 2016).

I requested any policy documents about the consortium of the private sector but was notified that the documentation regarding the partnership between the MSIT and the two SCCs were accessible to no one. This the lack of transparency meant I was unable to check the bidding process to see how it was structured and the extent to which it was competitive , the specified boundaries for the partnership and the procedures of auditing the contracting-out. One RO manager told me:

‘The MSIT has made a consortium with the SCC with no single obligation on the Company or audit from any supervisory body to track any fraud or manipulation’

(Interview with Ration Office 8, Cairo, June 2016).

Wallis and Dollery observe that, ‘in the absence of the state’s efficient role in discharging the minimal functions such as provision of public goods and services, economic infrastructure, law and order, and judiciary, the state is unable to implement the grand programs of privatisation, corporatisation and contracting out’ (2001, p. 253). Therefore, it is especially important to address the question about the role of the MSIT and its role throughout the whole consortium.

The automated trial system started in 2006 when the MSIT first delegated this responsibility to the Post Offices (PO) in every neighbourhood, according to an interview with a key informant in Cairo DSIT. He explained to me that the POs established a database based upon the files and records of existing beneficiaries in the

ROs. Since the ROs did not have the capacity to keep all beneficiaries' records on file, beneficiaries were told to take the required documents to the PO. In the absence of control and monitoring procedures, thousands of files piled up in the POs and there were long queues in front of the offices. Eventually, having created high levels of data entry errors, PO announced their incapacity to manage the database. The MSIT took back for collecting information on beneficiaries and creating a unified database for the ROs to collect and enter again onto the beneficiaries' file records. Many key-informants stated that the government recognised that it was unable to establish a unified data-base within governmental units without involving the private sector. Thus, the decision to contracting-out was taken: SCCs were contracted to take on a number of responsibilities with regards to delivering the FSP including providing the infrastructure (establishing the programme software, equipping ROs with computers, providing internet, and handing POS to the RSs and BSs), supplying technical assistance, and issuing the SRCS. These companies make profits from card issuance, use and transactions. After many pilot trials, the new Smart Card System was rolled out in all the governorates in 2014 in an attempt to help policy-makers to understand consumption trends and preferences by region, household level, age and other factors. Hence, FSP has been consolidated (bread and commodities provided by the same SRC) and has moved toward a system-based approach. The following sections explore the effects of contracting-out on the FSP.

5.6.2.1 Design and Infrastructure of the Smart Card Companies (SCCs)

The two SCCs have each designed software that forms for the national database but these systems are not compatible, accurate and connected to each other, as one RO manager explains:

‘First, the SCCs use the infrastructure of the database established on the entry errors which was executed by the PO and could not be corrected by the ROs. Therefore, the groundwork of the database contains some errors. Second, the two SCCs' software are not connected with each other. Thus, a major hindrance occurred’

(Interview with Ration Office 2, Alexandria, July 2016).

This quote identifies two major issues: firstly, the private companies inherited data errors and these were incorporated into the FSP database; secondly, there is no connection between the two software programs in that they are on different servers, and this increases the risk of fraud, as one RO employee explained:

‘We have more than 300 SRCs in the drawer and we do not know why those people did not come to obtain them. At the same time around 7000 SRCs in this RO are waiting to receive their SRCs. Some people have more than one SRC that's why I am telling you this system has a lot of chronological gaps. Disconnection between the two SCCs' software creates opportunity for many beneficiaries and applicants to double up on FSP benefits’

(Interview with Ration Office 6, Cairo, May 2016).

Another manager told me:

‘When I enter the detail of a certain household into the computer software programme, if this beneficiary or applicant benefits or applies in any governorate run by the other SCC, it won't appear on my screen’

(Interview with Ration Office 4, Assuit, November 2016).

By working in parallel using two different and unconnected software programs, beneficiaries or applicants can hold or apply for two SRCs at two different governorates, thus increasing the potential leakage. Additionally, when beneficiaries move from one governorate to another that uses a different software server, they are unable to transfer their registered accounts, as one RO manager explained:

‘Beneficiaries of ‘Inter-Governmental Mobility Arrivals’ struggle to get their allocated allowance when they move to a new governorate that uses a different server. They have to cancel their registration from the original RO and apply as a new applicant in the new one. It may take one to two years to get another SRCs with numerous ROs visits to ask when they should obtain them. Some poor households prefer to be out of the FSP. This is a totally unfair system’

(Interview with Ration Office 6, Alexandria, August 2016).

The problem for ‘Inter-Governmental Mobility Arrivals’ was voiced by all the interviewees in the three governorates. Managers told me they had reported this

problem to the regional SITD, but no concrete solution had been proposed. This shows how the disconnection between the two systems gives rise to exclusion errors as well as inclusion errors.

The SCCs are responsible for supplying the ROs with a number of computers, according to the size of the RO in term of how many beneficiaries are recorded in each RO. Very few ROs have been refurbished and supplied with the latest computers (three in Cairo, two in Alexandria and none in Assuit). Some ROs are given second-hand computers, with very small ram so that processing each transaction data entry takes a lot of time. Therefore, householders can queue up and wait in front of ROs for over 5 hours. Additionally, the SCCs supply the ROs with USB internet sticks, which are also slow and increase the time needed to process one transaction. Thus the delays to FSP processing time are down to limited administrative capacity, more specifically IT as supplied by the SCCs which is not fit for purpose.

5.6.2.2 Compliance of the FSP Software System

Software issues in both SCCs have been identified by many managers and employees in the ROs, and by RS owners. In the ROs, all the computers are connected to the SCC server. The software permitted authorisation of counterfeit IDs, as a key informant in Alexandria DSIT explained:

‘The software of the SCC can approve a registration of unauthenticated ID, for instance, if I entered 14 zeros in the ID box, the programme will accept this beneficiary’

(Interview with Key-Informant, Alexandria, DSIT, August, 2016).

Other problems with data entry include registering an approved applicant is that it only accepts the name of the household head and any number of individuals can be registered on the same SRC without their names and IDs. The programming of the software is full of glitches that increase the ease with which the FSP system can be manipulated. When I asked RO managers, why they did not write the names of the registered individuals as well, they always replied:

‘The SCCs have ordered us not to write all the registered individuals on the SRC. Only the full details of the household head and the number of the individuals in the same SRC’

(Interview with Ration Office 3, Assuit, October 2016).

The difficulties of overcrowding and access discussed in the previous section are supported by this further finding. Given the ration of employees to beneficiaries and density discrimination of ROs across different neighbourhoods, ROs cannot process applications effectively and this impacts on the FSP targeting outcomes. Furthermore, updating the software is also problematic. Some employees have found the programme software performs in peculiar ways. For instance, sometimes a beneficiary requests an update on his/her status, or wants to delete an individual from the household, due to request of separation, divorce, or death. The system first accepted the update, then after two days it returned to the original status. On other occasions it is the householder that complains, as this RO manager told me:

‘... a case; a household head has four individuals registered on his SRC was complaining that when he went to the bakery shop he took the bread quota for those four individuals, however, when he went to the RS he found 32 registered individuals were recorded on his SRC. He was so worried that the MSIT will give him a penalty and it was not his fault. Actually, we always face this problem with a lot of households. The recorded number of individuals differs from the actual one we entered’

(Interview with Ration Office 6, Cairo, May 2016).

Some RO employees accuse the SCCs of manipulating the system and recording extra number of individuals in some cases or less in other cases. A RO employee in Alexandria said:

‘The employees of the company take the advantage of their jobs and record some beneficiaries on their own. This is a tragic’

(Interview with Ration Office 1, Alexandria, July 2016).

An SCC representative- without taking any notes as I could not get the official permission-confirmed this, calling ROs ‘inactive’ employees. On the other hand, most

ROs' employees think that the SCC employees are not qualified enough to manage the programme gaps and difficulties, claiming that they provide very poor technical assistance. A manager of one RO states that

‘When we refer problems to the SCCs’ technicians, they respond that they do not recognise why these problems occur. And still these problems exist and no one get the picture of knowing why they happen’

(Interview with Ration Office 9, Assuit, December 2016).

Not surprisingly then, there is very little cooperation between RO and SCC employees. Software updates can result in inclusion and exclusion errors that can have severe consequences for FSP’s targeting outcomes. Inaccurate database compromises the objective of the FSP of reaching the poor and these flaws in addition represent a huge waste of public resources. Moreover, the identified glitches raise questions about the specified regularities of accessing the data entry. It was clear from an interview with a key informant that there is no segmentation of data entry responsibilities between the ROs and the SCCs. Therefore, sharing same responsibilities of data entry can introduce and increase the hazard of clientelism and patronage, and consequently non-poor households with the ability to meet the costs can easily access the benefit skillfully. All these problems led the MSIT to delegate the system to the Ministry of Military Production (MMP), as a RO manager explained:

‘Now, we are preparing ourselves for the MMP’s requests as it will take over the running system from the SCCs’

(Interview with Ration Office 9, Alexandria, August 2016).

The MMP established a website in 2017 (<https://www.tamwin.com.eg/>)_so that the beneficiaries could log in to their accounts. Since that was after my fieldwork, I cannot comment on the extent to which the new system has addressed the glitches of the previous system.

5.6.2.3 Issuing Smart Ration Cards

Major delays in issuing Smart Ration Cards (SRCs) cause undue stress to beneficiaries and applicants and this is passed on to the ROs. Surprisingly, there are more SCC centres in Cairo and Alexandria than in Assuit, despite the latter being considered the poorest of the three. There is only one centre in Assuit in the city centre where all complaints, maintenance requests for the POS machines, and activation of SRCs' requests from beneficiaries are collected. Managers of some ROs have described travelling for one and half hours to reach the centre and when they get there, being unable to go in due to from the queues in front of the SCC's gate. From all the interviews, it was evident that there was no grievance or complaint mechanism that could hold the SCCs to account, that most of the interviewees complained about. All the interviewees -employees and managers-across the three governorates complained about various issues in regards to the SCCs, including delay of issuing SRCs, poor quality of the cards, and lack of supervision.

5.6.2.3.1 Delay in Delivering SRCs to Beneficiaries

As mentioned earlier, SRCs can take between four months to two years to reach beneficiaries. One RO manager commented:

‘The SCC that is responsible for the submission of the smart cards are really the worst company I have ever seen; massive delays, never reply to our inquiries, never pick up the phone, and hardly have good technical assistance’

(Interview with Ration Office 1, Alexandria, July 2016).

Most employees, but especially those in Alexandria and Assuit, criticised the SCC's performance and their attitude in terms of disregarding and their negligence attitude towards their requests. Delays in distribution of the SRCs create problems inside the RO and leave large numbers of beneficiaries without their monthly quota or their daily bread. In some governorates, the ROs distribute Paper-Bread cards to beneficiaries who are ‘on-hold’ until they receive their own SRCs. A key informant at Alexandria DSIT noted:

‘The ministry did not set up the boundaries of the partnership with the SCCs, or maybe there are and we do not know exactly what they are. There is no supervision on their performance and there is not any specific written framework for their responsibilities and duties in Alexandria DSIT’

(Interview with Key-Informant, Alexandria, DSIT, August, 2016).

In Cairo, managers did not complain as fiercely about the SCC performance, compared to Alexandria and especially to Assuit. However, a RO employee told me that:

‘90 percent of the accepted applicants did not obtain their SCs. I have now around 1800 SRC ‘on-hold’ accepted applications from more than one year and still the SCC is saying they are under issuance. The guidelines of the SCCs for submitting the SRCs are not specified and are not clear to anyone at regional or even national level. Moreover, there is no synchronisation between what has been planned and what is happening on the ground’

(Interview with Ration Office 2, Assuit, October 2016).

Employees across ROs, SITAD and DSIT concurred with this comment. They argued vociferously for the need for concrete guidelines regarding the partnership between the SCCs and the MSIT. According to the NPM approach, the public administration of particular public service requires a mix of planning, organizing and controlling functions of management with the efficient and effective management of information and resources, as discussed in Chapter Two, Section 2.3 (Kalimullah, Alam and Nour, 2012). Yet there was an evident lack of planning, supervision and co-ordination between the MSIT, DSIT, SITAD, RO, and the SCCs that compromises the effectiveness of the whole implementation process by generating numerous inefficient practices.

5.6.2.3.2 Card Types and Quality

The SCCs issue two kinds of cards. The first is the SRC issued and given to the beneficiary and the beneficiary is able to use the card to get their monthly allowance and daily bread quota. Some RO employees and RS and BS owners argue that MSIT made an enormous error by combining the bread and the monthly allowance. As one RO employee pointed out:

‘In case loss or damage for the SRC, a beneficiary can survive without the monthly quota but not without the daily bread quota. Binding them in one card is a fatal mistake’

(Interview with Ration Office 8, Cairo, June 2016).

Moreover, many employees told me that due to the frequent use of SRCs for getting the daily bread quota, they can get easily damaged. A number of managers have reported these problems and have suggested that there should be two cards, one for bread and the other for the monthly commodities. Additionally, beneficiaries and RO managers complained of the very poor quality of the SRCs. Indeed, one employee said that:

‘Sometimes we receive the cards already damaged. Other times, the beneficiary return after using the SRC for couple of weeks to request a replacement. SCC issues a very poor quality of SRCs to get more requests for replacement. The more requests for replacement, the more profit the company earns’

(Interview with Ration Office 10, Alexandria, September 2016).

ROs managers, RS and BS owners I spoke to also pointed out that SCCs make a profit out of low quality SRCs that get damaged easily and therefore have to be replaced. In their view, the private sector is always profit-oriented and will not act in the interests of households. The lack of governance and monitoring procedures means the SCCs will only be driven by the profit motive.

The second type of card is called the golden card, issued to compensate the BSs for the subsidised loaves of bread given to beneficiaries holding the paper card. Each BS has a quota of a thousand loaves of bread per day. An RO manager comments:

‘The owners of the BSs is using the golden card without producing any loaf of bread’

(Interview with Ration Office 5, Assuit, October 2016).

Another RO employee in in Alexandria stated that:

‘The SITAD is given the golden card to the owners of BSs. I would argue that this is such a waste of public money as they slide the golden card in the POS without producing any loaf of bread’

(Interview with Ration Office 5, Alexandria, August 2016).

Also, I observed the golden card being used in many BSs I visited. The lack of monitoring during the implementation phase might result in corruption and inefficiencies. Additionally, the BS owners complained about the low quality of the golden card and about the need to always ask for replacements. Thus the contracting out of public services under the NPM approach is seen as resulting in profits coming before public interest, managerial accountability over public responsibility and business values over social values (Chapman and A O’Toole, 1995). Chapman and A O’Toole have cautioned against ‘the intricate implementation of proposed changes motivated by the fashionable pursuit of apparently new approaches to public service’ (1995, p.4). This is neither to minimize the contribution of the NPM or governance in contracting out public services nor is it a call for it to be withdrawn. However, it should be treated with more caution. Policy-makers and key informants should be aware of the issues involved in including private contractors in the public sector, especially in service delivery (United Nation, 2003). These qualitative findings regarding FSP implementation, show that introducing mainstream reforms that involve the use of ICT in targeting, without taking into consideration the local context, may appear as a reforming of the system but not necessarily improve it. Moreover, the findings challenge the assumption that the private contractor will have the capacity that is lacking in the public sector. As this section has shown, private contractors can be ill-equipped to take over the provision of a public service. Additionally, the analysis has

shown that the government organisations and departments lack the capacity to manage, monitor and supervise the private contractors. Government institutions that are weak at the national, regional, and local level encourage corruption, clientelism and patronage systems that in turn undermine the successful application of contracting-out policies (Larbi, 2003). Therefore, contracting out the FSP may be economically wasteful, ineffective and inefficient, unless mechanisms are in place in the strategic plans and contracts to mitigate the constraints.

5.7 Conclusion

In this Chapter, I have argued that targeting performance in the literature of FSP has not been sufficiently linked to the realities of implementing the programme, which in turn has a significant influence on the programme's outcomes. I have shown how the complex structure of public administration in Egypt is key to understanding the status quo. I have discussed the major actors that regulate the FSP and their roles in the bureaucratic structure of the programme: MSIT, DSIT, SITAD, ROs, RSs and BSs. I have explained how the administrative structure of the FSP looks very Weberian as a public sector organisation. I focused my analysis on the local office (RO) that is considered the first chain of processing and implementing the FSP entitlements. Each RO receives decrees from the ministry and implements them into but lack channels through which they can give feedback on the whole process. I illustrated the role of the RO in processing application requests and supervising both the RSs and BSs. I explained the two components of the benefits offered through the FSP using the SRC. I also described in detail the four types of request the ROs deal with on a daily basis.

Such a complex bureaucratic structure has cost implications and creates potential for targeting errors, as I have shown. I have suggested that ultimately these complexities will have a detrimental affect on the FSP's targeting outcomes. The World Bank and IMF have pushed reforms, concentrating on two aspects of reforming the FSP: reducing system leakages and narrowing the coverage of the existing system. I explained that the Egyptian government has chosen to focus on some selective policies of the NPM and governance in its reform of the FSP, firstly by shifting from input-based to output-based subsidy and secondly, through the use of ICT in an attempt to reach the poor and decrease benefit waste. Both policies are supported by international organisations , in particular the World Bank and IMF, arguing that such reforms are pro-poor and progressive. However, as my research has shown, adoption of these policies can lead to the opposite outcome.

The exploration of FSP implementation has highlighted the factors that possibly affect the programme's targeting outcomes. I used a qualitative analysis of the three governorates to explore the factors that might contribute to the quantitative measures of inclusion and exclusion errors, through two broad themes:

- FSP Bureaucratic and Administrative Structure

I explained how the FSP's bureaucratic structure and targeting process work in practice and to what extent it influences the programme's targeting outcomes. I identify the following key points:

- Application Process: decisions on the eligibility of households are determined on the basis of whether or not requests meet defined eligibility criteria. Most of these categories were found to be either open to abuse or outdated. 'Separation from Parent's Card' requests were more vulnerable to abuse than others, leading to the development of an inherited benefit or acquired right due to the disjuncture between the policy design and the realities of implementation. I showed how this particular category leads to mis-targeting, in other words, leakage. I demonstrated that when institutional capacity is fragile and there is a lack of governance, some practices might hinder the targeting performance and cause leakage. Moreover, I pointed out that extensive bureaucratic procedures, lack of co-ordination and co-operation of the whole targeting system could greatly influence targeting outcomes. These inefficiencies are moreover are highly susceptible to corruption and manipulation to the benefit of intermediary chains inside the FSP. Finally, the absence of a grievance channel means that inclusion and/or exclusion errors cannot be corrected.
- The Decentralisation Process of the FSP: the ROs' roles were focused on deconcentration of the decision-making process, which is considered to be the weakest form of decentralisation. One of the major impediments to the ROs functioning effectively was the heavy reliance on the presentation of documents throughout the whole process and the absence of communication with the top management. Managers expressed their frustration with the deconcentration of the decentralisation of the FSP and their lack of power and authority within it. I described the FSP's bureaucratic structure as inflexible and static and one of the example of this rigidity was illustrated through the absence of feedback channels for managers. Additionally, it was observed that there were no mechanisms for tracking the evolving

financial situation of beneficiaries. When RO employees were questioned about tracking FSP beneficiaries, they all replied that they were not allowed to do so. Therefore, beneficiaries who have been enrolled in FSP for an extended period, sometimes for decades, and whose financial status may have improved, are still able to benefit from the programme. Owing to loose targeting criteria, it is suggested that there is no incentive to track and re-certify beneficiaries to ensure that the programme's objectives are being met: to target poor households. This results in the high inclusion errors.

- FSP Quota Allocation: I explained how the information about the administrative distribution of subsidies was unclear in terms of the process of allocating the FSP quota for each governorate, being based on the previous allocated quota, taking into account the growth of population. Therefore, the system does not tightly put the responsibility of different positions into account in terms of auditing the allocation process. This can generate a number of practices that might affect performance outcomes.
- FSP Financial Accountability: the absence of any precise regulation, rules or control in the accounting procedures has significant implications for FSP accountability. This gap in governance undermines the programme's capacity to achieve its objective. The key findings from the analysis and observation were that the book keeping in different ROs was very arbitrary, and there was a general lack of financial accountability in the FSP system. Moreover, introducing an output-based financing approach to improve the supply chain appeared to be manipulated by many practices, due to the lack of accountability. Overall, the lack of supervision and inspection was detrimental to the accountability of the whole system and made it vulnerable to manipulation. The findings uncovered some of the realities of implementation and how the low level of accountability influences the targeting performance.

- **Geographical Distribution:** Based on micro-level data collected during the fieldwork, I analysed the geographical distribution of the FSP's service delivery. I first highlighted the geographical disparities in the quality of the service offered and second, access disparities of both the RSs and BSs. Most RO managers complained about the excessive workload and the insufficient number of employees in relation to the caseloads. The distribution of the ROs showed statistical bias and the absence of a standard or baseline for each RO in each neighbourhood for serving households, in terms of the maximum number of beneficiaries each office should serve, given the number of employees. For instance in India, in the food subsidy programme called the Public Distribution System (PDS), beneficiary enrolment is processed at state level, unlike in Egypt where it is at the local level. In India, the government establishes a threshold of a maximum number of beneficiaries for each RS depending on the geographical area. For example, 'In Punjab, a well-organised Public Distribution System (PDS) is maintained in the State through network of 19705 Fair Price Shops and 7421755 cardholders constitute... As per the present Govt. policy 350 ration cards are required for opening a fair price shop in the urban areas and 300 ration cards or 1500 units in the Rural areas. Whenever the number of ration cards exceeds 700 in urban areas a second ration depot can be opened in that area' (Ghumaan and Dhiman, 2016, p.12). This government policy reflects a vision in terms of quality of service that includes avoiding overcrowded shops and this is achieved by focusing on the efficiency and effectiveness of the geographical distribution of the shops, thus, 'access to the PDS facilities depends on a variety of factors, among which management, organisation And viability of fair price shops are of crucial significance' (Ghumaan and Dhiman, 2016, p.12). The shops are recognised as central to making PDS items available to the ultimate needy consumers. The realities of the implementation process and the quality of service might significantly affect targeting outcomes with the appearance of costs associated with unmanageable workloads. Unlike in India, in regards to the accessibility of the FSP benefit, the

analysis showed that the richer the neighbourhood, the higher the density of ROs. It showed an urban bias in allocating ROs and how the implementation process is divorced from its main objective of reaching the poor. A critical disconnect was found between the geographical distribution density of ROs and the poverty headcount ratios of neighbourhoods. These findings confirm how outdated the FSP design is and its failure to align a strategic vision with to the grass-root realities through the implementation process. Additionally, I examined access to private and public RSs, especially in poor neighbourhoods. The analysis confirms a negative relationship between the distribution of the RSs and poverty. I have argued that leakage and under-coverage may be attributed to spatial differentiation in the quality of and access to ROs and RSs, which were more numerous in the non-poor neighbourhoods than in the poor ones.

- Private Contracting Out

Egypt has reformed the FSP by reorganizing the delivery process of its public services based upon new ICT. I showed that there is a lack of clarity about whether contracting-out the service delivery of FSP by bringing in the private sector is a good thing in itself, or whether their primary goal was to deploy ICT. I explained that the SCCs hold several responsibilities in delivering the FSP.

- Design and Infrastructure of the Smart Card Companies (SCCs): two SCCs were responsible for designing the FSP programme's software. The analysis revealed that the programme software was built on inclusion and exclusion errors that had entered the system based on outdated records from decades. Moreover, I explained how the disconnection between the two companies' software is open to fraud, leading to either inclusion or exclusion errors. The ICT assets required to run the programme were invariably outdated (old computer, slow USB internet). Consequently, processing each transaction data entry was very time consuming leading to crowding in front of ROs.

- **Compliance of the FSP Software System:** the findings showed a number of software glitches. The programme can authorize counterfeit IDs, accept counterfeit names, and approve the name of the household head without any information required about the individuals registered on his/her SRC. These glitches mean that the FSP system can be easily and effortlessly manipulated. Moreover, the relationship between employees in the ROs and the employees in the SCCs was characterised by high levels of mistrust, since the latter can easily access the software and register any number of households, thereby building an inaccurate database that undermines the FSP objective of reaching the poor. Using ICT in the FSP without accountability, governance and capabilities increases clientelism and patronage of the FSP benefit. I have shown how the system favors non-poor households with the competencies to ‘play’ the system and the financial means of covering the costs involved.

- **Issuing Smart Ration Cards:** there are consistent and major delays in SCCs issuing and delivering SRCs. These delays contribute to the stressful environment in the ROs. In addition, I showed that SCC service centres are more numerous in Cairo and Alexandria than in Assuit. The analysis clarified that most RO managers complained about these delays, poor quality of the cards, and lack of supervision. Additionally, RO managers have no way of formally registering these concerns and thus hold the SCCs to account.

- **Delay of Delivering SRCs to Beneficiaries**

The late distribution of SRCs created problems inside the RO, leaving a huge number of beneficiaries without their monthly allowance or daily bread. Partnership between the SCCs and the MSIT is very opaque and there are no guidelines for ROs in this regard. Accordingly, the lack of planning, supervision and co-ordination between the MSIT, DSIT, SITAD, RO, and the SCCs resulted in numerous inefficiencies and ineffectiveness of the whole implementation process.

- Card Types and Quality

I explained the two types of SRCs. First, the beneficiary's SRC is used to obtain the monthly allowance and the daily bread quota. Some employees reported that MSIT should not have combined the bread and the monthly allowance, pointing out that if the card is lost or needs replacement, then the poor household can be without benefit for at least four months. Furthermore, not only the RO managers but also the RS and BS owners complained about the very poor quality of the SRCs. Since the private sector is always seeking profit, the more SRCs are issued, the more they profit from the poor quality of the cards. With no governance or monitoring procedures, SCCs have no incentive to improve their service.

The second type of card, called the golden card, is issued to compensate the BSs for the number of loaves of bread they sell to households who hold paper-cards. Each BS has a quota of a thousand loaves of bread per day. This card should be with the inspector, but in reality it was found with the BSs themselves. Therefore, the BSs could swipe the card into the POS without producing the stipulated 1000 loaves of bread. Lack of supervision is likely to encourage such practices, causing corruption and inefficiencies.

Institutional weakness in national, regional and local governmental units encourages corruption, clientelism and patronage that in turn undermine the successful application of contracting-out policies. The mainstream approach to reform supported by international organisations has promoted the usage of NPM for effective targeting of SSNPs. However, applying the one-fits all model by using ICT and involving the private sector in the administrative structure of the FSP has created a gap between policy and implementation, which in turn has affected targeting outcomes and the whole targeting mechanism. Until now, no study has demonstrated the problematic nature of applying ICT and involving the private sector in providing food subsidies

through SRCs either in Egypt or in other developing countries characterised by rigid bureaucratic structures and weak governance.

In the next chapter, I explore and examine to what extent the implementers of the programme at the local level and their working conditions influence targeting outcomes.

Chapter 6 – Street- Level Bureaucracy (SLBy) of the FSP in Egypt

6.1 Introduction

The RO locations together with the work environment, attitudes and actions of SLBs, determine the experiencing of accessing the FSP. As discussed in Chapter Five, Section 5.6.1, the MSIT does not recruit a sufficient number of SLBs in proportion to the number of beneficiaries and application requests, leading to unmanageable caseloads and workloads that impact on the employees' ability to meet the needs of households, deliver quality services and ultimately achieve the FSP outcomes in terms of inclusion and exclusion errors. In addition, the location of the RO, its resources and the work environment influence targeting outcomes. Lipsky (2010) gives two general reasons why SLBs dominate political controversies with regards to public service delivery. Firstly, debates about the proper scope and function of service delivery by governmental organisations are essentially debates about the scope and function of their front-line public employees. Secondly, SLBs have a significant impact on the households' lives, independently of the design of the programs they administer. He explains the role of SLBs in socializing the households to the expectations of the government service, determining their eligibility and overseeing the benefits which are received by the household in the programme. Accordingly, targeting outcomes of the FSP are correlated with the actions, of the SLB, and their work environment. Therefore, SLB is a very useful framework for understanding the targeting system of the FSP at grassroots level.

Drawing on Lipsky's SLB theoretical framework, FSP applicants and beneficiaries experience of the MSIT is mediated by front-line employees and their actions are the translated policies provided by the government in delivering a public service. Since the manager of the RO is administrating and managing the whole office with a number of employees, and most of the managers have direct contact with the beneficiaries and applicants, it is important to start the analysis with the SLBs of the

FSP. I have started by introducing the critical role of the SLB as the real policy implementers in terms of the qualifications of the RO' managers, and the communication between managers and front-line employees in the ROs with the beneficiaries and applicants. I explain the sense in which the qualifications and communications of the SLBs can affect the targeting outcomes of the FSP. In the next section, I describe the working conditions of these SLBs, and the common features of the ROs, as representing the MSIT's public service at the local level and explore the implications of these conditions for the FSP targeting outcomes. Moreover, I discuss how the assault on the SLBs can affect the targeting system. Lastly, I explore the patterns of practice that mean beneficiaries and applicants may face rationing and restricted access to the FSP.

6.2 The Critical Role of the Front-line employees in the FSP

The managers and the employees of the ROs who come into direct contact with beneficiaries and applicants are the front-line SLBs of the FSP. The actions of these SLBs translate the MSIT policy into practice. This is because the beneficiaries and applicants directly experience the action and behaviour of the SLBs. The combination of these, shaped by the skills, experience and qualifications of the SLBs in the work environment impacts on the FSP targeting outcomes. Moreover, numerous interconnected factors influence the communication between the SLBs and the beneficiaries and applicants, which also play an important role in implementing the FSP.

6.2.1 The FSP Human Resource Dilemma: the Portfolio of the Qualified SLBs

The skills, experience and qualifications of RO managers play an important role in understanding the FSP targeting outcomes. To understand the relationship between the programme's objective and the front-line employees' practices, it is important to understand the qualifications of the SLBs and their role as implementers

and processors a certain programme, since being a qualified employee is an indispensable part of processing the work effectively.

In this study, the main focus has been to understand how the SLBs' experience and the promotion system of the FSP influence programme performance in terms of its targeting outcomes. Interviews with managers of the ROs across three governorates in Egypt suggest that inadequate qualifications and a flawed promotion process for becoming managers, could contribute and be a potential explaining factor to the high inclusion and exclusion errors. Almost all the interviewed managers had previously been MSIT inspectors and had no experience of dealing with or having any direct contact with beneficiaries and applicants until being promoted as RO managers. As inspectors, they would have visited RSs and BSs but had no experience of processing applications or the process of enrolling beneficiaries, the main activity in the RO. Thus managers rarely have the qualifications or experience to run an RO office. One manager was candid about his lack of experience:

‘.. I am always asking Mr/... the manager of another RO ... (serving another district with around 10 years of experience as a manager) to ask about certain cases which are not clear in the guidelines because he has vast experience than me in running these cases. He always tells me what decision I should make. I do not have any experience to be the manager of this RO. To ask and receive an answer; this may take some times; these applications always lack behind and usually annoy the applicants or beneficiaries as they have to visit the office many times until their problems are solved and sometime we send them to the MSIT’

(Interview with Ration Office 4, Cairo, May 2016).

Another manager told me that:

‘...lack of skilled and experienced workers. I even do not have enough experience to run the RO. I always ask my colleagues inside or outside the office who better know...’

(Interview in Ration Office 7, Alexandria, August 2016).

Another RO manager told me he did not even want his position:

‘I am surprised why I am the manager of this ration office. I did not request that, I do not like this seniority based promotion which does not depend on experience at all. I see that Mr/.. (One of experienced employees inside the RO) is more experienced than me, around eighteen years dealing with all problems. I am not sure how this qualification and promotion system are set on which basis. I am the only one here who nearly do all the tasks of receiving the application forms, processing them, recording each household case on the system’s software. I am not sure if I can delegate some of these tasks to my employees or not’

(Interview Ration Office 2, Cairo, April 2016).

To be good managers and deliver their objectives effectively, RO managers need management skills. RO managers have to juggle a range of important management responsibilities and tasks, and at the same time ensure the smooth running of the enrolment process with beneficiaries and applicants. However, from different managers across different governorates the previous quotes were repeating, these evidence shows, managers themselves freely admit their lack of capacity to manage the ROs, and this is bound to have a negative effect the whole system.

In the FSP programme, promotion to RO manager is largely determined by the amount of time spent in FSP bodies regardless of managerial experience and soft skills. This is characteristic of many civil service organisations, especially in developing countries (see World Bank, 1999a, 2002; Shepherd, 2003). With the required managerial experience, managers could process applications smoothly and accelerate the procedures. Without this experience, they may include beneficiaries in the programme and exclude others. For instance, some managers with less experience can approve the basic salary slip of a certain household instead of the full income. An RO manager told me that this is an unintentional mistake that some new managers can make due to their lack of experience:

‘Some managers with less experience may approve the basic salary slip as a proof for being eligible. These managers do not know that what they are doing

is totally incorrect. Other managers when they cannot solve the beneficiaries or applicants problems, they may direct beneficiaries to wrong places to visit for completing their application; for instance, the directorate, MSIT and so forth’

(Interview with Ration Office 2, Assuit, October 2016).

Therefore, some managers can unintentionally contribute to inclusion errors as a result of lack of managerial experience on the one hand and lack of specific guidelines on the other, as an RO manager explained:

‘... sometimes the guidelines of the decrees are not clear enough for us. When we ask the SITAD or the DSIT for more clarifications, no one provides clear answers. Therefore, we use our own experience to deal with the problems of the unclear guidelines. Some ROs’ managers are not qualified enough to cope with this obscurity so they tend to make the beneficiary or the applicant to wait long time and may at the end either send them to the ministry -and therefore poor households cannot afford all these private costs and tend to leave the programme-, or incur some mistakes of including or excluding some beneficiaries wrongly’

(Interview with Ration Office 1, Alexandria, July 2016).

Managers with insufficient experience, as mentioned by many, may direct beneficiaries and applicants to other organisational departments that run the FSP, as a result of their inability to solve their problems. Several RO managers and employees raised the issue of poor households who cannot afford the time or money needed to visit different governmental agencies, and therefore leave the programme. Hence, lack of experience can lead to exclusion as well as inclusion errors.

The combination of lack of experience and lack of clear guidelines makes the application process very time consuming, so that applicants or beneficiaries may feel they cannot afford the cost of repeat visits to RO as it is considered a high private cost

for them. Others may be incorrectly expelled or included in the programme. Thus without the required competencies, RO managers can slow the whole process down and therefore, targeting errors may occur. Accordingly, promoted managers may not have the know-how to delegate tasks efficiently, oversee their employees or resolve conflicts, leading to low productivity, loss of resources and process inefficiency. The ambiguity and lack of clarity in the scope, experience and function of the FSP's SLBs is of fundamental importance in influencing policy implementation and the programme's outcomes.

6.2.2 Interconnectedness Factors influencing Communication between ROs' Managers and Beneficiaries

A significant part of my fieldwork involved visiting ROs, mainly to interview managers or employees. This enabled me to observe the day to day workings of an RO and how the work environment and working relationships shape the service. For instance, in July, 2016, I visited an RO in Alexandria, located on the second floor. It is a very small space (the waiting area is around 12 m²) compared to the 87,616 beneficiaries it serves, plus the new applicants. I stood in a corner of the waiting room to meet the manager and I observed householders standing in the waiting area followed by a long queue down to the building's entrance lobby. I overheard a beneficiary complaining to one of the front-line employees that it was his tenth time visiting the RO. The employee evaded his complaint and instead, accused him of being ignorant. The man turned to his wife and told her that because they were poor, they were considered ignorant. He told his wife that he did not want to visit this RO ever again and preferred to be out of the programme. This is an example of the lack of interconnectedness with regards to communication between beneficiaries and the SLBs in the and therefore clearly has a significant effect on successful targeting.

SLBs are often committed to public service and have certain expectations in terms of job delivery. However, Lipsky (2010) argues that these expectations are undermined by the demands of the work setting, which communication skills. In the FSP setting, the front-line SLBs deal with each household request and have to develop communication skills as part of the mass processing these households' requests. Therefore, communication is also one of the most important parts of the process since

the aim of FSP enrolment is to achieve the policy goal of funnelling the benefit to the poor households. Yet, most of ROs suffer from chronic communication shortcomings.

Many factors have been discussed as problematic in the process of implementing the FSP and illustrating the communication's messiness theme. . These include: the volume of application requests from both existing beneficiaries and new applicants in terms of caseworkers and workload; difficulties with workload management; lack of training for SLBs; lack of complaint channels for beneficiaries and applicants; lack of feedback and response mechanisms and the 'phenomenal pressure' this puts SLBs under. . It is by combining these factors that it is possible to understand the poor outcomes of FSP and communication plays a role in all of them in terms of targeting.

6.2.2.1 Volume of Application Requests

‘There are several ways in which street-level bureaucracies characteristically provide fewer resources than necessary for workers to do their jobs adequately. The two most important ways are the ratio of workers to clients or cases, and time. Street-level bureaucrats characteristically have very large caseloads relative to their responsibilities. The actual numbers are less important than the fact that they typically cannot fulfil their mandated responsibilities with such caseloads’ (Lipsky, 2010, p.29).

Lipsky (2010) has focused on the challenge that SLBs face between their responsibilities and the volume of cases they have to process. All managers who I interviewed discussed the problems and challenges they face when they meet beneficiaries and applicants. They complained about the mass processing of the application procedures and the resulting difficulties with managing the heavy workload, the daily activities of the SLBs that are never completed, the absence of any channel through which employees can complain and the psychological stress this causes and last but not least, the lack of training for SLBs to help them manage their work. All these factors can influence the FSP's targeting mechanism.

6.2.2.1.1 Caseworkers and Workload

There is plenty of evidence in the literature that high workloads put pressure on the social workers and henceforth, affects their performance (Moriarty, 2004). Additionally, existing literature shows a relationship between the ability of workers to carry out their jobs adequately and an institutional structure that provides sufficient resources for them (Juby and Scannapieco, 2007). However, thus far empirical studies have not looked at the impact of SLBs' communication skills performance whose jobs involve direct contact with beneficiaries and how this, combined with unmanageable workloads, impacts the targeting performance of the FSP.

A study conducted by Orme (1995) states that workload refers to the amount of work represented by SLBs' caseloads plus the other tasks they undertake. In the FSP, the SLBs have to deal with beneficiaries and applicants, register their records in the ledger and in the computer software programme. Also, Stevens (2008) has argued that measuring employees' workload is imperative as part of identifying and quantifying all the pressures on staff and how these pressures affect their performance.

To apply for the FSP benefit, beneficiaries or applicants come into direct contact with the employees inside the RO. Within this setting, these interactions are a stressful part and a challenge for workers as a part of implementation process. Some managers have expressed acute concern with their inability to deal with massive processing of the high volume of cases they are faced with, due to the lack of resources, and particularly, the lack employees in relation to the workload. This problem is further exacerbated in the poorest areas, as one RO manager explains:

‘This area is considered one of the poor areas in Egypt, how I have to deal with these number of beneficiaries and applicants every day and manage the system with only one RO serves this whole poor neighbourhood’

(Interview with Ration Office 10, Alexandria, September 2016).

These differences on the ground mean that that offices in the poorest areas face more challenges than those located in the richer ones. One of these challenges is the concentration of poor households in these neighbourhoods, as shown in Chapter Five, Section 5.6.1.2.1. This problem is worse in Alexandria and Assuit than in Cairo. As

discussed earlier, the distribution of ROs in Alexandria does not appear to be underpinned by any rationale and many ROs are located in neighbourhoods they are not serving. For instance, a RO in a poorest quintile serves around one hundred thousand households, compared to a RO in a rich quintile that serves around twenty thousand households. Thus, the number of applicants and beneficiaries registered in the poorest quintiles is far higher in comparison with the richest quintiles. The managers have complained about the disconnection between the design of the FSP and the actual targeting process arguing that it does not take into consideration the number of applications in each RO and the resources each RO has at its disposal. This is a good example of how the problems of the institutional structure (linking the number of employees to the number applicants and beneficiaries, or the number of ROs to the applicants and beneficiaries as discussed in Chapter Five, Section 5.6.1.2) is combined with the SLBs, thereby affecting the performance of the programme by generating poor targeting outcomes.

6.2.2.1.2 Work Management, Psychology and Training

‘The context for social work and social care, and the effects of workload on practice and outcomes for people using services and staff all serve to increase the importance of workload measurement and management’ (Stevens, 2008, p.210).

The previous section shows how the disjuncture of the institutional structure and the workload is combined with the SLBs, making it extremely hard for them to manage this workload. One manager expressed her frustration at the intolerable workload:

‘It is very hard to deal with people face-face with a direct contact. I am really frustrated how many applicants we receive and serve on daily basis. This is not something normal and we sometime cannot bare all the work stresses’

(Interview with Ration Office 1, Cairo, April 2016).

This narrative of overload permeates all the interviews with RO managers and workers and workload management systems seem to be entirely absent in the FSP. Stevens (2008), proposes three approaches to managing the workload: planning is considered

a key stage in setting explicit the goals, then there is an analysis of the kinds of work included in a particular setting, and finally there is the process of developing and employing an approach to handling the workload. The managers in the three governorates unanimously stated that they did not receive any training to help them to deal with the daily challenges they faced. This inability to manage the workload has a significant impact on targeting the FSP benefit and therefore, the targeting outcomes. Providing training for RO managers that relates to the realities of the RO could significantly improve targeting performance, perhaps even more than contracting out FSP and using ICT to improve performance.

A study conducted by Stander and Rothmann (2010) shows that the psychological empowerment of employees can affect their engagement. The implications of this study is that the psychological empowerment of employees can contribute greatly to their engagement and performance (in terms of vigour, dedication and focus). In the FSP, it is not only that SLBs suffer from the inability to manage their workload, but also that there is not channel through which they can complain and affect the senior decisions. They then feel voiceless and disempowered. An employee emphasised that their experience of dealing with daily problems is being entirely disregarded:

‘We are not involved in the decision making process at all. However, we are the ones who have a direct contact with the beneficiaries and applicants. It is really strange how the top management level is thinking and deciding. Therefore, some decrees are issued and caused a lot of trouble and then they have been stopped. Some Ration Offices cannot deal with these troubles and therefore, poor households are affected’

(Interview with Ration Office 6, Assuit, November 2016).

Another manager also expressed his frustration at the lack of influence they had on decisions:

‘I am really upset that those employees who have a direct contact with both beneficiaries and applicants they are not involved in the decision making process. We are here the real ground that could say whether a certain decree

would fit or not. We always face the anger of the citizens. We are trying to manage the whole process but still sometimes we cannot tolerate and we yell at them'

(Interview with Ration Office 4, Cairo, May 2016).

These discussions highlight the psychological disempowerment employees can feel and how it influences their job performance, and thereby affects targeting performance.

Thus heavy workloads, psychological disempowerment and lack of training create a dissatisfied workforce. Concern about lack of training, a manager of one of the ROs has explained

'...we did not receive any training to be a manager of the ROs and to have a direct contact with beneficiaries'

(Interview in RO 5, Alexandria, August 2016).

Juby and Scannapieco argue that a worker's ability is entirely dependent on receiving adequate training and preparation for work in the SSNPs. Moreover, they explain that 'the lack of adequate skills and knowledge diminishes a worker's ability to complete tasks accurately and in an acceptable amount of time' and therefore, 'worker ability has the potential to directly affect workload management' (2007, p.98). Therefore, combining the factors presented in this section as a disconnect between the institutional structure and the SLBs, the latter's high workload, the lack of a system for managing the workload, psychological disempowerment, and the absence of adequate training for SLBs helps to clarify how targeting is linked to different aspects that influence FSP's performance outcomes.

6.2.2.2 Complaint Mechanism and SLBs' Behaviour Under 'phenomenal pressure'

Providing a complaint mechanism for beneficiaries and applicants is crucial to creating a fair and effective targeting mechanism that rectifies or eliminates ineffective policies, practices and actions. Accountability of the SSNPs, in which beneficiaries

and applicants can make complaints about the administration of the programme is related to the quality of programme delivery (Giannozzi and Khan, 2011). However in the FSP, there are no official complaint channels for beneficiaries or applicants. This evidence has been incorporated by all the interviews conducted with the employees and managers inside the ROs. In Stevens's study about workload management in social work services, he states that ‘...high workload carries implications for the workforce in terms of the interaction between stress, burnout ...’ (2008, p.207). This stress and burnout and with no supervision in place, can lead to bad practices. Thus, the disconnect in the institutional structure of the FSP, the challenges of managing the workload, employees’ feelings of frustration of disempowerment are exacerbated by the absence of formal complaints mechanisms, affecting SLBs’ behaviour under what several employees described as a ‘phenomenally’ pressurised work environment.

The SLBs’ mistreatment behaviour toward the beneficiaries has been reported at different sources of media. Beneficiaries and applicants, especially in the poor settlements, usually suffer from the mistreatment behaviour and report these incidences to the newspapers and TV reporters (Youn7 Newspaper, 2015; Sada El-Balad, 2017a, 2017b). One such headline states:



‘With Video: Citizens complain about the mistreatment of the Ration Office employees’ (Radwan, 2016). This article reports on interviews with a number of applicants and beneficiaries in front of one of the ROs. It focuses on complaints by householders that they were mistreated by employees inside the ROs. One of the interviewees complained that the employee refused to explain anything to her and that when she tried to ask a question, he yelled at her as if she had committed a crime. An old man (70 years old) expressed anger at how the employees dealt with him. He told the reporter that for seven months he has been coming to fulfil the required paper work. The reporter asked whether he would file an official complaint at the MSIT but he answered that he is an old man and at his age, cannot visit the

ministry, as there is no official complaint channel. Another lady complained about the lack of clarity about any deferral of receiving the benefit. According to her experience, employees invariably answer any query by saying that they cannot see the record on the IT software system. Generally, the point was made that the local staff treat beneficiaries like criminals or beggars. Another article about mistreatment in ROs discusses this further.



Eyewitnesses: Mistreatment of the citizens in a Ration Office: 'Are we tramps?' (Khalid, 2018).

Different newspaper articles seem to suggest SLBs regularly mistreat applicants and beneficiaries and this may have a negative psychological impact on them, which in turn may be responsible for the programme's exclusion errors. As shown by previous excerpts, some applicants end up dropping out of the system due to poor communication and costs involved in the process. Furthermore, poor communication includes the social stigma associated with poverty. Householders feel they are classified as ignorant because they are poor or employees treat them as though their IQ is low. These attitudes and the psychological pressure they bring can affect FSP targeting outcomes.

In studies about the administration of social protection schemes the concept of stigma has been described as the central issue (Pinker, 1971). A stigma marks the targeted households who receive welfare benefit, sometimes undermines their dignity and may damage their reputation. The experience of being disrespected and disregarded becomes a barrier to accessing the programs whose objective is social protection and in turn. affects targeting performance (Hernanz, Malherbert and

Pellizzari, 2004; Finn and Goodship, 2014). The causes of stigma are complex, being partly normative, personal, instrumental, social and institutional. While very poor households who need access to this benefit to fulfil their basic needs are prepared to confront the stigma, others may not (Li and Walker, 2017). The imposition of stigma, Pinker writes, ‘is the commonest form of violence used in democratic societies’ (1971, p.175).

I myself observed, in many ROs located especially in the poorest quintiles, managers and employees shouting at applicants and beneficiaries in an aggressive manner. At one of the ROs I visited, one beneficiary burst into tears because of the way in which they were treated by one of the employees. When I asked a manager at this RO why they were so harsh, he explained his difficulty in dealing with citizens:

‘I am really regretting to leave my job as an inspector and being the head of this RO. To deal directly with beneficiaries and applicants you should have a talent or special skill and I do not have it at all. I am always nervous and aggressive towards them’

(Interview with Ration Office 2, Cairo, April 2016).

This manager clearly feels he does not have the required skills for dealing with the beneficiaries or applicants and this leads to feelings of stress. He feels that people do not understand what he says and he does not have the patience to explain more.

Thus from interviews, observations and newspapers articles it is evident that householders are being mistreated by RO managers, especially in the poorest areas, and appears to be no penalty system in place or supervision from the MSIT that might monitor the quality of communication between beneficiaries and the SLBs. Moreover, it is clear that such practices will impact targeting performance.

Street level bureaucrats of the FSP supply a service that the beneficiaries cannot find elsewhere. According to Lipsky (2010), SLBs can impose numerous non-monetary costs such as mistreatment, neglect, personal abuse or inconvenience. Lipsky argues that these employees are not usually penalised for the suffering they cause by such actions and behaviours. . Lipsky gives the example of a medical centre where patients may be called ‘garbage’, ‘liars’, ‘deadbeats’ and so forth. This language can be seen as an expression of feeling superior to especially a lower-class people. By

observation, it is suggested that doctors can neglect patience if there is restrict supply of the professional in their specialisation. However, if the patient can visit another clinic, this behaviour is limited (Rein, 1970). Applying that to FSP, benefit can only be obtained from the RO, so the beneficiaries and applicants are forced to accept the mistreatment. Furthermore, there is no complaints mechanism or accountability process for beneficiaries and applicants who are unhappy with how they are being treated. Moreover, they cannot even appeal against decisions. Therefore, all the interconnected factors that contribute to poor communication between SLBs and the beneficiaries can have a significant effect on the targeting mechanism of the FSP and lead to targeting errors.

6.3 The FSP Working Conditions

The work environment of the SLBs is characterised by conditions that affect service delivery and because SLBs share similarities across different contexts, a certain amount of generalisation is possible about the social work and roles they provide under certain working conditions (Weinberg, 1977; Yates, 1977; Lipsky, 2010). For instance SLB jobs are characterised by extensive interaction with individuals and they are required to respond effectively to the needs identified in the policy mandates. However, they tend to do their best from their point of view and work in circumstances in which they develop a routine that is virtually equivalent to bureaucratisation (Bendix, 1956; Lipsky, 2010). This implication of street-level working conditions is the basis for the real implementation, in which the street-level employees are defined as the ultimate policymakers, not just the final link in the policy implementation chain (Lipsky, 2010). This section explores the difficulties that FSP SLBs experience and their response to the, at times, chronically inadequate resources and occasionally violence towards them- and the influence this has on the programme's outcomes.

6.3.1 The problem of the FSP's Resource Inadequacy

In delivering a public service, SLBs are difficult governmental units within which to work; they create a number of challenging working conditions for the SLBs, including resource shortages and policy confusion (Lipsky, 1991). When resources are insufficient to complete the assigned tasks, the policy objectives tend to be overambitious, ambiguous, vague or even conflicting. Furthermore, the governmental units that offer and deliver SSNP's welfare services to the public is always in dynamic work situations (Evans, 2016). Hence, there is an urgent need for a response to the households dimension of service in terms of '... complex tasks for which elaboration of rules, guidelines, or instructions cannot circumscribe the alternative' (Lipsky, 2010, p.15). Working conditions play an important role in determining performance outcomes. If there is a chronic lack of resources to carry out the expected activities, this affects the performance of the entire programme (Evans, 2016; Lima and D'Ascenzi, 2017). This section tries to understand how the working conditions of the FSP affect the programme's targeting outcomes.

The implementation of the FSP application and entitlement process begins in the local offices across the governorates. At this point of service delivery, the front-line SLB employees need to carry out the administrative activities of the programme within the given resources. To understand the implementation of FSP, it is important to look at what happens inside these ROs in terms of the effect of the salaries and incentives, the work environment and the shortfall of the staff, the bureaucratic setting in general and how their effect on SLBs' performance is passed on to the programme's outcomes.

6.3.1.1 Effect of Salaries, Physical Workplace Design and Bureaucratic Targeting Settings

The interaction between the households and the employees is made in the ROs which are distributed across the 27 governorates. There are three particularly important characteristics that affect the employees within the RO and therefore the programme's targeting outcomes: employees' salaries and incentives, the physical

workplace and the bureaucratic set up for the collection of information that enables effective targeting. These characteristics can be conceptualised as crucial elements in a welfare office (Hasenfeld, 2000; Aselage and Eisenberger, 2003; Godfrey and Yoshikaw, 2012).

6.3.1.1.1 Salaries and SLBs' Performance

‘Although psychologists point to the inherent value of work to human beings and identify the beneficial impact it has on their wellbeing, the rational economic behavioural model underpinning labour economics equates effort with disutility. As such, economists assume employees are motivated by monetary rewards’ (Bryson, Buraimo and Simmons, 2011, p.242).

Psychologists and economists have shown how salaries link to motivation and the incentive to work, that in turn affects job performance. In all the interviews I conducted, interviewees complained about low pay. Even when I decided that I would not ask about the salary so as to establish whether it was something that RO managers were suffering from or not, by self-referring to this problem (taking into consideration if a manager did not refer to this problem, I would ask about her/his salaries). Remarkably, all the RO managers, without asking them, complained about the low pay and about how hard their job is. For example, an RO manager in Alexandria stated that:

‘Any hierarchal system starts with the employee; the employee should like his job so much to be productive. If the employee is being paid so little and has a very heavy workload with different cases due to the insufficient number of employees, then certainly the performance will be very low. Therefore, I would recommend that the MSIT should increase the salaries of the employees working in the RO to get better performance from them’

, then he asked

‘How come the MSIT is paying me a salary of some ‘Piasters’ and give me a responsibility of million Egyptian Pounds to be distributed to the RSs. Can imagine how this gap could exploit the whole system and create corruption?’

(Interview with Ration Office 10, Alexandria, September 2016).

These quotes have been repeatedly merged in a systematic way to reflect how the pay low is influencing on the employees motivation and incentive to work, which might have a significant effect on targeting performance. Unexpectedly, even the job responsibilities of managers differ in Cairo and Alexandria compared to managers in Assuit, according to a manager in Assuit who told me:

‘There is lack of employees. Salaries are low. We cannot run the whole RO with those loads of responsibilities even more than our peers in Cairo and Alexandria’

(Interview with Ration Office 2, Assuit, October 2016).

Another manager compared them thus:

‘We are holding a lot of tasks and responsibilities not like the head of RO in Cairo. We have to distribute the LPG, commodities to RS and flour to Bakeries and supervise/inspect them and finally and above all serve citizens and process all the procedures for applicants and beneficiaries requests’

(Interview with Ration Office 4, Assuit, November 2016).

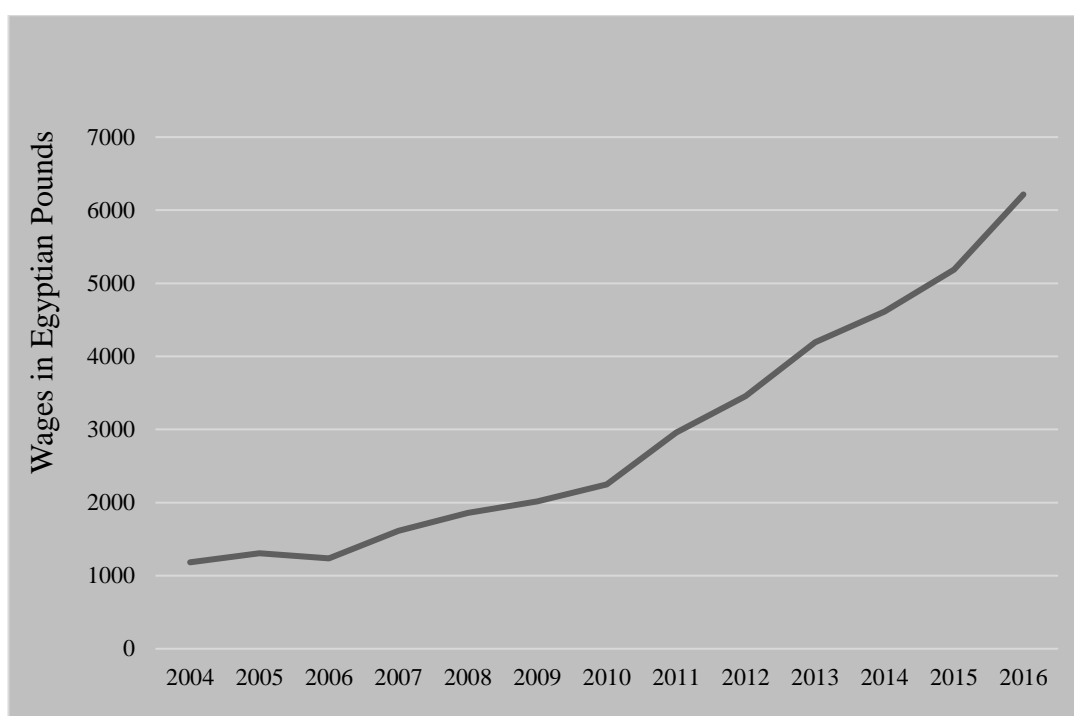
These quotes indicate that while salaries appear to be considered universally low, there are also disparities in the structure, even in the design of the FSP, whereby job responsibilities of the same position differ across governorates. All managers in Assuit complained about the heavy responsibilities of the job and the impossibility of fulfilling these responsibilities due to limited resources and time. An RO manager in Assuit explained:

‘First of all, our salaries are very low in spite of we are having more job responsibilities than our peers in Cairo. Telling you the truth, I cannot supervise all these RSs and Bakeries. I could say it is impossible task and no one could do that’

(Interview with Ration Office 7, Assuit, November 2016).

Salaries ranged from LE1800 (US\$204) to LE2800 (US\$ 318) depending on the amount of time spent working in the FSP. These salaries are less than the average monthly wage of other workers in the public sector by around 3.5 to 2.2 times as shown in **Figure 23**. These findings add to the argument that inadequate resources result poor targeting outcomes. The employees' performance is directly affected by all these factors, which consequently has a negative impact on the targeting outcomes of the FSP.

Figure 23: Average Monthly Wage of the Workers in Public Sector



Source Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) statistical yearly book, various years

6.3.1.1.2 Physical Workplace and the Bureaucratic Targeting Settings

‘...we are working in an inhuman work place’

(Interview with Ration Office 8, Cairo, June 2016).

Around 20 managers out of 31, many of them in poor neighbourhoods, criticised the working conditions and how they undermined programme performance. The analysis of the data collected from the three governorates shows there is a disconnection between the bureaucratic requirements for information for targeting and the physical workplace in which this information is gathered. These features may not seem directly related to targeting but narrative evidence from interviews suggests it has a very significant influence on the programme.

The MSIT planned to renovate all the ROs by 2018, I was told by RO interviewees. However, few of them have been renovated and only in Cairo and Alexandria. From interviews and my observations across the three governorates there is apparently no approved code of practice that specifies how much room employees and the householders should have in terms of access to and from their desks, waiting areas and space between desks. All RO managers complained about the location of the office, most ROs are up several flights of stairs, and the space inside the office in that the offices are small in proportion to the number of served households. An RO manager described other inadequacies of their working environment:

‘There is no specific guidance on the occupational space requirements for the ROs that should be formed by the MSIT. We have broken desks and chairs, sometimes we collect money as colleagues to cope to these insufficient resources and buy a second hand desks and fans in summer. Given this small space volume of this RO, two room each (4*5*2 m), we have to serve 60,092 beneficiaries and the new applicants as well. The households stand in long queues from the second floor down to the street. Moreover, if there is any fire to happen in the office, there is not any means of escape; no escape routes or exits, we will be all dead’

(Interview with Ration Office 1, Alexandria, July 2016).

Another manager describes the situation

‘The office is very small and is located on the fifth floor, no good desks or chairs, no fans, no toilet, no shelves. We do not feel comfortable to work in this work place at all. These conditions influence on our work progress, (sometimes some files are missed or a paper is missed), in terms of processing the applications faster than how it is now, dealing with each household carefully or sufficient time to listen exactly to everyone, it is very noisy. There is a provision for renovation of the RO from 4 years ago in the DSIT. We still do not know why they did not renew the offices and where is this provision’

(Interview with Ration Office 9, Assuit, December 2016).

These quotes reflect how the office space is not designed to receive large numbers of beneficiaries. And there are other problems, as one employee told me:

‘We have a sewage problem for one year in front of the office. People sometimes cannot enter the office from the overflowing sewage ponds. We also do not have enough files, shelves and office supplies. How they expect us to deliver a good service’

(Interview with Ration Office 1, Assuit, October 2016).

These quotes again emphasize how the physical workplace can be linked to the processing of the targeting benefit to the beneficiaries and how it may affect on the programme’s performance. A study on the influence that physical office environments can have on employees, found that ‘Office employees spend a lot of their time inside a building, where the physical environments influence their well-being and directly influence their work performance and productivity. In the workplace, it is often assumed that employees who are more satisfied with the physical environment are more likely to produce better work outcomes. Temperature, air quality, lighting and noise conditions in the office affect the work concentration and productivity’ (Kamarulzaman *et al.*, 2011, p.262). Clearly the sub-standard conditions of ROs will impact on employee performance.

Another obstacle SLBs face aside from too few staff across the three governorates, is shortage of office supplies in terms of essential stationary, including pens, papers, files, and the number of computers needed for the administrative mechanism of the FSP. I conducted one interview in RO 7 in Alexandria, located on the third floor, which consisted of two rooms and one kitchen. In the first room there were three employees who were recording cases in four ledgers. When I asked an employee why there were no other ledgers in this room from previous years, I was told that they had been discarded, which made me wonder how employees or inspectors can verify previous records. The second room was used for requests. There were two desks, one for the manager and the other for the front-line SLB. The room was full of beneficiaries and because it was so crowded, the manager had to shout but I still could hardly hear him. The queue began in the room and went down the stairs to the entrance lobby of the building. After queuing for more than 5 hours, some applicants got angry with the manager for their long stay in the RO. During my interview with the manager, the front-line SLB had dealt with only 16 beneficiaries as the computer was so slow - I was writing the number of beneficiaries he served during my interview with the manager.

IT is another area where there is a lack of skills. In 25 out of the 31 ROs I visited, the manager is computer-illiterate. The manager of this RO described the working conditions as follows:

‘...we are working in a very narrow flat with no office supplies; no pens, no papers, no files. We collect money from our pockets to buy these stationaries. Also, we have only one computer and only one employee who is computer-literate with basic skills in the office that serves around 126,788 registered beneficiaries and new applicants as well. The computer is very slow, and we do not understand how the software of the Smart Card Company works. Moreover, the system a lot of times is down that causes a numerous problem, such as this crowdedness, sometimes errors in the data-entry. I am computer-illiterate, so I am not sure what’s going on in this programme. The MSIT did not establish a system that can provide enough supervision on the technical work inside the RO. Every manager came here did his work on his own way

as there is not specific guidelines to do the RO work. I cannot see any files to follow or track anything done before I arrived here’

(Interview with Ration Office 7, Alexandria, August 2016).

Therefore, the ability of RO managers in the workplace together with the fragile link with the private SCCs, where SCCs do not provide proper training, leaving RO managers feeling deskilled, has a knock on effect on the targeting performance mechanism of the whole system

As I have shown, the RO is a demanding, under resourced and understaffed working environment that places huge stress on its managers. So they develop certain coping mechanisms, like a manager who works in in RO 3 in a very small village 40 minutes driving from Assuit city centre. The RO is located in a flat on the second floor, and consists of two rooms, with two employees serving 70,113 beneficiaries. One room has only a desk and a ledger while the other room has two desks with a computer on one of them. The manager complained about the lack of office supplies such as pens, paper, files or even shelves. So he contacted a member of parliament and asked him to provide the office with what was needed and persuaded the owners of the private RS to pay some money to purchase the required supplies.

Lipsky (2010) refers to such coping mechanisms in his theory, arguing that sometimes the demands of the work setting challenge the expected performance outcome of any programme. In these settings, if the demand is detrimental on performance, SLBs cannot deal properly with households. As a result, they have to develop coping mechanisms in terms of work practices that allow the mass processing of these household requests. The SLBs justify these coping strategies as pragmatic and reasonable, given the work conditions and settings they work in, but these strategies may distort the service benefit or put SLBs in the position of ‘manipulating citizens on behalf of the agencies from which citizens seek help or expect fair treatment’ (ibid, p.xv). The citizens meanwhile become, ‘bureaucratic subjects’ who, in accessing the benefit, “must strike a balance between asserting their rights as citizens and confirming to the behaviours public agencies seek to place on them as clients” (ibid, p.xvi). Consequently, the SLBs can either ‘invent modes of mass processing that more or less permit them to deal with the public fairly, and

appropriately and thoughtfully”, or they can “give in to favouritism, stereotyping, convenience, and routinizing – all of which serve their own or agency purposes’ (ibid, p.xiv). Unsatisfactory working conditions and the lack of human resources are likely to exacerbate existing failings of the FSP and undermine targeting outcomes.

A noisy work environment makes concentration difficult. As I have indicated, ROs are very busy and noisy places. Lack of concentration may lead to errors of inclusion or exclusion, as being inferred from interviews. Furthermore employees say there is insufficient time to deal with the number of daily requests and the place is not ready to receive so many people. These inadequate organisational structures impact on front-line SLBs, which in turn affects their actions and performance (Godfrey and Yoshikaw, 2012). Therefore, the workplace is an important contributing factor in the targeting outcomes of the FSP.

Another issue in terms of the RO as a structure is the lack of private space. The bureaucratic targeting process of the FSP requires beneficiaries and applicants to discuss their personal circumstances and socio-economic conditions, which needs a private setting, not only as an important right in itself, but also as key element in respecting the autonomy and dignity of the beneficiaries and applicants. Having to conduct such requests in a crowded public space, does nothing to address the shame and stigma associated with poverty (Li and Walker, 2017), especially given this administrative bureaucratic setting. However, the day-to-day reality of the FSP, in a small noisy space does not offer any privacy. Furthermore, this lack of privacy may make beneficiaries and applicants extremely reluctant to discuss their situation, for example changes in their financial circumstances. This does not create a climate that is conducive to open and friendly communication between the SLBs and the beneficiaries and applicants. Therefore, the RO as a physical space and the bureaucratic targeting requirements combine to create a stressful environment for everyone inside the ROs. This also illustrates the interconnectedness of different issues and how in combination, they may lead to undermining the outcomes of the programme’s targeting performance.

6.3.2 Assaults on Street-Level Bureaucrats of the FSP

Incidences of conflict and violence that arise in the stressful workplace have emerged from my fieldwork, an area that has not been adequately explored in the targeted food programs. Although there is growing concern about the violence that social workers can be exposed to during the course of their work (Bibby, 2017). Many studies have revealed how social workers street-level bureaucrats can find themselves at the receiving end of violent behaviour. According to the literature, some workers consider these occurrences as an inevitable part of their work and therefore consider as essential the ability to defend themselves. Other SLBs demand a safe work environment to be able to perform their job, as some households yell, curse, hit and shout at them and these behaviour are a significant problem that cannot be ignored, since every violent incident has a debilitating effect on the workers concerned, which can escalate and become dangerous if not properly managed (see Scalera, 1995; Newhill, 1996; McCoy and Smith, 2001; Shields and Kiser, 2003; Spencer and Munch, 2003; Jayaratne, Croxton and Mattison, 2004; Respass and Payne, 2008). This section discusses current concerns about workplace safety and violence towards the FSP's front-line SLBs who have face-to-face contact with beneficiaries and new applicants. It presents the different threatening situations they may face that the government needs to address for their own safety. Additionally, it sheds further light on how the work safety can have an effect on the programme's targeting outcomes.

When beneficiaries and new applicants feel mistreated, they can become angry and frustrated and this is likely to be directed at the front line SLBs. Some RO managers confided to me how challenging they found it when dealing with expressions of anger and many complained of feeling unsafe. One employee who has a direct contact with beneficiaries and applicants shared with me the challenges she faces in her job:

‘Some people can be very angry, like they do not understand that any delay in the application process is out of our hands. However, they argue a lot, sometimes being disrespectful to us. You know not receiving the FSP benefit in Egypt, applicants or beneficiaries can really get angry and that's definitely,

I mean it's very difficult to handle this bad tempered without enough security'.

(Interview with Ration Office 2, Alexandria, July 2016).

She was very unhappy with the lack of security in her work place and felt threatened when beneficiaries got angry or were disrespectful towards her when she was unable to hand them their card. I heard other stories of employees being intimidated by applicants, for example, an RO manager told me:

'We do not have enough security here. From two weeks ago a thug woman was shouting at me to be enrolled in the FSP system. She was threatening me that she would wait me after I finish my work and would hit me in the street in front of everyone. We are not secured at all. I was crying two hours. I would blame the irresponsibility of the MSIT which does not feel what we are suffering from'

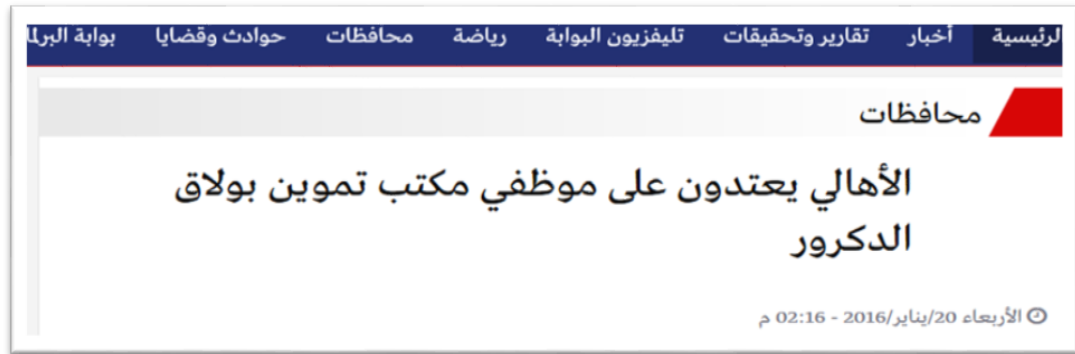
(Interview with Ration Office 4, Cairo, May 2016).

This employee shows that SLBs are at serious risk if there is not enough security. Because of fear of further conflict, she said she preferred not to file a police report about this incidence. Policy-makers at the MSIT must ensure that there are structures in place to handle potentially unpredictable and hazardous situations by putting in place proper protocols and rules. She also mentioned that some employees bow to the pressure and enrol some beneficiaries in the programme to protect themselves. The issue of intimidation was mentioned by many interviewees across the three governorates, indicating that intimidating behaviour may be also contributing to inclusion errors. Another employee in one of the poorest areas said:

'We do not have enough security at all. We all are women here and thugs can harm us anytime. We all do not feel we are in a secured environment'

(Interview with Ration Office 7, Cairo, June 2016).

One employee showed me a wound on her hand from an applicant who bit her and insisted on being enrolled in the programme. Similar revelations were made unprompted, by employees and managers across Cairo, Alexandria and Assuit. All these cases highlight that SLBs are exposed to the risk of personal injury every day. Some of these incidences have been reported in the newspapers. One such article is entitled:



“Citizens assault employees of Boulak’s RO” (Albawabh, 2016).

The newspaper reports that some citizens attacked an RO in a poor area in Egypt and beat up its local staff because they had not received the FSP benefit. The police were called and arrested the two culprits.

I spent around one year in different ROs across Cairo, Alexandria and Assuit. A number of common settings are met at all the ROs as they represent the focal point of the programme enrollment where all sorts of tensions can occur; heterogeneous households, convergence of situations of rancor and failure to meet the households’ expectations and needs, and insecurity environment. These tensions are observed from either the managers of the ROs and their employees, or from the beneficiaries and applicants as well which are always being expressed in front of or inside the ROs. All these tensions are outbursts during household confrontations with the front-line employees, it bears mentioning that they are not well restrained. The disturbance; I may name it as a disturbance routine in most of the ROs seems so regular across the three governorates, whereby this disturbance routine always ends up with behaviour that might lead to abuse and violence on a direct level. Also, I have observed in some ROs across the three governorates that some households are very aggressive in dealing with the employees and have heard a number of stories from many employees about

the threats they have faced to be enrolled in the FSP or due to the delay of receiving the Smart Card. Henceforth, the ministry should admit that the FSP's targeting outcome is affected by the reality within which the SLB are exposed to violent practices and must take action to preserve worker safety in the ROs.

Lipsky has stated that 'the threat of physical harm is the most dramatic aspect of the threat under which street-level bureaucrats sometimes work' (Lipsky 2010, p.32). Given the high levels of verbal abuse and hazardous threats inside the RO, official channels for security actions should be constructed for immediate purposes. Thus, the ROs' employees are exposed to threats if the required actions are not taken appropriately; for instance, creating a zero-tolerance policy for violence and threats to have a safe environment. Since these practices have the potential to escalate if the result is being enrolled in the programme with this hostility. Moreover, the MSIT should organize programs addressing issues of how to deal with violent occurrences and encouraging the reporting of violence cases. These practices of threats may bring out and induce more error of inclusions due to the fear of the employees not to enroll those bullying households and influence negatively on the programme's targeting outcomes. Newhill and Wexler (1997) have argued that procedures and policies should include training and didactic information to increase personal safety.

6.4 Rationing the FSP: Limitation of Access and Demand

The inadequacies and uncertainties of the FSP as a public service engenders a number of costs to service users. The highest costs are borne by those households who are discouraged from applying for the benefit that is designed for them. The complex criteria of eligibility not only leads to exclusion errors, but also to additional costs, both monetary and non-monetary, including time and cost involved in repeated visits, queuing and extracting information (see Lipsky, 2010). All these costs may significantly affect the targeting outcomes of the programme.

6.4.1 Monetary

Programs sometimes demand a fee from households in exchange for enrolling them, which sometimes discourages them from participating (Lipsky, 2010). In the FSP, beneficiaries and applicants have to pay a number of costs in order to access the benefit. First, they have to acquire official records such as birth certificates, marriage or divorce certificates, from different governmental agencies. Second, SLBs follow the ministry's decrees in assigning a monetary cost for each application request. Third, the beneficiaries and applicants have to pay the application cost. In theory applications should only cost 50 Piasters (5 Cents), however, in practice, according to some testimonies and anecdotes from 20 ROs manager out of the 31 across the three sites, larger payment are requested and made.

Moreover, during my fieldwork I became aware of two types of informal costs that the householder has to pay. For instance, in Alexandria, as discussed in the previous chapter, individuals not recruited by the MSIT, will hover in front of the RO office and offer to fill in the application requests for them and provide them with a file. I am unsure whether this practice has arisen due directly to the limited number of front-line SLBs in relation to the number of beneficiaries and new applicants or it may be a historical office culture phenomenon. According to managers I spoke to, beneficiaries pay a minimum fee of around LE10 (\$1.2) per application request to these people.

Another type of informal cost I observed is effectively a brokerage service. Retired employees from the MSITs in all three governorates, but most significantly in Alexandria, work as facilitators to track the beneficiaries' or new applicants' requests. These beneficiaries or new applicants pay a monthly fee to this person to regularly visit the RO and ask about the application requests and how far their request has progressed in the process. Based on the testimonies of three individuals, fees range from LE100 (\$11) to LE500 (\$56). From short interviews I conducted with some of them, it appears that some of them may visit the office nearly three times a week, so that the beneficiaries and applicants themselves only have to go back when the RO notifies them that the SRC has arrived and needs to be signed for. It is of course the better-off beneficiaries and applicants that benefit from this informal tracking service their applications in case they have any problem. Lipsky (2010) has stated that those

households who have monetary resources tend to be more powerful than those households who do not. Therefore, in the FSP, households who can afford all these types of costs tend to have better access to the benefit and are more likely to have SRCs than those who cannot.

6.4.2 Queuing and Time

Time is another resource for households and is considered in this framework as a unit of value that is extracted from beneficiaries and new applicants when they have to acquire official documents and present them at the RO as part of their application- as a service cost. For the bureaucratic processing of programs that deliver public services, the way that the households are required to present themselves at the local offices imposes costs on them. Even the most ordinary queuing arrangement that is designed as a first come-first served has cost implications for households (Schwartz, 1975). The design of FSP is a first come first served service and this type of design tends to ration the service delivery by making service users wait. ‘When clients are forced to wait they are implicitly asked to accept the assumption of rationing: that the cost they are bearing are necessary because the resources of the agency are fixed’ (Lipsky, 2010, p.95). Long lines are proceeded on the basis of first come first served, and therefore that design relatively benefit households who can afford the waiting time (Lipsky, 2010) while those who suffer most from this design are the poor households. ‘Not only may clients who appear more affluent get served first because it is thought that the costs of waiting are higher for them, but agencies often paternalistically develop policy as if the costs to the poor were nonexistent’ (ibid, p.95 ;Schwartz, 1975). In front of every RO I visited across the three governorates there were beneficiaries and new applicants standing in long queues. In the FSP, time costs are crucial for households and are considered a significant problem, especially for poor households. As one manager explained:

‘ ...unfortunately, the administrating system of the FSP made the households spend a lot of time in going to numerous places and keep visiting the ROs. We know that poor households, especially the poor ones, tend to be so angry and furious as most

of them depend on their daily wage which will be gone on the day they decide to visit the RO. Other non-poor households have the ability to hire someone to keep visiting the RO until they receive their own SRC'

(Interview with Ration Office 2, Cairo, April 2016).

This view was echoed across the three governorates and emphasizes that time is a very important aspect that should be taken into consideration in targeting the FSP and it needs to be recognised that it can greatly affect the programme's performance. Time as a cost being imposed on the households to access the FSP can lead to leakage errors or under-coverage.

6.4.3 Information

Another way in which a service can be rationed is in the provision of information (Lipsky, 2010). All the documents required as part of an application are displayed on a notice board in every RO. Yet I observed several beneficiaries and applicants asking about the document requirements written on this sign post. I was not sure if this was because they are illiterate or because they needed more clarification. However, what I observed was that the employees in that stressful environment tended to give very brief and curt answers to their questions. During an interview in a RO in Alexandria, in a very crowded office, I spent around 7 hours conducted a one hour interview due to the number of interruptions, the crowded and noisy office. I asked the manager if we could schedule another appointment but he advised me to experience and observe the day-to-day life inside the RO. During one of the interview pauses, a beneficiary came to the manager's desk and asked clarification about the documents he would need to bring. The manager gave him a brief reply and started to serve someone else. But the original person clearly had not quite understood the manager so approached him again, this time with a piece of paper, so that he could write down the documents he should bring to his next visit to the RO. The manager refused to write anything down on this paper so the beneficiary asked me if I could help him by writing down the required documents on this piece of paper. I turned to the manager and asked if it was okay or not. He agreed and so I wrote them down. Afterwards, I asked the manager why he refused to write down the requirements. He answered that he never

signed or wrote anything hand-written on a paper for any beneficiary or applicant, as some case guidelines were unclear. He then changed the topic. At that time, I could not interpret what happened, except that it reflects a probability of a kind of mistrust in the programme. However, in 15 other ROs I visited afterwards, I also observed that employees and manager avoided writing anything down for the beneficiaries or applicants. All the instructions tended to be only verbal. Moreover, in around 18 ROs, the employees who had direct contact with the beneficiaries tended to speak too fast or in their own bureaucratic language. Then, the beneficiaries had to ask more than two times the same question to get a clear answer. Edelman states that ‘a related characteristic of many official statements helps further to neutralize or win over potential opponents: the resort to jargon and banality. Bureaucratic language is usually dismissed as funny and trivial. But in politics, as in religion, whatever is predictable, ceremonial, or banal serves a function. The jargon of administrators does have important consequences, for its users and for public opinion, though the dictionary definitions of the words rarely convey their meaning’ (1977, p.98). The information that is provided through the employees of the FSP and the way it is communicated can have a significant impact on the targeting mechanism.

In the FSP, some managers complained about a lack of clarity in the guidelines and they preferred not to provide additional information until the DSIT provided more clarification. As one manager commented:

‘...certain cases which are not clear in the guidelines, I tend not to give any information until asking the DSIT. However, to ask and receive an answer; this may take some days or weeks or more; that annoy the applicants or beneficiaries as they have to visit the office many times until their problems are solved and sometimes we send them to the MSIT’

(Interview with Ration Office 7, Cairo, June 2016).

Having information about a service is an important aspect of providing that service; in the case of the FSP, information about the enrolment process is a crucial part of the targeting mechanism. Instead, both service users and employees suffer as a result of inaccurate information conveyed in TV announcements, on shows and on the news about receiving the SRC. All RO managers and employees across the three governorates mentioned this problem and said it was the cause of tension between them and the householders. For example, a Cairo manager explained:

‘The MSIT is announcing on TV shows that accepted applicants will be handed the SRC in maximum of twenty days and then people came and argued with us if there will be any delay. The information that the MSIT is announcing is not true, there is a massive delay in handing the SRC due to the SSCs’

(Interview with Ration Office 2, Cairo, April 2016).

In Alexandria, a manager told me:

‘Households feels the lack of credibility of the Ration Office as it is not coping with what the MSIT announces on the TV shows in regards to the time of receiving a Smart Card ID. It always say it take around two weeks from the day of requesting an application, however in reality it may take from at least five months to one year’

(Interview with Ration Office 4, Alexandria, July 2016).

An Assuit, manager concurred:

‘We are facing a lot of problems as a result of the official statements on the TV shows which is not right at all. They always say that the issuance of the SRCs won’t take more than 15 days from the day of the application. It is totally untrue. So, people visit our RO and started to argue and complain that we are lazy’

(Interview with Ration Office 2, Assuit, October 2016).

The mean of providing the bureaucratic information for the households may depress the service delivery of certain programme (Lipsky, 2010). Hence, this represents non-monetary costs that are imposed on those who visit the RO and is considered one of the factors that may discourage poor households from being enrolled on the programme, thereby contributing to exclusion errors.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has been in part an investigation about the place of the SLBs in the FSP and the implications for its targeting performance. It is also an inquiry into the structure of one of those resonant anti-poverty programs in Egypt. Beneficiaries and applicants encounter a series of complex interactions with the SLBs that may deeply affect the benefit they receive from the FSP. In this chapter, I have examined how the combination of actions and behaviours of the SLBs together with the work environment can affect the FSP targeting outcomes. These actions and behaviours are shaped by the SLBs' abilities; their skills and experience; several interconnected factors that influence the communication between the SLBs and the beneficiaries and applicants; working conditions; and inadequacies and uncertainties associated with rationalizing practices through numerous costs the households pay to access the benefit. All these factors shape what becomes the implemented policy of the programme, which as I have shown, plays such an important role in understanding the FSP's targeting outcomes.

This chapter has shown that SLBs' critical role in service delivery. Their abilities and the characteristics of promotion in the FSP play an important role in understanding the FSP's targeting outcomes. In the FSP being promoted to a management position is largely determined by the amount of time spent in the FSP bodies, regardless of actual managerial experience or soft skills. Hence, the FSP's promotion system leads to unqualified and incapable employees becoming managers, thereby negatively influencing programme performance. For example, managers with insufficient experience tend to send households to different governmental agencies. Lack of experience and unclear guidelines slow down the application procedures and therefore, some applicants or beneficiaries choose not to continue visiting the RO as the costs begin to outweigh the perceived benefits. Others may be excluded or included incorrectly in the programme. Therefore, the current FSP's promotion system, SLBs' limited abilities, and unclear guidelines contribute to targeting errors.

The interconnectedness in terms of communication between the SLBs and beneficiaries and applicants seems to have a clear and significant effect on targeting the FSP. These factors include the volume of application requests, the lack of complaint mechanisms and the SLBs' behaviour due to the 'phenomenal pressure' of the work environment. This chapter shows how combining these factors can help to understand why FSP's performance is so poor in terms of targeting.

- The volume of application requests is a significant factor that can be linked to poor targeting outcomes. This factor includes first, the heavy workload and the exhausting daily activities of the SLBs. The analysis of implementing the targeting process shows a disconnection between the design of the programme and the workload. The absence of workload management, complaint mechanisms for SLBs and training seem to have a highly significant effect on the FSP's targeting mechanism. The inability to manage the workload has a significant impact on targeting the FSP benefit. Moreover, the inability of SLBs to manage the workload is accompanied by stress and, and in the absence of a complaint channel through which to change any senior decision, SLBs say they feel voiceless and disempowered. Additionally, the chapter shows how the absence of training for SLBs is considered a triggering factor when it comes to programme outcomes. These challenges significantly undermine SLBs engagement and performance, thereby impacting on targeting performance.
- The lack of complaint mechanisms for the service users and the SLBs' behaviour under pressure play a crucial role in the programme's poor targeting outcomes. However, despite being clearly unfair and ineffective, the targeting mechanism has not been rectified nor have there been efforts to change or eliminate policies, practices or actions that are likely to affect targeting outcomes. Consequently, the challenges of the aforementioned factor combined with the absence of a complaints mechanism contribute to the pressurised and stressful work environment for SLBs, contributing to the incidences of mistreatment and generally, undermining the communication and relationships between SLBs and beneficiaries.

The implication of the SLBs' working conditions is also the basis for the real implementation of the FSP. This chapter has furthermore explained the difficulties that the SLBs experience during administrating their work from their perspective. They face a number of challenging working conditions that include resource shortages and policy confusion (Lipsky, 1991). This chapter has argued that working conditions play an important role in determining performance outcomes. The analysis of the FSP's working conditions in this chapter has been instructive to understanding how (a) inadequate resources and (b) personal assaults on SLBs affect the programme's targeting outcomes.

- (a) Inadequate Resources: the analysis of this section has provided a detailed discussion of these conditions and their interactions and has analysed their contribution to the problem of targeting. I argue that some characteristics of this interaction to be particularly important for the programme's targeting outcomes: employees' salaries and performance, physical workplace and bureaucratic settings for collecting information needed for targeting.
- Psychologists and economists show that salaries are related to the motivation and the incentive to work, and that this in turn influences job performance. In the FSP, all RO managers complained about the low salaries and how demotivated they are. The analysis shows that low pay is influencing employee motivation and incentive to work in a repeated systematic narrative, which might have a significant effect on targeting performance. Moreover, unexpectedly, responsibilities of the managers are not the same in all the governorates in Egypt. Low pay and disparities in structure and design of the FSP provides significant evidence on how different factors can produce poor targeting outcomes of the programme.
 - An examination of the physical workplace and the bureaucratic targeting settings has shown that the FSP suffers from policy incoherence. The analysis of the data collected shows a disconnection between the bureaucratic requirements for information for targeting and the physical workplace in which this information is collected. Although these features may not be seem to relate directly to targeting, it is evident from the narratives that were common across the interviews, that they have a significant influence on the programme. SLBs have to find ways of coping with the workload and deliver the service. This is

the kind of coping mechanism that Lipsky (2010) has referred to in his theory, arguing, if the demand affects negatively on the performance, SLBs will not be able to deal properly with the householders. As a result, SLBs develop certain a coping mechanism in terms of work practices that make it possible to deal with the volume of requests, allow the mass processing of these households. The FSP is the case. This coping mechanism illustrates the incoherence in the programme. On the one hand, the physical work place is experienced as a very stressful environment where it is difficult to concentrate due to overcrowded spaces and noise, which in turn affects SLBs actions and performance. Therefore, the workplace could be an important factor influencing the targeting outcomes of the FSP. On the other hand, the bureaucratic targeting requirement of the FSP requires beneficiaries and applicants to discuss their personal circumstances and socio-economic conditions in these non-private settings. Lack of privacy can increase stigmatisation and reduce beneficiaries' and applicants' willingness to discuss the changes in their life. Consequently, communication between SLBs and service users is undermined by lack of trust and empathy. The combination of the RO as a working environment and the bureaucratic requirements of targeting is stressful for everyone inside the ROs. This chapter has illustrated how interconnected different issues are in terms of how they undermine the programme's targeting performance.

- (b) Personal Assaults on SLBs: this analysis has discussed in detail the issue of conflict and violence in the workplace, leaving SLBs feeling unsafe and threatened. I have argued that although this issue has been discussed in a number of studies, it has not been adequately explored in targeted food programs. The literature has identified violence towards SLBs as a significant problem that has to be addressed. This chapter has highlighted the urgent concerns about workplace safety and violence towards the FSP's front-line SLBs. Hence, the FSP's targeting outcomes are affected by the reality within which SLBs carry out their work and are exposed to threatening behaviour. This reality is explored from the perspective of the SLBs and then effect it has on the programme's targeting outcomes.

SLBs, beneficiaries and applicants bear the brunt of an environment of inadequate resources, uncertainties and lack of accountability that resulted in pattern and practices that could ration the service. A number of costs associated with the FSP benefit have been discussed. Lipsky (2010) has argued that the fixed criteria of eligibility not only has an influence on exclusion errors, but also has significant cost implications, both monetary and non-monetary ones. The costs to households can be monetary demands in return for information and the time required for repeated visits and time spent queuing on each occasion. All these costs play a significant role in affecting the targeting outcomes of the programme.

- Monetary costs discourage beneficiaries and applicants from participating (Lipsky, 2010). The analysis has highlighted the costs incurred by beneficiaries and applicants in order to access the FSP benefit. The findings show that there are formal and informal and that the better-off beneficiaries and applicants can afford all the costs involved in enrolling in the programme. Lipsky (2010) has stated that those households who have monetary resources tend to be more powerful than those households who do not. This is reflected in the FSP, where households who can afford all these types of costs tend to have better access than those who cannot.
- I have shown how time is a unit of value that is extracted from the beneficiaries and new applicants as a cost of accessing the service (Lipsky, 2010). The first come first served arrangement is an imposition of cost – all be it non-monetary - on the households who want to access the service (Schwartz, 1975). The findings indicate that the FSP's beneficiaries and applicants have to stand sometimes for hours in long queues in front of ROs, representing a considerable non-monetary cost and having a substantial impact on the programme's performance, especially for poor households.
- Providing accurate information to beneficiaries and applicants is an important factor in rationing the service and in turn, in terms of targeting performance. The ways and means of providing or obtaining accurate information are likely to influence targeting performance. First, conveying information verbally can expose beneficiaries and applicants to confusing and bureaucratic jargon. Second, the inaccurate information that is often broadcast through TV programs causes huge tensions between the SLBs on the one hand and the

beneficiaries and applicants on the other. Therefore, the ways and means of conveying information might also influence targeting performance.

The experience of the SLBs was extremely important to the operation of the targeting scheme for the FSP. Their performance, practice and the working conditions appeared from the data collected to sometimes produce unintended policy outcomes and contribute to poor targeting performance. The findings have demonstrated the importance of including the SLB's experience and the work setting, together with policy conflicts, for understanding targeting mechanism of the FSP. This suggests that these experiences and the difficult circumstances faced by both the SLBs and beneficiaries can affect the operation of the scheme and eventually produce poor targeting outcomes of the program.

Chapter 7– Discussion and Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

‘There is a wealth of statistical material on the Egyptian economy, but little is usable without much processing and elaboration’ (Mabro, 1974, p. 12)

Although these words were written by Mabro over forty years ago, they are still relevant today. The objective of this thesis was to conduct an analysis of the targeting system of the FSP, a programme that different international organisations have said contributes greatly to social stability in Egypt (see World Bank, 2010). This programme is perceived by policy-makers as a key safety, and an obligation of the state towards the people in the society, giving them access to a sustainable livelihood as a substantive right. Most studies of FSP targeting have assessed the programme solely from a quantitative approach. This thesis has sought to provide different insights about FSP’s targeting mechanism, and the influence it might have on the programme’s outcomes. This analysis includes grass-root perspectives of the implementation mechanism. The study has generated multiple insights regarding targeting measurements using multi-disciplinary and multi-level approaches. It focused on the different actors across the system, and the way in which mainstream approaches of measuring and designing targeting, bureaucratic policy structure, bureaucratic settings and implementers directly or indirectly influence the smooth functioning or distortion of the targeting outcomes. I have examined how effective the FSP targeting is in terms of inclusion and exclusion errors; how the targeting outcomes are affected by the programme’s bureaucratic structure and policy design; and the extent to which implementers of the programme at the local level and their working conditions influence targeting outcomes. In this concluding chapter, I discuss what points may be drawn from combining different insights of targeting that influence the programme’s performance.

7.2 Revisiting the Measuring Performance of the FSP

Food subsidies are common in the MENA region, as discussed in Chapter Four and Egypt's first food subsidy programme was launched during World War II. Since then, the history of providing FSPs is associated with the ideologies of successive regimes. The programme's objective has changed from managing scarce resources due to the War to curbing poverty in society. Food subsidies are found to have shielded the majority of poor people but not all, from the impact of the economic crisis and are widely popular with both policy-makers and beneficiaries, and therefore a politically sensitive issue when it comes to any reform (Abdalla and Al-Shawarby, 2018). However, the continuous fiscal support to the poor, as provided through food subsidies, has failed to decrease or curb the growth of poverty rates. This fact creates a policy space for investigating the programme's effectiveness in reaching the poor as well as meeting its targeting outcomes. In making concluding statements about how effective the FSP targeting has been in terms of inclusion and exclusion, it is necessary revisit "orthodox" quantitative approaches to measuring targeting performance. As discussed in Chapter Two Section 2.2, Chapter Three Section 3.2, 3.2, 3.4 and Chapter Four, there is a large body of research that measures targeting using mostly quantitative approaches. These studies fail to discuss the details of how and why performance is poor. However, it is still important to quantify first the whole targeting performance.

The empirical data presented in Chapter Four draws on the nationally representative CAPMAS survey, as discussed in Chapter Three Section 3.6.2. It included three different analyses. I analysed the targeting performance at the macro-level, then for further analysis of the targeting errors, at the meso-level and finally, I developed a model for targeting the benefit. Three key findings were discussed. Firstly, the macro-level analysis quantified the inclusion and exclusion errors of the programme's performance at the national level. Results showed a very high level of inclusion and exclusion errors. Secondly, the meso-level analysis explored the difference in targeting errors between urban and rural areas for better understanding error patterns. This analysis revealed an even distribution of targeting errors between urban and rural areas. Thirdly, I designed the Proxy Means Test (PMT) model to

examine how the model might work in measuring targeting effectiveness by determining eligible poor households in Egypt.

With the increase in poverty and inflation discussed in Chapter Four Section 4.2 and 4.3, I have argued that Egypt's FSP, at both a national and regional level, is in dire need of a reform to achieve its aim of reaching the poor. I used a macro-level approach towards measuring targeting errors, as explained in Chapter Two Section 2.2.4., using both the total yearly household expenditure and per capita household expenditure to show that at the same level of expenditure, some households have a SRC and others do not. This led me to assess the levels of inclusion and exclusion errors in the programme. The results showed that FSP suffers from high leakage rates, around 80 percent using HIECS 2013 (Chapter Four Section 4.5.1) and 90 percent in 2018 (Alderman, Gentilini and Yemtsov, 2018). With this high level of leakage, there is around 10 percent exclusion errors. In other words, the fact that 90 percent of poor households are included in the programme appears suggest targeting performance of FSP is good. Yet, when one considers that around 80 percent of non-poor households benefit from the programme, this indicates that the overall targeting performance is poor. Given the high degree of leakage error, it is expected that the coverage of poor households should be higher than 90 percent. This is a causative question of a simple trade-off. The targeting literature (as discussed in Chapter Two, Section 2.2) claims that some inclusion errors are needed to limit exclusion errors. However, the experience of FSP does not reflect such a trade-off. The performance of the FSP at a macro-level analysis appears to be relatively poor compared to targeted SSNPs in other countries (see for example, Coady, Grosh and Hoddinott, 2004a). This at first sight supports wider claims that in-kind schemes may be harder to target than cash transfers and that is the reason why they still exist, as discussed in Chapter One Section 1.2. I have also questioned the application of new technologies as part of reforms, something international organisations claim can improve targeting and yet, this study shows that in the case of Egypt's FSP, it has not.

As part of analysing the targeting performance of FSP at a meso-level, I compared the distribution of errors between the urban and rural areas, which showed them to be more or less equal, being 49 percent and 51 percent, respectively. The analysis demonstrated no significant differences in the distribution of leakage and under-coverage between rural and urban areas in the 27 governorates. In other words,

the same level of errors occurred, regardless of whether an urban and rural area. Given the uniform pattern of errors, the findings showed that the programme was probably being operated in a universal manner, whether the local enrolment office was located in a rural or urban area. This emphasised the gaps in the implementation phase, as the benefit was vulnerable to leakages and under-coverage in both rural and urban areas. This analysis has provided hard evidence on the gaps and the urgent need to start the reform process for the whole system in all governorates. As such, the system itself as a whole suffers from high leakage and unduly wide coverage on the one hand but at the same time, under-coverage on the other.

In recent years, PMT has become the approach advocated by international organisations in targeting SSNPs, especially in terms of food subsidies in low and middle- income countries. Advocates claim that this method can target the benefit accurately and effectively to reach the poor. I designed a PMT and applied it to an anti-poverty food programme in Egypt. I assessed the theoretical accuracy and effectiveness of the targeting mechanism using PMT, in line with the claims of its advocates. I assessed two scenarios. In the first scenario, in theory, the leakage rate would decrease 2.2 times, declining from around 80 percent to 36 percent. However, under-coverage would increase two-fold, from around 9 percent to 18 percent. In the second scenario, the leakage rate would decrease 1.3 times from 80 percent to 62 percent, while the exclusion error would be less than one percent. In theory, therefore, it might seem that the eligibility formula of PMT is relatively easy to apply and generates computer scores for distributing the benefit. In reality, however, challenges at the point of delivery, combined with a lack of institutional capacity, can emerge in its implementation, leading to many errors in the end incurring potentially even higher leakage error than the status quo.

Consequently, I set out to investigate the underlying reasons for how and why these errors occurred. A quantitative analysis is not able to explain in depth how and why these targeting errors occur and most of the targeting literature does not address this issue, thereby creating biased or misleading findings that support a certain method. I have explored a number of fundamental issues underlying the administration of the targeting mechanism during the implementation phase, that have a significant affect on performance, issues that are not raised in the targeting literature of the FSP.

7.3 FSP Structure and Policy Design of the Targeting Mechanism

In drawing conclusions about the targeting performance of the FSP, I summarise the key reasons why targeting errors occur and how. I have shown that the complex structure of the administration of the FSP is key to understanding current targeting performance. It is a large, unwieldy structure with many over-lapping layers, raising two major questions: first, how is targeting performance influenced by the institutional and governance challenges of the bureaucratic structure?; second, how do the policies and reforms supported by the international organisations that change the programme's structure influence targeting performance?. As discussed in Chapter Two Section 2.3, the SSNPs structure and policies are underpinned, either explicitly or implicitly by the performance of central, regional and local government, in addition to the agents, in other words, all the bodies who are involved in service delivery. The finding in Chapter Five showed how the complex bureaucratic structure, with six main bodies, influences the targeting mechanism.

A close scrutiny of the FSP's administrative bureaucratic structure looks very Weberian, in the more traditional sense of public sector organisations, and has a major bearing on the function of the targeting mechanism. I have shown how this complexity manifests at each stage of the whole targeting process in the system and have argued that this traditional Weberian structure is ill suited to the complex realities of targeting. These complex arrangements are not without cost and may potentially introduce errors into the targeting process that cannot be captured through the use of a quantitative approach, as discussed in Chapter Four. The overall government system, not only in Egypt, but in the MENA region as a whole, is characterised as a form of deconcentration rather than one of devolved local self-government (Tosun and Yilmaz, 2008). The analysis shows that the bureaucratic administration of the FSP consists of an elaborate system of deconcentration, both regional and local, and is highly centralised. The policies, decisions and decrees are formulated by central government with no involvement of regional and local actors through some form of decision-making process. Hence, the role of regional and local offices is confined to carrying out top management decisions, despite their major role in delivering the

service directly to the public. Their functions are entirely restricted by the decisions of central government.

There is a wider critique of the performance of the public sector, particularly in the MENA region (Tosun and Yilmaz, 2008), not only as being broadly inefficient, clientelistic and corrupt (Campos and Lateef, 2006; Bold, Molina and Safir, 2017), but also as being incredibly rigid and highly centralised, as the thesis has proposed in case of FSP. So my analysis explored whether a traditional Weberian bureaucratic structure could be effective in delivering the programme or not. My findings show that the Weberian bureaucratic administrative structure, with its centralised decision-making, does not seem to work very well. This might be for two reasons: firstly, the Weberian features of the administrative structure itself, are a historical, cultural and traditional inheritance. Moreover, responsibilities assigned to the regional and local offices appeared to be less extensive than in many other parts of the world (see Ahmad *et al.*, 2005; Kimble, Boex and Kapitanova, 2012). Also, my analysis shows a number of contextual governance issues in Egypt with regards to the FSP. Secondly, the emergence of the NPM and governance advocated by international organisations in the 1980s and with the financial crisis, provided entry points for external organisations to engage in public sector reform of many developing countries, including Egypt. Applying these public administration reform concepts to the Weberian structure of the FSP has resulted in a perception of the NPM and governance as a menu from which certain policies can be selected and implemented. Applying the programme's policies based on these concepts, given the disconnection with the local context, has added additional layers of complexity. The ways in which these policies and mechanisms have been implemented, in the context of targeting the FSP, have become deeply problematic.

The advantage of using mixed methods was that it allowed me to identify the disconnections and gaps in the literature between targeting performance outcomes, bureaucratic systems of food subsidy in Egypt and the implementation phase of the programme inside the ROs. The quantitative analysis in Chapter Four describes what happens at the macro and meso level and how this helps to explain the targeting performance outcomes, more specifically, targeting errors. The qualitative analysis in Chapter Five interpreted the performance measurements in terms of how and why these errors might have occurred. In other words, the "orthodox" approach of

measuring targeting performance provided important indicators in terms of quantifying the targeting errors; however, this approach could not achieve a level of explanation of how the targeting mechanism functioned in reality. Hence, it was important to combine both quantitative and qualitative methods in order to maximise insights about the targeting mechanism using a top-down approach. These different insights represent a part of the picture of how bureaucratic structure and policies of reform might significantly impact on targeting outcomes.

The empirical data in Chapter Five was built around the analysis of various sources of data. It included a series of interviews with different actors in the FSP system, especially inside the ROs. The analysis offered four main insights to the targeting literature on the effectiveness of the FSP in Egypt. Firstly, it provides one of the first systematic case studies of this bureaucratic targeting mechanism structure by revealing the distortions in the system in terms of the targeting process inside the ROs, and thereby providing potential reasons for the poor targeting outcomes. Secondly, it has provided a more differentiated and nuanced understanding of the bureaucratic structure of the FSP's targeting mechanism, resulting in a clear identification of its impact on targeting performance. Thirdly, it has revealed geographical disparities between the three governorates in providing and accessing the service benefit. Fourthly, it shows how the selective policies of the reforms promoted by the World Bank and IMF have allowed these distortions to persist by maintaining the status quo of the bureaucratic system and injecting those selective policies into the system.

The bureaucratic structure of the application and targeting process showed gaps in the mechanism and how it uses ambiguous and outdated targeting criteria. With a lack of governance and control, the analysis shows that the targeting system is open to abuse in some cases. Moreover, the disjuncture between the policy objective of reaching the poor and the implementation phase which does not take into account changes in the financial circumstances of the beneficiaries, resulted in the benefit being perceived by beneficiaries as an inherited or acquired right for non-poor households. Additionally, I explained how the extensive bureaucratic procedures, lack of co-ordination and co-operation of all the bodies involved, has made the whole targeting system at high risk of corruption and manipulation, to the benefit of intermediaries inside the FSP. Finally, the lack of a complaints channel raises the question of to what extent the government is willing to improve service delivery.

Advocates of NPM and notions of good governance sometimes propose decentralisation as a kind of mantra, the solution to highly centralised Weberian administrative bureaucracies (see Larbi, 2003; Hanson, Kararach and Shaw, 2012; Lægreid, 2017). The FSP's bureaucratic system seemed to be more static than dynamic. The actors in the local offices seem to be disempowered. In other words, the findings show the inability of the managers to feed back into the system. It is evident that the policy design of the targeting process, characterised by heavy reliance on documents, including the application form and the documents applicants have to obtain to support their application, is a major cause of poor targeting outcomes. Lack of cross verification for the presented documents across different independent sources, creates a significant potential for fraud. Clearly, the enrolment process as one of the major factors contributing to inclusion and exclusion errors. Additionally, the lack of clarity with regards to quota allocation for each governorate pertains to the governance of the programme. The findings have uncovered some important new insights into the grassroots realities of the low level of governance and accountability of the FSP system, and how reliable the annual needs reports are at regional and local levels. Moreover, fieldwork has revealed that with regards to how the RO and the SITAD keep accounts with the RSs and Bakeries under their supervision, through checks and balances, the programme's procedures are very loose. The absence of a standardised accounting system shows the disparities in the FSP system across different neighborhoods within the same governorate and ultimately, across the three governorates. These disparities suggest that patronage and clientelistic distribution of the benefit is widespread. In addition, these disparities combined with loose procedures of book keeping have huge implications for the financial accountability of FSP, suggesting a lack of governance that could significantly weaken the programme's capacity to achieve its objective. Scholars who have advocated decentralisation as a solution (Larbi, 1998; Caulfield, 2004; Christensen and Lægreid, 2011; Lægreid, 2017) present successful experiences, but the effectiveness of decentralisation policies has also been questioned in contexts where selective policies of the NPM and governance are applied to centralised governments with fragile governance (Lægreid, 2017). Clearly, the selective policies of public sector reform of the targeting mechanism have not seem to be a panacea in terms of resolving the challenges of the FSP.

A key claim made about the geographical distribution of the ROs and RSs is that it is piecemeal, unplanned and largely uneven. The micro-level data collected from the DSIT of the three governorates shows that the geo-distribution has ultimately exacerbated disparities in administering the programme. High and unmanageable workloads due to excessive caseloads, given the limited number of caseworkers' employees in proportion to the number of registered beneficiaries and new applicants, has been put forward as a key contributor to the programme's outcome. The analysis shows that the government did not have a standard or baseline for the quality of service in terms of the maximum number of beneficiaries each office should serve, given the number of employees in the same RO. The uneven geographical distribution of ROs in the three governorates indicates a lack of rationale or governmental policy for service delivery. I have argued that the FSP's limited capacity, given the ROs' mostly universal settings and the absence of a unified strategy in managing each RO in terms of the minimum and maximum range of beneficiaries for each RO, are likely to have a serious impact on the targeting outcomes of the FSP. Targeting outcomes of the FSP can also be jeopardised by overcrowded ROs and also disparities in access to the service itself, due to apparently random distribution. In addition to the geographical heterogeneity of the ROs, the combination of private and public RSs also play an important role in influencing the targeting mechanism and hence, the targeting outcomes. This is the first time such specific findings about the quality of and access to the service are being published, despite the apparent common perception that these issues exist. Yet no evidence has been collected about these geographical issues among front-line employees, managers and senior policy makers, which then raises the questions of whether they are motivated and have the will to address these concerns.

Despite the Weberian nature of the FSP, reforms imposed by the World Bank and IMF have reinforced the neoliberal public administration paradigm. This paradigm draws on the concepts of NPM and governance for enhancing service delivery, as discussed in Chapter Two Section 2.3. Thus, the reform policies have addressed the issues of performance management, management decentralisation and executive agencies of public services, facilitated by the use of modern information technology. Two main policy reform streams have been implemented and supported by the international organisations: the shift to an Output-Based approach and the use of ICT through private contracting out of the service delivery. The analysis of the

qualitative data first showed that the use of the Output-Based system instead of the Input-Based system to be ineffective and inefficient, given the lack of governance and accountability referred to earlier. Second, as explained in Chapter Five Section 5.6.2, the government tried to introduce ICT whereas it was not initially very successful, leading some policy-makers to recognise that there is significant variance and a degree of failure in terms of the application of ICT by the public agencies of the FSP. These trials led to the idea that if ICT was going to be introduced it should be done by a non-governmental organisation, hence the decision to contract-out was taken to bypass weaknesses and lack of capacity in the state sector.

Chapter Five explored a number of issues that have arisen from the involvement of the private sector. First, the data analysis showed a lack of transparency in the bidding process of involving the private sector. Second, there were no clearly specified boundaries for the partnership or auditing procedures for the contracting-out. From the different experiences of managers across the three governorates, the role of the MSIT seemed to be very fragile and inefficient throughout the whole partnership consortium, as manifested in the absence of any auditing process or procedures for these private companies who are responsible for FSP service delivery: providing the infrastructure (establishing the programme software, equipping ROs with computers, providing internet, and handing POS to the RSs and BSs); supplying training and technical assistance and issuing the SRCS. The gaps in the in the extent to which these responsibilities are fulfilled are clearly a disruptive factor in terms of targeting outcomes: (i) major gaps in the programme software and the lack of coordination between the two private companies have led to the risk of double benefiting, appearance of the ghost cards and an increase in the risk of fraud (ii) some ROs are delivered second-hand computers, with very slow ram modules and slow USB internet. Endemic overcrowding, queues and waiting in front of the ROs, are exacerbated by the time needed to process each transaction request, reflecting a failure on the part of the SCCs to provide adequate administrative training and inefficient service supply. (iii) The lack of clear segregation of duties between RO employees and the employees in the private SCCs seems to have increased clientelism and patronage of the FSP benefit; as a consequence, non-poor households with the ability to meet the hidden costs of application are able to access the benefit more easily (iv) Employees across the three governorates complained about the delay in issuing

the SRCs, the poor quality of the cards and lack of MSIT supervision on the private companies. Since the SCCs are profit-oriented, and given the lack of governance and monitoring procedure, there is a strong incentive for the SCCs to provide low quality SRCs that need to be regularly replaced, rather than looking out for the households' interests. The analysis also showed that the total lack of planning, supervision and co-ordination between the MSIT, DSIT, SITAD, RO, and the SCCs has generated numerous inefficiencies in the whole implementation process. Additionally, many of these problems and concerns are widely recognised so the fact that public policy-makers are not engaging more robustly with them suggests that there are more complex political issues at stake that need to be studied. This complexity underpinning that there is a deeper political motivations that are breadwinning to my case study.

One aspect of the NPM policies is privatisation, strategies towards pro-market that include a range from selling state enterprises to contracting-out public services with private contractors (Hodge, 2000; Hope, 2002). Hodge stated that one should not expect that 'contracting to be a panacea for all public services...' (2000, p.246-7). Under the rigid bureaucratic circumstances of the FSP, it is not surprising that the findings showed that there was no publicly available information about the tendering process and the criteria applied in drawing up a contract with the SCCs as part of reforming the targeting system. Therefore, there is a gap between the theory of contracting-out and what appears to have been done in Egypt. I could not draw any concrete conclusions about this process as there was not enough information about the contract available in the public domain, although in order to have a process of contracting-out, the information should theoretically be available in the public domain (Nemec, Merickova and Vitek, 2005).

I have argued that the reinforcement of selective neoliberal policies and decentralisation and private contracting-out within a Weberian bureaucratic structure have introduced major gaps that have potentially influenced the effectiveness of the programme's outcomes, and that these gaps are ignored when evaluating the targeting performance using an "orthodox" approach. The contracting out of public services under the NPM is criticised for putting profits over public interests, managerial accountability over public responsibility, and business values over social values (Chapman and A O'Toole, 1995). This is neither to denigrate the contribution of the NPM or governance for contracting out-public service nor to call for an end of its

implementation but rather, I argue, for it to be treated far more critically. This public-private partnership might have been insufficiently equipped to take on the provision of a public service due to gaps in institutional capacities. These institutional weaknesses at national, regional and local level have encouraged corruption, clientelism and patronage systems, which in turn undermine the successful application of contracting-out policies and a systematic monitoring system that can hold different actors to account. Having revealed these gaps in the FSP's bureaucratic structure, the prospects for achieving better targeting outcomes remain highly doubtful, given the existing political complexities that underpin the programme.

7.4 Street-Level Bureaucracy and Targeting

A top-down approach has shown the bureaucratic structure of the FSP to be very rigid and the implemented policies characterised by significant gaps. To complement this, Chapter Six also looked at targeting using a bottom-up approach, focusing on the place of the SLBs in the system and the implications for the FSP's targeting performance. Drawing on Lipsky's SLB eloquent analytic and theoretical framework, I described the applicants' and beneficiaries' direct experience of the service delivery as provided by the front-line employees, and showed how their actions, behaviour and the working conditions combined to translate the policies provided by the government in delivering a public service. This was then explored by better understanding the policy objectives versus actual implementation, showing the need for more improvisation and responsiveness to each household case. Using the SLB framework sheds light on the fundamental tension between the need to keep rules relatively simple for the bureaucrats to function and the infinite variety and messiness of the real implementation process, which then influences the targeting outcomes.

The empirical data was built around the analysis of publicly available documentation and media reports, archival data, observation as well as interviews with different employees and managers inside the ROs. Spending four months in each governorate gave me the opportunity to observe the actions and behaviours of SLBs and the working conditions inside the ROs in different neighbourhoods. Using the SLB sociological framework, results and analysis presented in Chapter Six were

summarised into four major contributions to the FSP targeting literature. Firstly, they provide one of the first systematic case studies of the SLBs and the targeting mechanism by investigating the nature and the settings what is happening on the ground inside the local offices. Secondly, they have shed light on the abilities, skills and experience of RO managers, reflected through the FSP's promotion system. Thirdly, they have demonstrated how poor communication between the SLBs on the one hand and beneficiaries and applicants on the other, are shaped by a series of interconnected factors that influence the targeting system. Fourthly, they revealed the working conditions inside the ROs and how these settings allow for poor targeting performance. Finally, after gaining a clear sense of the bureaucratic settings and working conditions, it emerged that the targeting mechanism limited the demand for and access to the service by incurring monetary and non-monetary costs.

SLBs rely on their skills and experience in implementing policy objectives and determining what is needed in service delivery. For example, a teacher's experience will greatly influence a school's policy outcomes (Brudney and Hebert, 1987; Hill, 2003). My research suggests that the combination of actions and behaviours of the SLBs together with the work environment significantly influence the FSP targeting outcomes. I have demonstrated that these actions and behaviours are shaped by the SLBs' abilities, skills and experience. Being promoted to managing a RO is largely determined by the amount of time spent in FSP bodies, regardless of managerial experience or soft skills. Hence, some managers found they had insufficient experience and skills to manage the targeting mechanism, and they readily admitted to this lack of capacity, not just their junior staff. Thus, sometimes their lack of capacity and unclear guidelines in some cases resulted in slow application procedures, and numerous targeting errors, as well as increasing the private costs paid by the beneficiaries or applicants. This suggests that the FSP's current promotion system, SLBs' abilities, and unclear guidelines also contribute to targeting errors within the FSP.

Workload, overcrowding and ineffective communication can have a significant impact on service delivery outcomes (Lipsky, 2010; Zijdeveld, 2010; Godfrey and Yoshikaw, 2012). Several interconnected factors influence the communication between the SLBs with the beneficiaries and applicants, which in turn seem to have a clear and significant detrimental effect on the effective targeting of the

FSP. I have shown the value of combining these factors in order to better understand why the performance of the FSP is so poor. This includes (i) the volume of application requests (ii) the complaint mechanisms and the SLBs' response to 'phenomenal pressure'. First, the heavy workload and the exhausting daily activities of the SLBs significantly influences targeting performance. The poor quality of the service is reflected in the disconnection between the design of the programme and the workload, which was confirmed by the geographical distribution disparities discussed in Chapter Five. Additionally, the analysis shows that in the absence of workload management, the lack of complaint mechanisms and training for the SLBs seemed to have a significant effect the FSP's targeting mechanism. The SLBs feelings of being voiceless and disempowered seemed to be a triggering factor that negatively affecting their performance and engagement.

Second, there was a lack of complaint channels not only for the SLBs but also for the beneficiaries and applicants as. SLBs' response to the pressures of the working environment inside the RO was exacerbated by lack of supervision and lack of feedback channels. These conditions are argued to play a crucial role in the programme's poor targeting outcomes. Therefore, the absence of a fair and effective FSP system has not resulted in any change of removal of policies and no actions thus far have addressed the practices that seem likely to affect targeting outcomes. One of the ways in which SLBs respond to this stressful working environment is to mistreat beneficiaries. Godfrey and Yoshikaw have recommended in their study that the government 'could design programs that reduce the negative influence of caseload size and foster caseworkers support. This could occur through caseworker training sessions emphasizing the importance of supporting clients and offering strategies for effective communication' (2012, p.396).

The governmental units that offer and deliver welfare services to the public is always in dynamic work situations. In this thesis, the SLBs' working conditions have been considered a critical basis for the implementation of the FSP. My research shows that SLBs faced a number of challenging working conditions, including resource shortages and policy confusion and how these play an important role in determining performance outcomes. It has been instructive to understand how inadequate resources combined with threats to individual SLBs' physical safety can affect the programme's targeting outcomes. The findings of Chapter Six Section 6.3.1 show that (i) low pay

across the three governorates contributes to demotivation of the SLBs. Moreover, the unsystematic structure in the design of the FSP across the three governorates shows disparities in job responsibilities of the same managerial positions. In Upper Egypt it was found that managers had more job responsibilities than their peers in Lower Egypt. They complained about the disparities in responsibilities without any compensation for the extra work done. These findings could provide significant evidence of how different factors can produce poor targeting outcomes. (ii) The findings show that the FSP suffers from policy incoherence through the disconnection between the bureaucratic requirements for information for targeting and the physical workplace in which this information is elicited. The workplace might not seem directly related to targeting, yet it is evident from the interview data that in practice, they have a significant influence on the programme. Hence, SLBs developed coping mechanisms in terms of their work practices that allowed mass processing of household requests. The stressful environment characterised by crowds and noise, making it difficult for employees to concentrate had a negative effect on their actions and performance. Moreover, the analysis shows that the bureaucratic targeting requirement of the FSP forced householders to discuss their personal circumstances and socio-economic conditions in non-private settings, increasing exposure to stigmatisation and reducing the openness with which householders will be inclined to discuss changes in their circumstances. The analysis in Chapter Six Section 6.3.2 concludes by raising urgent concerns about workplace safety and violence towards the FSP's front-line SLBs. My fieldwork has revealed that FSP's targeting outcome is also negatively affected by the physical threats that SLBs are exposed to. As such, the climate of communication between the SLBs and beneficiaries and applicants was a troubled one. Therefore, the findings show that the combination of the RO settings and the bureaucratic targeting requirements, have created an environment that is stressful for everyone inside the ROs. This also demonstrates the extreme interconnectedness of different issues that together undermine the programme's targeting outcomes. A study conducting a similar investigation of free healthcare in South Africa (Walker and Gilson, 2004) where nurses were the SLBs revealed that overcrowding, resource shortages, lack of communication, poor working conditions, particularly low wages and staff shortages, lack of recognition, problems of safety were all considered to impede the health care system in South Africa. These impeding factors can also be found in my case study, providing evidence of how much they can influence the programme's outcomes.

Under these conditions, implementers may not only shape the policy but also generate unexpected outcomes (Walker and Gilson, 2004; Rice, 2012).

Additionally, Lipsky (1980) has argued that the practices of service rationing as a response to limited resources tends to underpin service delivery outcomes. Alden (2015) has stated that welfare programs are facing ‘a challenging environment in terms of delivering a service and scarce authorities in particular’ that resulted in ‘more strictly rationing the service’ (2015, p.17). My case study findings indicate a number of costs associated with the FSP benefit, reflecting a paradoxical targeting environment full of inadequacies and uncertainties, which results in the service being rationed. Lipsky (2010) has further argued that it is not only fixed criteria of eligibility that negatively induced exclusion errors, but also the cost of the service. The findings show that there were two types of costs that the household might pay, monetary and non-monetary and that all of these costs have a negative effect on the targeting outcomes of the programme. First, the findings show that the households are subjected to formal and informal costs. The better-off households who can afford these costs were likely to be more powerful than those households who could not. Second, the ordinary queuing arrangements were considered as imposing costs on the households in terms of accessing the service. This finding can be cross validated with the findings in Chapter Five Section 5.6.1.2 of the geographical disparities with regards to overcrowding and also with the disrupted bureaucratic settings and policy conflicts discussed in Chapter Six Section 6.3. Third, the way information was delivered through verbal instructions can expose beneficiaries to confusing bureaucratic terminology while the distribution of inaccurate information through TV programs caused extreme tension between the SLBs on the one hand and the beneficiaries and applicants on the other. Therefore, the ways and the means of conveying information can also have a considerable influence on targeting performance. Following Lipsky (1998, 2010) and other aforementioned scholars that have used the SLB framework in their studies, even though their studies were conducted in different fields, one could argue that SLB behaviour, attitudes, working conditions and other factors can affect service delivery outcomes. Although there are many studies underpinned by Lipsky’s theoretical framework in many fields, this case-study is the first to analyze the effect of the SLB and the working environment on the targeting performance of food subsidies.

Achieving a balance between cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness is difficult in any bureaucracy, including the case of targeting SSNPs. Neoliberal policies of targeting SSNPs embrace concepts of cost containment, which often focus on minimizing administrative overheads in managing a programme in order to enable the government to save money. These policies focus on the efficiency of the programme in terms of how large the administration cost is relative to a certain budget. However, my discussion of the SLB presented a perspective that stressed the importance of investing in resources to achieve a suitable working environment for the SLB. Without such an environment, the system would, somehow irrationally, represent a “false economy” where the minimization of costs determines poor outcomes and seriously jeopardises the programme’s effectiveness. It is then irrational to request SLBs to work effectively without acquiring the basic skills, in an unsuitable environment and applying loose targeting criteria to achieve cost-efficiency. It is likely that the cost of leakage and under-coverage would be much lower than the costs of investing to provide the required resources for effective service delivery. This alleged ‘rationality’ approach is also unethical (see Dustin, 2016), because for the sake of cost-containment poor households may be prevented from being enrolled in the programme. An example of this effect has been reported by Isaacs (2008) who compared food stamps in the United States with eight other public assistance programs across four measures of programme effectiveness: administrative costs, programme access, error payments, and benefit targeting. She found that low administrative costs ‘appear to be inversely associated with good programme access for recipients’ (2008, p.i). It becomes clear how the irrationality of this ‘rationality’ approach is a major barrier for the achievement of better targeting outcomes. Therefore, there should be a less narrow approach to promoting and assessing administrative efficiency. This is a further example of how combining different methodologies generates insights that would not result from a research design focused on a single approach.

7.5 Implications of Introducing Quantitative, Qualitative and More Heterodox Methods in the Targeting Domain

The discussion and the findings of this thesis have dealt with many of the issues associated with the FSP and its effectiveness and, in particular the targeting mechanism itself. This also raises many more opportunities for future research in relating targeting performance to the complexities of the implementation phase. One of the significant limitations of this study was the use of document information and newspapers to shed light on beneficiary experiences; a further area of research would be to look at the FSP through the perspective of the beneficiaries. Although I was able to collect a little bit of this material through the voices of and information from beneficiaries, I could not interview them directly due to ethical reasons. Moreover, it is difficult to more critically evaluate the qualitative data as a comprehensive or near comprehensive picture of why targeting is so problematic. Despite the aforementioned limitation, the research design is significantly robust in providing unique and meaningful analysis. The range and diversity of evidence it generated, provide a significant and robust strength to the analysis. Yet, the objective of the thesis was not to gain a good representative coverage of the targeting mechanism, but rather, to gain a better understanding of some of the grass-root realities of the programme's targeting system and identify some of the factors and different insights of targeting across different domains that influenced the programme's outcomes. This thesis has offered insights into targeting the FSP by drawing on different discourses, rather than only the quantitative approach, suggesting that these findings should not be discussed in isolation from the programme's effectiveness. These insights need to part of a common approach of measuring the effectiveness of the targeting performance, which should include institutional capacity, governance, policies of reform and the SLBs.

Expanding subsidy programs, especially food subsidy programs, is always politically easier than reducing them in developing countries (Alderman, Gentilini and Yemtsov, 2018). There have been 'numerous government attempts to reduce food subsidies that have ignited violent protests, often seen as politically destabilizing. Yet despite the political benefits of food subsidy programs, many perform poorly ... they also tend to be costly, presenting a significant drain on government expenditures' (Gutner, 2002, p.456). This raises the question of whether the formally stated

objectives of the FSP perfectly match the real aims of policy-makers who influence the policies and design of the whole system. Additionally, international organisations such as the World Bank and IMF are often one of the main sources of pressure to reform certain policies, as proposed within broader structural adjustment programs. Therefore, a valid question in this case is whether there is an element of “pretence”. In other words, is this programme genuinely intended to be a source of food for the poor or are the real motivations of these policies and reforms more politically complex. In the case of the FSP, it may be the latter. FSP represents a complex nature for a social programme that needs to be tackled from a large number of angles and that should be working in parallel when measuring targeting outcome and introducing a new reform if the policy-makers truly wish to achieve the stated aim of the programme.

Given the poor overall performance of targeting the FSP, the apparent intractability of the causes of this poor performance, and the experiences of other countries, it would not be surprising if policy-makers were to consider replacing the FSP with a different welfare scheme such as a cash transfer. In practice, this might be difficult, due to the likely high level of political opposition to such a move. Moreover, the World Bank recently noted the challenges that Sri-Lanka is facing as a result of its transition to cash transfer scheme. It stated that in ‘an inflationary environment, fixing the value of transfers (with no built-in mechanism for adjusting their size) may erode their value over time, weakening their effects—a warning for the Arab Republic of Egypt and other countries that are moving toward near cash modalities’ (Tilakaratna and Sooriyamudali, 2018, p.175). Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that the number of cash transfer programs has been steadily rising in African countries, operating in 64 countries by 2014 (World Bank, 2016c). Although it is beyond the scope of thesis to speculate on future policy directions or to consider how well the cash transfers might work in the Egyptian context, some general observations can be made based on insights this thesis has provided about the FSP.

The experience of the FSP indicates that many challenges would exist, both strategic and operational, for digitally-administered cash transfers. More generally, formulating welfare policies on the basis of selective interpretations of NPM and governance agendas without considering the local context, is likely to lead to poor outcomes. It is now crucial for policy-makers to look at how to plan social policies in a more coherent and consistent way; preferably, developing policies that are in

accordance with and engage with the local context. Switching away from voucher FSP to cash transfers would not resolve the most important challenge for effective targeting, unless the targeting criteria are replaced by more specific and usable ones. Digital technology for cash transfers in most countries has been delegated to private sector organisations, in part reflecting neo-liberal views of limited state capacity. However, this study of the FSP shows that contracting out service delivery has been highly problematic, begging the question whether this would also occur as part of a cash transfer in Egypt. Moreover, the disconnects between state agencies, ROs and SLBs may be equally present in any other welfare scheme unless the deeper causes of dysfunction are addressed.

My concluding point is that one of the most fruitful ways of assessing the targeting of SSNPs is through deep immersion in the field and cross-interdisciplinary work integrating grass-root implementation to theoretical and methodological frameworks from different disciplines. The evidence international organisations take into account is entirely based on quantitative approaches. They work closely with developing countries to analyse the impact of social policies on the basis on neoliberal ideologies. They provide a rigorous quantitative assessment and then design social policies based on their own agenda without looking to the local context, applying selective concepts of NPM and governance. Hence, I am concerned with the dominant position of the discipline of economics, in particular an orthodox approach to it, in evaluating the performance of SSNPs. I do not challenge the power of the quantitative approaches of economics discipline, and I am aware that in terms of robustness and parsimony this is exemplary within the social sciences. Yet, my case study proves that it is misleading to evaluate targeting performance from the lens of only one discipline. The findings show that targeting policies are regressive rather than being effective. Therefore, it is wrong to believe that the application of economics in evaluating targeting provides the most satisfactory and accurate explanation because this will overlook too much of what is actually happening. It is important to pose the question and try to grasp “what reality counts” in the analysis of targeting performance to comprehend and advocate the position that there is much more which should be accounted for, and which must be taken on board in reforming and designing SSNPs policies. Bridging theory and practice is crucial to help developing countries better understand their SSNP’s targeting performance and to help practitioners and scholars

better understand how international organisations conceptualise the design of their policies. The results of this study open new avenues for assessing other SSNPs in developing countries, as well as for future research on the FSP, and may serve as source of inspiration for the future use of mixed methods in the evaluation of SSNP outcomes.

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Annex

Table A 1: Targeting Criteria of the Ration-Card System (1997-2015)

DECREE	DATE	DESCRIPTION
#488 FOR 1997	December 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quota of subsidised sugar is 1kg/person/month. The price of a 1 Kg pack is LE 0.6 for high-subsidy ration cards (red ration cards) and LE 0.85 for low-subsidy ration cards (green ration cards).
#168 FOR 1999	April 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quota of subsidised oil is 0.5 Kg in cities and 0.3 Kg in villages (per month, per person). The prices of these packs are LE 0.5 and LE0.3 for high-subsidy ration cards and LE0.75and LE0.50 for low-subsidy ration cards.
#75 FOR 2004	March 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quotas of additional subsidised commodity items are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Kg of rice/person/month, with a maximum of 4 kg for each card, for LE1/Kg, 1 Kg of macaroni/person/month, with a maximum of 4 Kg, for LE1.5/Kg, 0.5 Kg of oil/person/month, with a maximum of 2 Kg for each card, for LE3.5/Kg, 0.5 Kg of lentils/person/month, with a maximum of 2 Kg for each card, for LE3/Kg, 0.5 Kg of beans, with a maximum of 2 Kg for each card, for LE2/Kg, 2 Kg of vegetable ghee/card/month, forLE9/Pack, 0.05Kg of tea /person/month, for LE0.65 according to the number of people.

#82 2004	FOR	March 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The prices of additional subsidised commodities are reset (for both kinds of cards) as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ LE1.75 and LE3.5 for 0.5 Kg and 1 Kg, respectively, of additional subsidised oil, ○ LE9 for additional subsidised vegetable ghee, ○ LE1 for additional subsidised rice, ○ LE0.65 for 0.05 Kg pack of additional subsidised tea, ○ LE1.5 and LE3 for 0.5 Kg and 1 Kg, respectively, of additional subsidised lentils, ○ LE1 and LE2 for 0.5Kg and 1 Kg, respectively, of additional subsidised beans, ○ LE1.5 for 1-Kg pack of additional subsidised macaroni.
#56 2006	FOR	April 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four additional subsidised commodities are removed from the ration cards (macaroni, beans, lentils, and ghee) and 0.5 Kg of additional free sugar was offered to each person with a ration card (both kinds), with 2 Kg maximum per card, for LE1.50/Kg.
#69 2007	FOR	June 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-subsidy cards are issued to all people eligible for cash-transfers (social solidarity) who do not have rations cards.
#7 2008	FOR	January 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those born between 1988 and 2005 are added to the ration-card system.
#50 2008	FOR	May 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The prices of additional subsidised commodities have been determined as follows: LE3/Kg for sugar, LE5/Kg for oil, and LE2/Kg for rice.
#62 2008	FOR	June 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-subsidy cards are issued to all citizens with current ration cards so they and their families can get fully subsidised commodities.
#63 2008	FOR	June 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quota of oil is unified across governorates to 0.5Kg/person, for LE0.5.

#79 2008	FOR	August 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional amounts of rice, sugar, and edible oil are distributed via ration cards as follows: 1 Kg of sugar/person/month, with a maximum of 4 Kg for each card, for LE1.75/Kg; 1 Kg oil/person/month, with a maximum of 4 Kg for each card, for LE4.25; 2 Kg of rice/person/month, with a maximum of 8 Kg for each card, for LE1.5. <p>*_ _</p>
#63 2009	FOR	April 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The system is opened to specific categories: all recipients of social cash assistance from the Government; widowed, divorced, or family-supporting women; chronically ill and those with special needs; temporary seasonal and occasional workers, street vendors, and drivers; craftsmen, professionals with income lower than LE400/month; underage children with no breadwinner or fixed income; and non-government and non-public-sector pensioners with pensions less than LE 400/month.
#84 2009	FOR	September 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to the categories stated in decree #63 for 2009, the system is opened to unemployed; those under investigation with educational qualifications but no work; government, public-sector, or private-sector pensioners with pensions less than LE 750/month; and government or public-enterprise-sector workers with salaries less than LE 1000/month.
#15 2011	FOR	February 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The smart card system is opened to specific categories: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- All recipients of social cash assistance from the government. 2- Widowed, divorced, or family-supporting women 3- Chronically ill and those with special needs 4- Underage children (less than 18) with no breadwinner or fixed income

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5- Temporary seasonal, daily wage or occasional workers, farmers, street vendors, drivers, craftsmen, professionals with income lower than LE 800/month after investigation visit and also the unemployed with educational qualifications. 6- Government, public-sector, or private-sector pensioners with pensions less than LE 1200/month 7- Government or public-enterprise-sector workers with salaries less than LE 1500/month • For each household; maximum four individual can be registered per smart card.
#669 2013	FOR	December 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to the categories stated in decree # 15 for 2011, the system is opened to 2011 Revolution martyr families and Revolution casualties.

Source: Ministry of Social Solidarity; (World Bank, 2010); Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade 2014

I investigated pairwise correlations of the dependent variable and independent variables by using Pearson correlation matrix. The regressors are not strongly correlated with each other, less than 0.5. Using pwcorr STATA command as shown below

Table A 2: Pearson Correlation for the variables used

	<i>Per Capita Expenditure</i>	<i>Urban/Rural I</i>	<i>Governorates</i>	<i>Household Age Squared</i>	<i>Household Gender</i>	<i>Household Size Squared</i>	<i>Household Employment</i>
<i>Per Capita Expenditure</i>	1						
<i>Urban/Rural</i>	0.3155	1					
<i>Governorates</i>	-0.3414	-0.3536	1				
<i>Household Age Squared</i>	0.2436	0.0995	-0.0523	1			
<i>Household Gender</i>	-0.1254	-0.0089	-0.0101	-0.2015	1		
<i>Household Size Squared</i>	-0.3945	-0.1289	0.1665	-0.0875	0.2198	1	
<i>Household Employment</i>	0.1733	0.1125	0.0668	0.5032	0.5605	0.2152	1
<i>Household Marital Status</i>	0.164	0.0495	-0.029	0.3841	-0.7355	-0.1973	-0.4984
<i>Household Education</i>	0.0993	0.1251	-0.0781	-0.3179	0.2012	-0.008	0.1875
<i>Household receiving Cash or In-Kind Transfer</i>	0.0931	-0.0124	-0.056	0.3281	-0.3863	-0.1714	-0.4796
<i>Apartment or Rural House</i>	0.3096	0.3313	-0.3746	-0.0716	0.0564	-0.1407	-0.0035
<i>Number of Rooms</i>	0.1054	-0.1224	0.0475	0.0661	0.0825	0.335	0.0616
<i>Dwelling Area</i>	0.1361	-0.1637	0.0963	0.0722	0.0681	0.2708	0.0573
<i>Possession of Dwelling</i>	-0.0829	0.1204	-0.062	-0.2836	0.0533	-0.0765	0.0898
<i>Tap Inside the Dwelling</i>	0.1825	0.2071	-0.1838	0.0013	0.0237	-0.0195	-0.0139
<i>Mean of Sewage Gas Bottle</i>	0.3198	0.6518	-0.4506	0.0709	-0.0069	-0.1626	-0.0934
<i>Dwelling Wall</i>	-0.3425	-0.5005	0.3079	-0.1003	0.0142	0.1131	0.0951
<i>Dwelling Ceiling</i>	0.1632	0.1896	-0.2252	-0.0448	0.0493	-0.0429	0.0242
<i>Dwelling Kitchen</i>	0.2266	0.2353	-0.2525	-0.0242	0.0301	-0.0797	-0.0181
<i>Dwelling Floor</i>	0.2439	0.1496	-0.2117	-0.0325	0.0656	-0.019	0.0275
<i>Toilet with Flush</i>	0.314	0.4056	-0.2903	-0.023	0.0244	-0.13	-0.0504
<i>Garbage Disposal</i>	0.3923	0.5155	-0.3906	0.0387	0.006	-0.1587	-0.0842
<i>Own Private Car</i>	0.2971	0.5132	-0.3422	0.0612	0.0135	-0.1244	-0.0676
<i>Own Motor Cycle</i>	0.3455	0.1561	-0.0896	0.0129	0.076	-0.0118	0.0314
<i>Have Refrigerator</i>	-0.013	-0.105	0.0524	-0.0729	0.0825	0.0976	0.0897
<i>Have Telephone line</i>	0.118	0.1439	-0.1002	-0.0774	0.1208	0.0617	0.0922
<i>Have Freezer</i>	0.3846	0.2478	-0.2214	0.1892	-0.0283	-0.0878	-0.1268
<i>Have Manual Washing Machine</i>	0.2688	0.1263	-0.1102	0.0377	0.0274	-0.0205	-0.0016
<i>Have Air Conditioner</i>	-0.3019	-0.3305	0.2388	-0.0159	0.0005	0.1424	0.0518
	0.3097	0.2321	-0.0254	0.0227	0.0241	-0.0454	-0.0195

	<i>Household Marital Status</i>	<i>Household Education</i>	<i>Household receiving Cash or In-Kind Transfer</i>	<i>Apartment or Rural House</i>	<i>Number of Rooms</i>	<i>Dwelling Area</i>	<i>Possession of Dwelling</i>
<i>Household Marital Status</i>	1						
<i>Household Education</i>	-0.2266	1					
<i>Household receiving Cash or In-Kind Transfer</i>	0.341	-0.1584	1				
<i>Apartment or Rural House</i>	-0.0463	0.2562	-0.038	1			
<i>Number of Rooms</i>	-0.0755	0.0243	-0.0371	0.0465	1		
<i>Dwelling Area</i>	-0.0707	0.0106	-0.0283	-0.0054	0.6893	1	
<i>Possession of Dwelling</i>	-0.0985	0.1589	-0.02	0.1277	-0.1757	-0.184	1
<i>Tap Inside the Dwelling</i>	-0.0148	0.1506	-0.0382	0.4286	0.1195	0.0762	0.0228
<i>Mean of Sewage Gas Bottle</i>	0.0418	0.1421	0.0025	0.3918	-0.0979	-0.1566	0.1137
<i>Dwelling Wall</i>	-0.0391	-0.1187	0.0026	-0.2425	0.0264	0.0504	-0.0403
<i>Dwelling Ceiling</i>	-0.042	0.1117	-0.0745	0.4528	-0.0017	-0.0386	0.0608
<i>Dwelling Kitchen</i>	-0.025	0.1771	-0.066	0.5536	0.0235	-0.0205	0.0549
<i>Dwelling Floor</i>	-0.0473	0.2134	-0.0539	0.4874	0.2519	0.2192	-0.0268
<i>Toilet with Flush</i>	-0.0082	0.252	-0.0464	0.4879	0.0179	-0.0587	0.1434
<i>Garbage Disposal</i>	0.0113	0.2336	-0.0015	0.446	0.0135	-0.0218	0.1227
<i>Own Private Car</i>	0.0209	0.1508	-0.0106	0.3167	-0.0761	-0.1068	0.0913
<i>Own Motor Cycle</i>	-0.0621	0.0854	-0.0903	0.1171	0.1156	0.1733	-0.0205
<i>Have Refrigerator</i>	-0.0669	0.0594	-0.0337	-0.0018	0.0936	0.0968	0.003
<i>Have Telephone line</i>	-0.1046	0.1813	-0.0905	0.2133	0.1874	0.1546	-0.0072
<i>Have Freezer</i>	0.0439	0.1526	0.0497	0.2302	0.12	0.1129	-0.034
<i>Have Manual Washing Machine</i>	-0.0284	0.1075	-0.0208	0.137	0.1259	0.163	-0.0242
<i>Have Air Conditioner</i>	-0.0069	-0.1751	0.0192	-0.2032	0.0108	0.0174	-0.1
	-0.0278	0.0958	-0.0468	0.1128	0.0836	0.1398	0.009

	<i>Tap Inside the Dwelling</i>	<i>Mean of Sewage</i>	<i>Gas Bottle</i>	<i>Dwelling Wall</i>	<i>Dwellin g Ceiling</i>	<i>Dwelling Kitchen</i>	<i>Dwelling Floor</i>
<i>Tap Inside the Dwelling</i>	1						
<i>Mean of Sewage</i>	0.2561	1					
<i>Gas Bottle</i>	-0.1454	0.4219	1				
<i>Dwelling Wall</i>	0.2462	0.221	-0.1187	1			
<i>Dwelling Ceiling</i>	0.3337	0.2798	-0.1762	0.5982	1		
<i>Dwelling Kitchen</i>	0.3337	0.2167	-0.1409	0.2492	0.3308	1	
<i>Dwelling Floor</i>	0.309	0.4119	-0.2668	0.3427	0.4609	0.31	1
<i>Toilet with Flush</i>	0.2697	0.5157	-0.3851	0.2544	0.3444	0.3016	0.5016
<i>Garbage Disposal</i>	0.2038	0.4805	-0.3746	0.1661	0.2132	0.1756	0.3306
<i>Own Private Car</i>	0.0779	0.1448	-0.2231	0.058	0.0826	0.0902	0.1221
<i>Own Motor Cycle</i>	0.0104	-0.1003	0.0811	-0.0149	-0.0305	0.0438	-0.0244
<i>Have Refrigerator</i>	0.1853	0.1439	-0.0872	0.1525	0.1778	0.3035	0.212
<i>Have Telephone line</i>	0.1686	0.269	-0.2902	0.112	0.1615	0.1774	0.2372
<i>Have Freezer</i>	0.0754	0.1162	-0.168	0.0648	0.0961	0.1101	0.1383
<i>Have Manual Washing Machine</i>	-0.1014	-0.2992	0.3267	-0.0845	-0.1284	-0.1049	-0.252
<i>Have Air Conditioner</i>	0.0632	0.1705	-0.2304	0.0281	0.0758	0.1038	0.1435

	<i>Toilet with Flush</i>	<i>Garbage Disposal</i>	<i>Own Private Car</i>	<i>Own Motor Cycle</i>	<i>Have Refrigerat or</i>	<i>Have Telephon e line</i>	<i>Have Freezer</i>
<i>Toilet with Flush</i>	1						
<i>Garbage Disposal</i>	0.4101	1					
<i>Own Private Car</i>	0.1925	0.129	1				
<i>Own Motor Cycle</i>	-0.0503	-0.041	-	1			
			0.0304				
<i>Have Refrigerator</i>	0.1995	0.1321	0.0641	0.0397	1		
<i>Have Telephone line</i>	0.3134	0.2482	0.2396	-0.0064	0.1387	1	
<i>Have Freezer</i>	0.2057	0.1258	0.3035	0.0236	0.0689	0.2663	1
<i>Have Manual Washing Machine</i>	-0.3785	-0.2724	-	0.0633	0.0215	-0.2463	-0.1872
			0.2167				
<i>Have Air Conditioner</i>	0.2144	0.183	0.3913	-0.0242	0.0735	0.255	0.2611
	Have Manual Washing Machine				Have Air Conditioner		
<i>Have Manual Washing Machine</i>	1						
<i>Have Air Conditioner</i>	-0.2418				1		

Table A 3: Original Regression Model

VARIABLES	(1)
	Original Model
Urban/Rural	0.0303** (0.0128)
Governorates	
Alexandria	0.0689*** (0.0233)
Port Said	0.0716 (0.0519)
Suez	0.312*** (0.0558)
Damietta	-0.0756** (0.0348)
Dakahlia	-0.0738*** (0.0223)
Al Sharqia	-0.0260 (0.0217)
Qalyubia	-0.160*** (0.0208)
Kafr El-Sheikh	0.0685** (0.0315)
Garbia	0.0183 (0.0241)
Monufia	0.0366 (0.0256)
Behera	-0.124*** (0.0218)
Ismailia	0.0846** (0.0386)
Giza	-0.117*** (0.0220)
Beni Suef	-0.0485 (0.0318)
Faiyum	-0.117*** (0.0250)
Minya	-0.0181 (0.0231)
Assuit	-0.258*** (0.0298)
Sohag	-0.236*** (0.0241)
Qena	-0.284*** (0.0314)
Aswan	-0.299*** (0.0379)
Luxor	-0.257*** (0.0381)
Red Sea	0.0935

	(0.0838)
New Valley	-0.153**
	(0.0745)
Matrouh	-0.0854
	(0.0592)
North Sinai	-0.165***
	(0.0581)
South Sinai	0.251***
	(0.0891)
Household age Squared	6.39e-05***
	(4.81e-06)
Household Gender	-0.0215
	(0.0223)
Household Size Squared	-0.00818***
	(0.00133)
Household Employment	0.0562***
	(0.0152)
Household Marital Status	
Not Married	0.3892***
	(0.0481)
Divorced	0.2685***
	(0.0509)
Widow	0.16289***
	(0.0229)
Household Education	
Did not Join School	-0.15085***
	(0.01564)
Joined School not University	-0.10125***
	(0.0141)
Household receiving Cash or In-Kind Transfer	-0.00830
	(0.00982)
Apartment or Rural House	0.0365**
	(0.0167)
Number of Rooms	0.0284***
	(0.00553)
Dwelling Area	0.00141***
	(0.000154)
Possession of Dwelling	
Rented Dwelling	-0.152***
	(0.0134)
Charity Given	-0.0517***
	(0.0125)
Tap inside Dwelling	-0.0203
	(0.0159)
Mean of Sewerage	0.0176
	(0.0117)
Gas Bottle	-0.0758***
	(0.0142)
Dwelling Wall	0.0520**
	(0.0211)

Dwelling Ceiling	0.0372** (0.0166)
Dwelling Kitchen	0.0494*** (0.0150)
Dwelling Floor	0.0729*** (0.0124)
Toilet with Flush	0.0624*** (0.0107)
Garbage Disposal	0.0387*** (0.0102)
Own Private Car	0.333*** (0.0223)
Own Motor Cycle	0.0815*** (0.0156)
Have Refrigerator	0.0622*** (0.0201)
Have Telephone Line	0.106*** (0.0110)
Have Freezer	0.0924*** (0.0172)
Have Manual Washing Machine	-0.0440*** (0.0107)
Have Air Conditioner	0.197*** (0.0213)
Constant	8.605*** (0.0575)
Observations	7,528
R-squared	0.555

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table A 4: Regression Model after Dropping the Governorates Variable

		(2)
VARIABLES		Governorates (Dropped)
Urban/ Rural		0.0415*** (0.0128)
Household age Squared		6.15e-05*** (4.91e-06)
Household Gender		-0.00134 (0.0229)
Household Size Squared		-0.00842*** (0.00136)
Household Employment		0.0805*** (0.0155)
Household Marital Status		
Not Married		0.39858*** (0.0493)
Divorced		0.2815*** (0.5105)
Widow		0.1771*** (0.0237)
Household Education		
Did not Join School		-0.13905*** (0.01601)
Joined School not University		-0.0987*** (0.0146)
Household receiving Cash or In-Kind Transfer		0.0170* (0.00986)
Apartment or Rural House		0.0701*** (0.0171)
Number of Rooms		0.0365*** (0.00564)
Dwelling Area		0.00128*** (0.000155)
Possession of Dwelling		
Rented Dwelling		-0.155*** (0.0136)
Charity Given		-0.0646*** (0.0129)
Tap inside Dwelling		-0.00873 (0.0162)
Mean of Sewerage		0.0279** (0.0115)
Gas Bottle		-0.0996*** (0.0142)
Dwelling Wall		0.0525** (0.0213)
Dwelling Ceiling		0.0126 (0.0168)

Dwelling Kitchen	0.0516***
	(0.0147)
Dwelling Floor	0.0725***
	(0.0127)
Toilet with Flush	0.0818***
	(0.0111)
Garbage Disposal	0.0567***
	(0.00994)
Own Private Car	0.356***
	(0.0232)
Own Motor Cycle	0.0912***
	(0.0158)
Have Refrigerator	0.0460**
	(0.0204)
Have Telephone Line	0.114***
	(0.0113)
Have Freezer	0.101***
	(0.0178)
Have Manual Washing Machine	-0.0521***
	(0.0109)
Have Air Conditioner	0.138***
	(0.0211)
Constant	8.476***
	(0.0566)
Observations	7,528
R-squared	0.529

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table A 5: Regression Model after Dropping the Gender Variable

VARIABLES	(3) (Gender Dropped)
Urban/ Rural	0.0415*** (0.0128)
Household age Squared	6.14e-05*** (4.52e-06)
Household Size Squared	-0.00842*** (0.00136)
Household Employment	0.0801*** (0.0148)
Household Marital Status	
Not Married	0.399*** (0.0495)
Divorced	0.282*** (0.0505)
Widow	0.178*** (0.0200)
Household Education	
Did not Join School	-0.139*** (0.0159)
Joined School not University	-0.0987*** (0.0146)
Household receiving Cash or In-Kind Transfer	0.0171* (0.00991)
Apartment or Rural House	0.0701*** (0.0170)
Number of Rooms	0.0365*** (0.00563)
Dwelling Area	0.00128*** (0.000154)
Possession of Dwelling	
Rented Dwelling	-0.155*** (0.0136)
Charity Given	-0.0646*** (0.0129)
Tap inside Dwelling	-0.00872 (0.0161)
Mean of Sewerage	0.0279** (0.0115)
Gas Bottle	-0.0996*** (0.0142)
Dwelling Wall	0.0525** (0.0213)
Dwelling Ceiling	0.0126 (0.0168)
Dwelling Kitchen	0.0515*** (0.0147)
Dwelling Floor	0.0725*** (0.0127)
Toilet with Flush	0.0818*** (0.0111)
Garbage Disposal	0.0567*** (0.00993)
Own Private Car	0.356*** (0.0232)
Own Motor Cycle	0.0912*** (0.0157)

Have Refrigerator	0.0460** (0.0204)
Have Telephone Line	0.114*** (0.0112)
Have Freezer	0.101*** (0.0179)
Have Manual Washing Machine	-0.0521*** (0.0109)
Have Air Conditioner	0.138*** (0.0211)
Constant	8.176*** (0.0471)
Observations	7,528
R-squared	0.529

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table A 6: Regression Model after Dropping the Receive Cash/ In Kind Variable

VARIABLES	(4) (Receive Cash/In kind Dropped)
Urban/ Rural	0.0407*** (0.0129)
Household age Squared	6.21e-05*** (4.54e-06)
Household Size Squared	-0.00846*** (0.00135)
Household Employment	0.0729*** (0.0145)
Household Marital Status	
Not Married	0.398*** (0.0494)
Divorced	0.283*** (0.0503)
Widow	0.180*** (0.0201)
Household Education	
Did not Join School	-0.138*** (0.0159)
Joined School not University	-0.0980*** (0.0145)
Apartment or Rural House	0.0710*** (0.0171)
Number of Rooms	0.0366*** (0.00563)
Dwelling Area	0.00129*** (0.000155)
Possession of Dwelling	
Rented Dwelling	-0.154*** (0.0136)
Charity Given	-0.0629*** (0.0129)
Tap inside Dwelling	-0.00914 (0.0161)
Mean of Sewerage	0.0281** (0.0115)
Gas Bottle	-0.0995*** (0.0142)
Dwelling Wall	0.0516** (0.0213)
Dwelling Ceiling	0.0115 (0.0167)
Dwelling Kitchen	0.0513*** (0.0147)
Dwelling Floor	0.0718*** (0.0126)
Toilet with Flush	0.0822*** (0.0111)
Garbage Disposal	0.0566*** (0.00993)
Own Private Car	0.354*** (0.0232)
Own Motor Cycle	0.0915***

	(0.0158)
Have Refrigerator	0.0456**
	(0.0204)
Have Telephone Line	0.115***
	(0.0112)
Have Freezer	0.101***
	(0.0178)
Have Manual Washing Machine	-0.0518***
	(0.0109)
Have Air Conditioner	0.137***
	(0.0211)
Constant	8.189***
	(0.0453)
Observations	7,528
R-squared	0.529

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table A 7: Regression Model after Dropping Tap inside Dwelling Variable

VARIABLES	(5) (Tap Inside Dwelling Dropped)
Urban/ Rural	0.0406*** (0.0129)
Household age Squared	6.21e-05*** (4.54e-06)
Household Size Squared	-0.00846*** (0.00135)
Household Employment	0.0730*** (0.0145)
Household Marital Status	
Not Married	0.398*** (0.0495)
Divorced	0.283*** (0.0503)
Widow	0.180*** (0.0201)
Household Education	
Did not Join School	-0.138*** (0.0159)
Joined School not University	-0.0979*** (0.0145)
Apartment or Rural House	0.0694*** (0.0164)
Number of Rooms	0.0365*** (0.00565)
Dwelling Area	0.00129*** (0.000155)
Possession of Dwelling	
Rented Dwelling	-0.154*** (0.0136)
Charity Given	-0.0628*** (0.0129)
Mean of Sewerage	0.0277** (0.0114)
Gas Bottle	-0.0995*** (0.0142)
Dwelling Wall	0.0516** (0.0213)
Dwelling Ceiling	0.0107 (0.0167)
Dwelling Kitchen	0.0504*** (0.0147)
Dwelling Floor	0.0714***

	(0.0125)
Toilet with Flush	0.0821***
	(0.0111)
Garbage Disposal	0.0564***
	(0.00992)
Own Private Car	0.354***
	(0.0232)
Own Motor Cycle	0.0914***
	(0.0158)
Have Refrigerator	0.0452**
	(0.0204)
Have Telephone Line	0.115***
	(0.0112)
Have Freezer	0.101***
	(0.0178)
Have Manual Washing Machine	-0.0520***
	(0.0109)
Have Air Conditioner	0.138***
	(0.0211)
Constant	8.186***
	(0.0454)
Observations	7,528
R-squared	0.529

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table A 8: Regression Model after Dropping Dwelling Ceiling Variable

VARIABLES	(6)
	Final Model (Dwelling Ceiling Dropped)
Urban/ Rural	0.0404*** (0.0129)
Household age Squared	6.21e-05*** (4.54e-06)
Household Size Squared	-0.00846*** (0.00135)
Household Employment	0.0728*** (0.0145)
Household Marital Status	
Not Married	0.399*** (0.0495)
Divorced	0.283*** (0.0503)
Widow	0.180*** (0.0201)
Household Education	
Did not Join School	-0.138*** (0.0159)
Joined School not University	-0.0979*** (0.0145)
Apartment or Rural House	0.0716*** (0.0161)
Number of Rooms	0.0365*** (0.00565)
Dwelling Area	0.00129*** (0.000154)
Possession of Dwelling	
Rented Dwelling	-0.155*** (0.0136)
Charity Given	-0.0631*** (0.0129)
Mean of Sewerage	0.0278** (0.0114)
Gas Bottle	-0.0997*** (0.0142)
Dwelling Wall	0.0574*** (0.0191)
Dwelling Kitchen	0.0508*** (0.0147)
Dwelling Floor	0.0729*** (0.0124)
Toilet with Flush	0.0824*** (0.0111)
Garbage Disposal	0.0564***

	(0.00992)
Own Private Car	0.354***
	(0.0232)
Own Motor Cycle	0.0911***
	(0.0157)
Have Refrigerator	0.0454**
	(0.0204)
Have Telephone Line	0.115***
	(0.0112)
Have Freezer	0.101***
	(0.0178)
Have Manual Washing Machine	-0.0518***
	(0.0109)
Have Air Conditioner	0.138***
	(0.0211)
Constant	8.187***
	(0.0454)
Observations	7,528
R-squared	0.529

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

I investigated the joint significance of the set of variables including in the final model and their interaction with the log per capita expenditure. The test of the explanatory variables are jointly statistically significant at the level 0.5 because the p value less than 0.05

Table A 9: Hypothesis Test

1	Urban/Rural	= 0
2	Household Age Squared	= 0
3	Household Size Squared	= 0
4	Household Employment	= 0
5	Household Marital Status	= 0
	Never Married	= 0
	Divorced	= 0
	Widow	= 0
6	Household Education	= 0
	Did not Joined the School	= 0
	Joined School but not University	= 0
7	Apartment or Rural House	= 0
8	Number of Rooms	= 0
9	Dwelling Area	= 0
10	Possession of Dwelling	= 0
11	Rented Dwelling	= 0
12	Given through Charity	= 0
13	Mean of Sewage	= 0
14	Gas Bottle	= 0
15	Dwelling Wall	= 0
16	Dwelling Kitchen	= 0
17	Dwelling Floor	= 0
18	Toilet with Flush	= 0
19	Garbage Disposal	= 0
20	Own Private Car	= 0
21	Own Motor Cycle	= 0
22	Have Refrigerator	= 0
23	Have Telephone line	= 0
24	Have Freezer	= 0
25	Have Manual Washing Machine	= 0
26	Have Air Conditioner	= 0

$$F(28, 7499) = 217.69$$

$$\text{Prob} > F = 0.0000$$

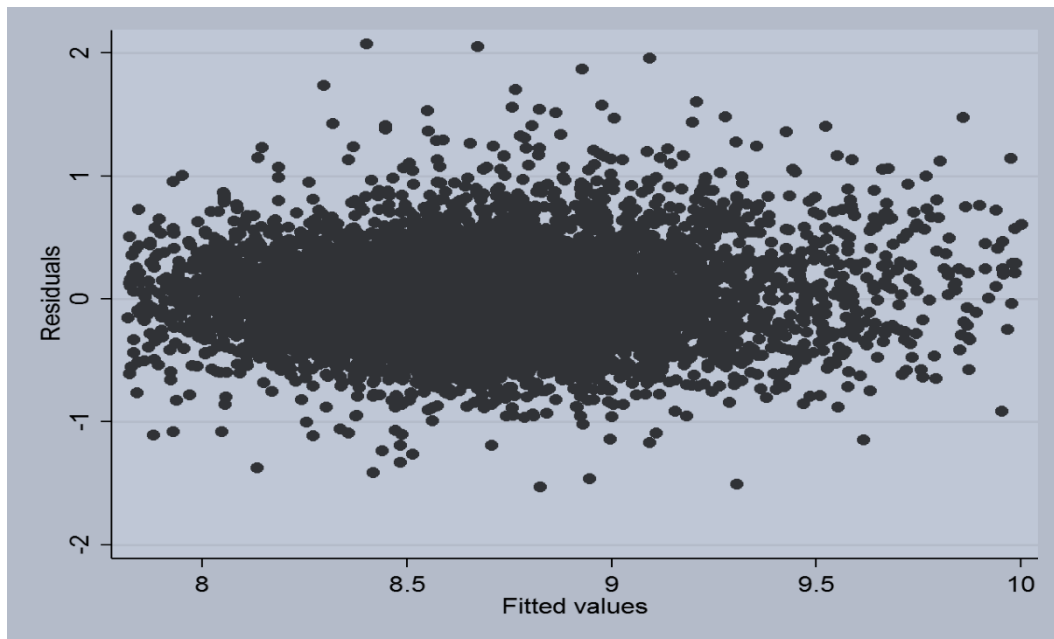
I checked the Multicollinearity using the variance inflation factor STATA vif command. The tolerance of the 1/vif showed the degree of collinearity was above 0.1 and the VIF lower than 10. Therefore, the VIF values indicated that these variables were irredundant.

Table A 10: Multicollinearity Test

Variable	VIF	1/VIF
Urban/Rural	2.35	0.426146
Household Age Square	1.70	0.586667
Household Size Squared	1.29	0.775613
Household Employment	1.67	0.600157
Household Marital Status		
Never Married	1.05	0.954579
Divorced	1.04	0.966001
Widow	1.48	0.677759
Household Education		
Did not Joined the School	3.59	0.278904
Joined School not University	2.84	0.352037
Apartment or Rural House	1.92	0.521214
Number of Rooms	2.10	0.475481
Dwelling Area	2.10	0.477196
Possession of Dwelling		
Rented Dwelling	1.32	0.758315
Given through Charity	1.20	0.832212
Mean of Sewage	2.06	0.485792
Gas Bottle	1.51	0.663002
Dwelling Wall	1.31	0.765925
Dwelling Kitchen	1.53	0.655723
Dwelling Floor	1.66	0.604078
Toilet with Flush	1.91	0.524923
Garbage Disposal	1.52	0.657816
Own Private Car	1.34	0.747213
Own Motor Cycle	1.04	0.960427
Have Refrigerator	1.22	0.821226
Have Telephone line	1.36	0.732618
Have Freezer	1.21	0.826919
Have Manual Washing Machine	1.35	0.738436
Have Air Conditioner	1.33	0.751644
Mean VIF	1.64	

I used STATA command `rvfplot` to plot actual values against fitted values of the dependant variable. The post estimation command `rvfplot` gave a transformation of this, plotting the residuals against the fitted as in Figure A1. The figure showed a random pattern, indicating a good fit for the model. Therefore, it appeared that no pattern to the residuals plotted against the fitted values.

Figure A 1: Heteroskedasticity of the Residuals



I checked the heteroscedasticity using the STATA command estat hettest if it presented. The test showed that $p=0$ which strongly reject the homoskedasticity.

Table A 11: Heteroskedasticity Test

Breusch-Pagan / Cook-Weisberg test for heteroskedasticity

Ho: Constant variance

Variables: fitted values of log per capita expenditure

chi2(1) = 44.25

Prob > chi2 = 0.0000

Breusch-Pagan / Cook-Weisberg test for heteroskedasticity

Ho: Constant variance

Variables: Urban/Rural Household Age Squared Household Size Squared Household Employment
i.Household Marital Status i.Household Education Apartment or Rural House Number of Rooms Dwelling
Area i.Possession of Dwelling Mean of Sewage Gas Bottle Dwelling Wall Dwelling Kitchen Dwelling
Floor Toilet with Flush Garbage Disposal Own Private Car Own Motor Cycle Have Refrigerator Have
Telephone line Have Freezer Have Manual Washing Machine Have Air Conditioner

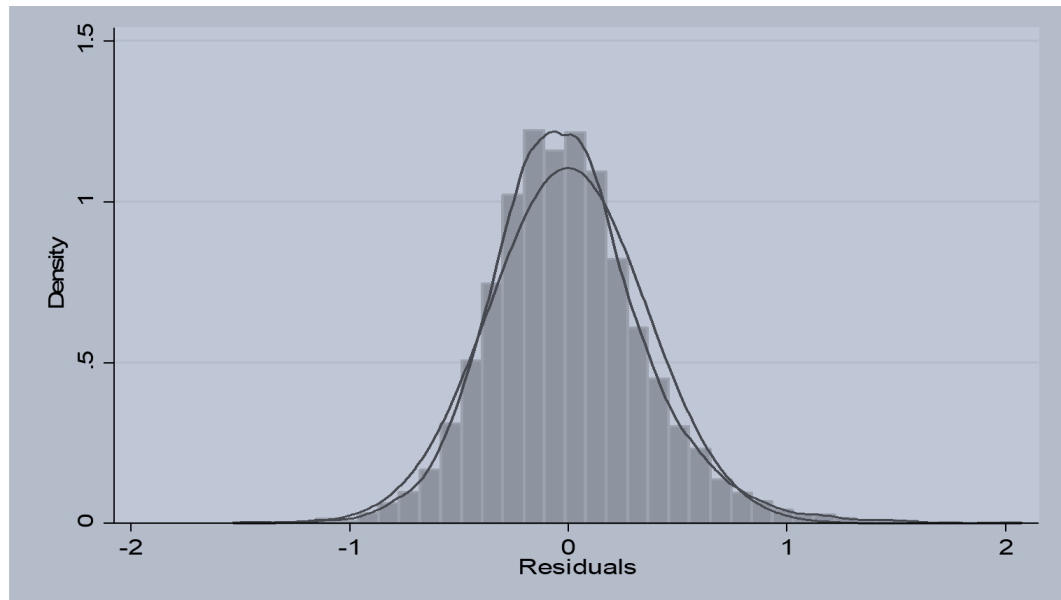
chi2(28) = 1021.19

Prob > chi2 = 0.0000

Since OLS regression requires that the residuals be identically and independently distributed, so I check the normality of residuals that assures that the p-values for the t-test and F-test are valid. Below I use kdensity STATA command to produce a Kernel density plot with the normal option

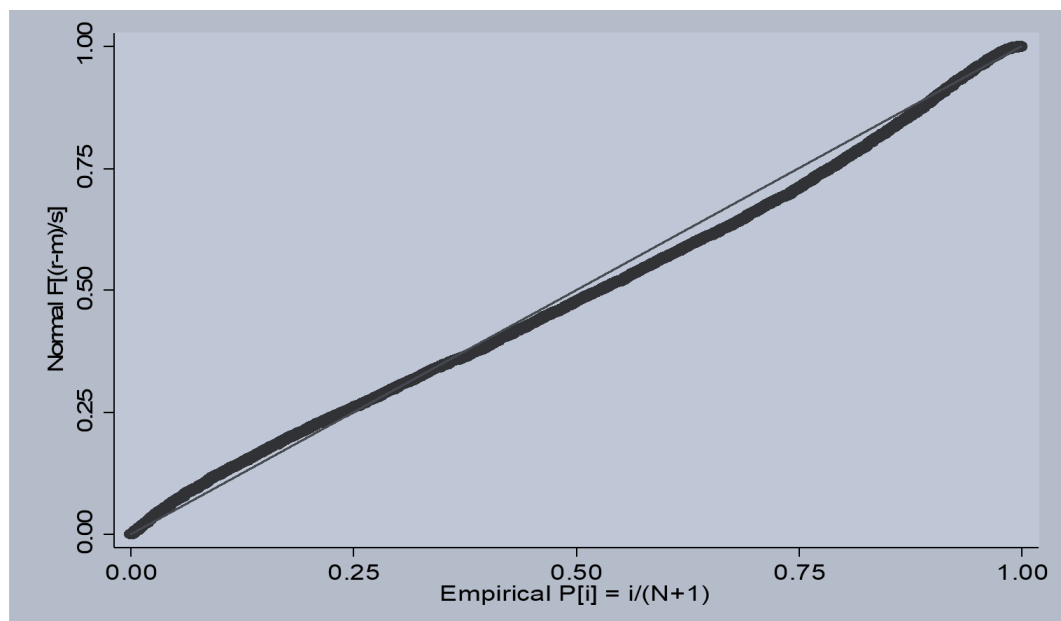
Figure A 2: Normality Test

(a)



The pnorm STATA command graphs the standardized normal probability. As the graph showed below, the results depicted no indication of non-normality; only minor deviation from normality which can be accepted.

(b)



Ethical Application

guidance on ethics is available in the International Development Ethics Handbook and on the UEA website <http://www.uea.ac.uk/dev/ethics> Please consult these sources of information before filling this form.

HOW TO COMPLETE THIS FORM

- Your application **MUST** include a **separate** Consent Form
- **COMPLETE** all sections of the form (including the top section of PART B)
- Submit the documents as **WORD** files (PDFs are NOT accepted)
- You **MUST** have your **SURNAME** in the electronic name of any documents you submit
- Your **supervisor must have approved** your two forms (ethical clearance application + consent form)
- **BEFORE** submitting your ethics form you must have submitted a Risk Assessment form, signed off by you and your Supervisor, to the Learning and Teaching Hub in Arts 1.

SUPERVISOR APPROVAL

Your ethics application **MUST** be reviewed, commented on and **APPROVED** by your Supervisor **BEFORE** submitting. How to confirm approval?

- The Supervisor attaches an electronic signature to your ethics form
- OR**
- The Supervisor emails dev.ethics@uea.ac.uk to confirm approval of your application
- OR**
- Your Supervisor confirms approval to you (via email) you include it in the application materials emailed to dev.ethics@uea.ac.uk

WHEN TO SUBMIT?

Deadline: for each month is **10th**.

Please be aware that it usually takes 1 to 2 months to be granted ethical approval.

WHO TO SUBMIT TO?

Email: dev.ethics@uea.ac.uk

PLEASE BE AWARE THAT FORMS THAT ARE NOT COMPLETED CORRECTLY OR ARRIVE WITHOUT AUTHORISATION FROM YOUR SUPERVISOR WILL BE REJECTED.

After review, if you are asked to **resubmit your application** follow the guidance in Part B

PERSON(S) SUBMITTING RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Name(s) of all person(s) submitting research proposal. <u>Including main applicant</u>	Status (BA/BSc/MA/MSc/MRes/ MPhil/PhD/research associate/faculty) <u>Students: specify your course</u>	Department/Group/ Institute/Centre
Walaa Talaat	PhD	School of International Development

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Forename	Walaa
Surname	Talaat
Gender	Female
Student ID number (if applicable)	100099720
Contact email address	w.talaat@uea.ac.uk
Date application form submitted	January 2016
1st application or resubmission?	1st

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project or Dissertation Title	Subsidy Reform: Effective Targeting to Reach the Poor. The Case of Egypt
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** DEV/DEVco faculty or DEVco research associate applications only:*

* Project Funder	
* Submitted by SSF or DEVco?	
If yes – Project Code:	

Postgraduate research students only:

Date of your PP presentation	
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1. OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Describe the purposes of the research/project proposed. Detail the methods to be used and the research questions. Provide any other relevant background which will allow the reviewers to contextualise your research or project activities. **Include questionnaires/checklists as attachments, if appropriate.**

Food subsidies contributes greatly to social stability in Egypt, yet there exist academic and political tendencies to abandon the current system in the interest of more effective targeting-based system to reach the poor (World Bank, 2010). Not only Egypt but also the countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region rely heavily on food and fuel price subsidies. The region has been experiencing a spontaneous revolutionary wave that has come to be known as the "Arab Spring". One of the major characteristics of this revolution is the demand for greater resource distribution among the whole society (Ncube and Anyanwu, 2012). The Arab spring highlight some key challenges in the MENA region that have already been existing from long time ago. Some of these challenges include ,high rates of poverty, reform of subsidised system, high unemployment, lack of transparency, pervasive corruption, democracy, lack of accountability, price volatility, high rate of crimes, growing inequalities and social injustice (O'Sullivan, Rey and Mendez, 2012). This is despite the fact that, governments in the MENA region allocate a substantial amount of their resources for social safety net for the poor. For instance, in Egypt, the average percentage of subsidies, grants and social benefits account for 30 percent of the total government expenditure in 2013. The subsidised food is provided through the smart card system, more than 77 percent of the population benefit from the programme whereas not all of them are poor households (CAPMAS, 2013). According to Ramadan & Thomas (2011) study, the leakage of the food subsidy system is in favor of the middle and high income households. Accordingly, governments and policy makers in the MENA region are in dire need of reforming subsidies and finding cost-effective targeting methods to allocate their resources to reach the poor (Sdravovich et al. 2014). Hence the issue of addressing the social agenda especially the subsidies by providing support to the poor and most vulnerable to poverty in the MENA countries has become a matter of national and international concern.

Targeting social safety net programs is the process of selecting eligible households and screening out ineligible ones, for purposes of allocating the resources to the targeted groups. Targeting is an attractive method for programs of alleviating poverty (Grosh *et al.*, 2008). The principles of targeting are well established in the literature (Besley & Kanbur 1993). However, the relationship between social provisions, poverty and targeting has been the subject for intense debate for many decades (Mkandawire, 2005). There is a fierce debate between the academics, policy makers and international organisation on which method to choose to reform the general food subsidised system in Egypt and one of the highly recommended proposal is to better target subsidies (World Bank, 2010). Therefore, what method of targeting is appropriate under what circumstances is an important question in the implementation of a concrete agenda of social safety net programs for

reaching the poor to reduce the poverty. Governments should work on designing, monitoring and evaluating social safety programme interventions to reduce poverty. The major challenge of such interventions is the implementation of targeting mechanisms to ensure that the benefits flow to the targeted groups which the programme is designed upon (Coady et al. 2004).

My main research question is :

To explore whether an alternative poverty targeting tool affects the capacity of Egypt's current general food subsidised system to identify the poor and improve poverty targeting outcomes with the same resources.

My main research question will require answering a set of sub-questions which are:

1. How does the current general subsidised system target the poor?
A contextual background for the targeting system in Egypt.
 - I. *What categories of targeting have been applied in Egypt to reach the poor and the means by which they are being operationalized?*
 - II. *What are the criteria for providing subsidies to the targeted groups?*
 - I. *How effective is the targeting in term of exclusion and inclusion errors?*
 - II. *What are the explanations for the inclusion and exclusion errors and why?*
2. How possible a different targeting scheme scenario than the currently used mechanism is likely to be designed for identifying the poor using same resources and improve targeting outcomes? *Current targeting of the general food subsidy system in Egypt VERSUS proxy means tests targeting method.*

Methodology and Methods

I develop a mixed approach method to the problem of identifying the households who are eligible for the food subsidy programme in Egypt. The research design combines both the qualitative and quantitative methods, which is appropriate to the research questions as mentioned above.

This ethical approval application only refers to part of the qualitative data collection. The quantitative analysis is not included, since this involves secondary analysis of data that have already been collected and are in the public domain. This is the national Household Income, Expenditure and Consumption Survey (HIECS), conducted by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) of Egypt for 2012/13.

The qualitative data collection will involve 2 elements: key informant interviews and, potentially, interviews with beneficiary households. The

ethical application only relates to the 1st element –key informant interviews. If the 2nd element goes ahead, this will be handled with a separate application. The researcher is not yet in a position to make that second application, since key details, such as questions to be asked, gatekeeper organisations and recruitment of households will be informed by preliminary findings of the key informant interviews.

Qualitative element of study

Most of the previous studies address the problem of leakage and under-coverage of the general food programme in Egypt exclusively from an econometrical approach. The general purpose of my qualitative research study is to expand beyond the quantitative findings based on Cost of Basic need approach to answer why the leakage and under-coverage of the current Egyptian food subsidy programme occurs by exploring how the programme distributes the benefit among the beneficiaries. Therefore, exploring why and how this leakage or under-coverage of the programme may occur, a primary data collection is needed on the one hand, from most of the organisational bodies that are responsible for distributing the food subsidies benefit (MSIT, Ration Offices, Ration Shops) and on the other hand the study involves collecting primary data from the NGOs which concentrate their charity work for the less advantaged people.

- Data Collection Methods

1. Interactive Data Collection; Interviews

Semi-structured and Key informant interviews are performed with the employees in the MSIT, ration offices, ration shops and NGOs to explore and understand how the current food subsidy system works in the selected field sites. Open-ended questions are used in these interviews.

Sample interview with the Head of one of the Ration Offices

- 1) What coverage area is this ration office serving?
- 2) What are the targeting criteria for applying to the food subsidy programme?
- 3) Which targeting criteria are most important? Get them to list in order of importance and give reasons.
- 4) How easy do you find it to put these criteria into practice? Are these criteria easy to be assessed?
- 5) How often does the ration office update the database for the applicants to the programme?
- 6) What are the procedures if an applicant or a smart-card holder has a complaint?
- 7) How do you feel about the existing resources to manage this programme?
- 8) What do you think is lacking the Egyptian food programme system?
- 9) With reference to all the above, How does the current situation have differed from 5 years ago or 10 years ago?

Sample interview with the Owner/Manager of one of the Ration Shops

- 1) What coverage area is this ration shop serving?
- 2) Give me general view of your current responsibilities.
- 3) How many beneficiary of the food subsidy programme are you serving? Do you have a fixed number?
- 4) Tell me exactly what happen if the smart card reader broke down?
- 5) What has been your experience in dealing with the angriness of the beneficiaries in case any problem occurs?
- 6) In what way the beneficiaries have the freedom of choosing their commodities?
- 7) What happened when a beneficiary did not take his monthly commodities?
- 8) *What checks and balances exist between the ration shop and the government?*
- 9) If you could be the Minister of MSIT, what changes would you make for the ration shops?
- 10) What do you think is lacking the Egyptian food programme system?
- 11) With reference to all the above, How does the current situation at the ration shop have differed from 5 years ago or 10 years ago?

Sample interview for an official at the MSIT

1. Let's start with numbers, how much is the food subsidy bill and its percentage of the government expenditures and the GDP?
2. From your own experience, what is the ideal amount of the food subsidy bill you think will be relevant in the Egyptian context?
3. Give me a general view of the current food subsidy programme and describe your role in this system.
4. In your point of view, what are the programme's strengths and weaknesses?
5. Could you tell me about the targeting criteria and how easy do you think the ration offices to put these criteria into practice?
6. Can you explain to me, how the MSIT is coordinating the organisational bodies (ration offices, ration shops) involved in the food programme to distribute the programme benefit?
7. What do you think are the major obstacles the MSIT is facing to reach the benefit to the poor. How did the MSIT deal with them? .
8. What do you think is lacking the Egyptian food programme system?
9. With reference to all the above, How does the current food system have differed from 5 years ago or 10 years ago?

Sample interview with the Manager of the NGO

1. According to the Ministry of Social Solidarity, which area your NGO is serving? Is it restricted to serve only the less advantaged people in this neighborhood?
2. How many households do you help per month?
3. What do you think about the Egyptian food subsidy system?
4. From your work experience, tell me about the percentage of the food programme do you think it covers the household basic commodity needs?
5. What do you think are the major obstacles the households you served have faced in applying for the food programme?
6. Tell me about a time when a household you are serving his application to the food programme has been rejected?
7. What do you think is lacking the Egyptian food programme system to reach the less advantaged households you are serving?
8. With reference to all the above, How does the current food system have differed from 5 years ago or 10 years ago?

2. Observation

Observation is used to see all the relevant factors and actors that surround and describe the current food subsidy programme, including the MSIT and ration shops and offices. Researcher note will be used in observing those places. I will inform the participants who are being observed of the purpose for being at either the MSIT-ration offices or ration shops, sharing sufficient information with them about my research study that their questions about the research and my presence there are put to rest. I will let them know that part of my study involves observing them and the place as well. I will inform the participants that my responsibility is to preserve their anonymity in the final write-up and in field notes to prevent their identification.

3. Document Analysis

The research study tends to use document analysis to verify and analyse the official public and classified documents related to the smart card subsidised food programme in Egypt.

Field site

My research will be based in three cities in Egypt, Cairo, Alexandria and Asyut. The vertical hierarchical structure of Egypt's government consists of three levels. The first level is composed of 27 governorates. The second sub-divisional administrative level contains more than 300 district/neighbourhood, called 'Kisms' in urban areas and 'Marakez' in rural areas. Finally, the third sub-divisional level includes more than 200 cities and 3000 villages.

The selected neighbourhoods will be chose according to the larger number of poor people and the lower mean expenditure of the households, using a disaggregated data report from the CAPMAS for every neighbourhood. All these locations are reported as secure areas according to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, available at <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/egypt>, all the three cities are marked as safe places 'in the green shaded area'.

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2. SOURCES OF FUNDING

The organisation, individual or group providing finance for the study/project. If you do not require funding or are self-funded, please put 'not applicable'

Not Applicable

3. RISKS OR COSTS TO PARTICIPANTS

What risks or costs to the participants are entailed in involvement in the study/project? Are there any potential physical, psychological or disclosure dangers that can be anticipated? What is the possible benefit or harm to the subject or society from their participation or from the study/project as a whole? What procedures have been established for the care and protection of participants (e.g. insurance, medical cover) and the control of any information gained from them or about them?

Since my research topic about the food subsidy programme, is being considered as a thread that may affect the Egyptian national security, therefore an official permission was taken from the government itself to conduct my qualitative research. In regards to the participants, especially the government employees, I will inform them about the risk of losing their jobs or credibility as a result of taking part of my qualitative research study.

I contemplate the possible of collecting information from

- 1- Employees (men and women) at MSIT, ration offices and ration shops,
- 2- NGOs,

These will constitute the major participants for my research. The following issues will be determined and actions will be taken to minimise any potential risk.

1- The interviews will be conducted at the MSIT, ration offices, ration shops and NGOs. All the participants will be aware that there is no obligation to participate. Moreover, their identity will be protected on my personal encrypted computer files to make sure that they will not be accessed by anyone and will not be revealed in any presentation or publication. Additionally, the information provided throughout the interview will be held confidential. They will be informed that they have the right to pull out of my study up to a certain date, even if that would be after the interview.

2- All participation will be through a written consent.

3- I will make sure that the participant understands that if s/he did not feel comfortable in providing a written consent, a verbal consent is a valid one as well.

3. RISKS OR COSTS TO PARTICIPANTS

4- I will ensure that the participant understands that in any stage prior or during of the interview, s/he can exit or stop participating.

5- A researcher notes will be used to record my observations after every interview which will help me during analysing my data.

(Please note this box will expand as much as you need to complete this section).

4. RECRUITMENT/SELECTION PROCEDURES

How will study/project participants be selected? For example will participants be selected randomly, deliberately/purposively, or using lists of people provided by other organisations (see section 11 on Third Party Data)?

Purposive sampling is employed in this study for three cities in Egypt, Cairo, Alexandria and Asyut in an attempt to explore and understand the current food subsidy programme. The selected neighbourhoods will be chosen according to the larger number of poor people and the lower mean expenditure of the households, using a disaggregated data report from the CAPMAS for every neighbourhood.

Since I have the official permission from the MSIT to conduct my qualitative research in the three selected sites, key informants participants of the ration offices, ration shops and NGOs will be purposively selected. However, the participation will not be mandatory in any sampling methods nor being reported to any official party and additional participants will be sought if some key informants refuse to participate. As outlined above informed consent will be sought from the participants and they have the full right to withdraw at any point or even to refuse to participate.

5. PARTICIPANTS IN DEPENDENT RELATIONSHIPS

Is there any sense in which participants might be 'obliged', to participate – for example in the case of project beneficiaries, students, prisoners or patients – or are volunteers being recruited? If participants in dependent relationships will be included, what will you do to ensure that their participation is voluntary?

The participation in this research will be voluntary and they will be notified prior to their participation that they have the full right to refuse to participate and withdraw at any point in the course of our interaction for my research until a certain date we will agree upon. Furthermore, the participants will be emphasised that in case s/he did not like to answer any question, has the opportunity not to. The participant will decide the suitable time for the interview and the place for the interaction.

As a researcher, I am fully aware that the nature of being a university staff member and having an official permission from the MSIT may result in obligating any participant to take part even if it is against their desire. Under such circumstances, the research team will have to decide whether to proceed or not, after weighing the implication of this decision. Moreover, I will make sure that the participant understand if they will refuse to participate, I will not report or mention

5. PARTICIPANTS IN DEPENDENT RELATIONSHIPS

them to any official party or in any aspect. I am aware of such possibilities and being sensitive to such issues will help in minimizing any adverse impact of the participation process.

(Please note this box will expand as much as you need to complete this section).

6. VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS

Specify whether the research will include children, people with mental illness or other potentially vulnerable groups. If so, please explain the necessity of involving these individuals as research participants and what will be done to facilitate their participation.

The research will not involve children below 18 years or people with mental illness. However, my research will focus on the organisational bodies dealing with less advantaged households. I will be dealing with the NGOs who have the direct contact with the less advantaged households. I will try to deal with this situation in a great sensitivity and respect. Moreover, Junior employees at MSIT and ration offices might feel vulnerable in some way if the operational guidelines of the food subsidy system are not strictly followed, therefore I will notify them that I will not share their comments with their superiors or other colleagues and I am only looking for their personal views, rather than the views of their organisations in case they will agree to participate, stressing that they can withdraw and refuse to participate if they feel any discomfort in participation without reporting them to any official party.

(Please note this box will expand as much as you need to complete this section).

7. PAYMENTS AND INCENTIVES

Will payment or any other incentive, such as a gift or free services, be made to any participant? If so, please specify and state the level of payment to be made and/or the source of the funds/gift/free service to be used. Please explain the justification for offering payment or other incentives.

No payments will be given.

8. CONSENT

Please give details of how consent is to be obtained. Participants must be aware of their entitlement to withdraw consent and at what point in the study/project that entitlement lapses. A copy of the proposed consent form, along with a separate information sheet, written in simple, non-technical language **MUST** accompany this proposal form as an **ATTACHMENT**.

8. CONSENT

Prior to any interview or data collection, verbal information will be provided about the objective and the aim of my research to the participant. After discussing the research project in detail, a consent (either verbal or written) will be sought. This consent will be translated into the local language, Arabic one. Note that, all the documents used in the fieldwork will be in Arabic.

9. CULTURAL, SOCIAL, GENDER-BASED CHARACTERISTICS

What consideration have you given to the cultural context and sensitivities? How have cultural, social and/or gender-based characteristics influenced the research design, and how might these influence the way you carry out the research and how the research is experienced by participants? For example, might your gender affect your ability to do interviews with or ask certain questions from a person of a different gender; might it affect the responses you get or compromise an interviewee? How might your position /status as a UK university based researcher affect such interactions?

My research will be carried out in my home country, Egypt. Therefore, I am quite aware with the area and the culture norms. Arabic is my mother tongue. Working as Assistant Lecturer of Economics in one of a well-known universities in Egypt, will give me a credibility among participants in trusting me for knowing the research ethics and masking their identities and confidentiality of the information provided. In regards to the religion beliefs, care will be taken to ensure that I won't conduct or pursue interviews during the praying time. Since the selected sites will be less advantaged areas, I am aware that despite being an Egyptian national, I may be perceived as one of the privileged sections of the society as being a university staff member. Thus, I will not wear any luxurious dresses or jewelries during my field work. Respectful behaviour with the research participant will be ensured all along the research fieldwork. As being a female researcher, a conscious effort will be made to recruit key interviewees from a wider pool of knowledgeable informants in case any gender issues may emerge. To get the right advice, I will be in a constant contact with my supervisors if any gender related issues may occur.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

Please state who will have access to the data and what measures which will be adopted to maintain the confidentiality of the research subject and to comply with data protection requirements e.g. will the data be anonymised?

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

My supervisors and I will share the primary data, including observation notes and audio recording. All the data collected will be stored in my personal encrypted computer files to make sure that they will not be accessed by anyone. None of the participants will be identified in any of the data presentations. Interviews and observation notes will be translated from Arabic to English. All the digital files and transcripts will be kept until thesis will be successfully awarded then any of these with identifiers will be deleted.

11. THIRD PARTY DATA

Will you require access to data on participants held by a third party? In cases where participants will be identified from information held by another party (for example, a doctor or school) describe the arrangements you intend to make to gain access to this information.

No third part will be used in my study. In my study design, I will use the HIECS masked data governmental records provided by the CAPMAS in assessing the leakage and under-coverage of the food programme. I already had the official permission from the MSIT to conduct my qualitative research study at the MSIT, ration offices and shops in six governorates, however I will be working in only three of them.

12. PROTECTION OF RESEARCHER (THE APPLICANT)

Please state briefly any precautions being taken to protect your health and safety. Have you taken out travel and health insurance for the full period of the research? If not, why not. Have you read and acted upon FCO travel advice (website)? If acted upon, how?

I am Egyptian and working as assistant lecture of Economics in one of the governmental universities in Cairo. Since I am on a study vacation to pursue my PhD at UEA, I am still having my health and safety insurance covered by my university in Cairo. As one of my field sites will be in Cairo where I live at, it will be so easy for me to access any help from my family and friends in case I may need it. For the other sites, Alexandria and Asyut, I will rent a house in a well reputable place. I am familiar with some of the places in Alexandria. In addition, I have some of my family and friends living there. I selected the locations of my study with security in mind, avoiding any dangerous or insecure areas. Additionally, if the security situation changes in those locations, I temporary will halt my work or relocate it. I will be in constant contact with my supervisors during my field work. My family can easily find out where I am working and when I am expecting to return during my fieldwork via internet and cell phone. For every visit, I will carry my official ID and all the official letter from MSIT. Transportation to field shall be by reliable and not at very late timings, having a good knowledge about the route and the places of the

12. PROTECTION OF RESEARCHER (THE APPLICANT)

ration offices and shops in each neighbourhood, with prearranged for emergency transportation and measures. Acceptable clothes will be used with a special care not to wear a luxurious ones so that not to hurt the local people in the field sites of the less advantaged areas. Communication links will be remained in touch with my family and friends via cellular phone, internet and emails. Working times will be restricted to only the safe hours, avoiding working in the dawn time before the employees daily working hours or beyond evening and returning back to my place before the sunset. I will be very concerned about my personal safety and security during my fieldwork so that I will be ensured not to breach them.

13. PROTECTION OF OTHER RESEARCHERS

Please state briefly any precautions being taken to protect the health and safety of other researchers and others associated with the project (as distinct from the participants or the applicant). If there are no other researchers, please put 'not applicable'

Not applicable

14. RESEARCH PERMISSIONS (INCLUDING ETHICAL CLEARANCE) IN HOST COUNTRY AND/OR ORGANISATION

The UEA's staff and students will seek to comply with travel and research guidance provided by the British Government and the Governments (and Embassies) of host countries. This pertains to research permission, in-country ethical clearance, visas, health and safety information, and other travel advisory notices where applicable. If this research project is being undertaken outside the UK, has formal permission/a research permit been sought to conduct this research? Please describe the action you have taken and if a formal permit has not been sought please explain why this is not necessary/appropriate (for example, for very short studies it is not always appropriate to apply for formal clearance).

Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade in Egypt has provided me with an official permission for six governorates, including the three cities I will be working at (Cairo and Alexandria and Asyut) to conduct my qualitative research study.

15. MONITORING OF RESEARCH

What procedures are in place for monitoring the research/project (by funding agency, supervisor, community, self, etc.).

The research project will be monitored by my supervisors. During my fieldwork, I will regularly communicate with them twice a month via email and skype call meetings. I will write my daily field work notes which will be written and sent to my supervisors for the follow up process of my project.

16. ANTICIPATED USE OF RESEARCH DATA ETC

What is the anticipated use of the data, forms of publication and dissemination of findings etc.?

The collected data will be used for my PhD thesis and publications in academic journals. Moreover, this data will be used in presentations, policy briefs and newspapers articles to disseminate the findings among policy makers and practitioners.

17. FEEDBACK TO PARTICIPANTS

Will the data or findings of this research/project be made available to participants? If so, specify the form and timescale for feedback. What commitments will be made to participants regarding feedback? How will these obligations be verified?

The data which will be gathered, will be available to all the participants if they want to check their views have been appropriately represented. Anonymously, I will try to summarise the findings to participants at MSIT, ration offices and shops to get their feedback on my analysis and interpretations which will be recorded and sent it back to my supervisors

Table A 12: Themes and codes used for the data collected from the three fieldwork sites covering the core ideas of the research

***FSP Public Administration Structure
influencing Targeting Performance***

<p>Bureaucratic structure Application Requests Decentralization process Allocation of the FSP Quota Financial Accountability Spatial Analysis of the Geographical Distribution of the ROs, RSs and BSs Private Contracting-Out</p>	<p><i>FSP Organisational Hierarchy (Centralisation-Rigidity-Static)</i></p> <p><i>The Role of the Main FSP actors and Administrative Bodies (Bureaucratic Procedures at each level- Coordination of the designated levels)</i></p> <p><i>Deconcentration of Decision-Making and Targeting Mechanism (Application process- Eligible Criteria- Request verification- Recertification- Waiting Time -Service Delivery-Benefit Abuse- Formal Complaint Channel)</i></p> <p><i>Annual Needs Reports and Financial Checks and Balances between ROs and RSs and BSs (Annual need report- procedures of the output-based system- Records-Accounting systems-Regular Supervision- Unified accounts)</i></p> <p><i>Quality of Service and the Access of Service (Workload and Caseload- Number of Employees- Practices of Managing the Workload- Distribution of the ROs- Distribution of the Private and Public RSs)</i></p> <p><i>Contracting Out (Bidding Process- Delegation of Service Delivery to private Sector- Administrative Capacity- Software compliance and glitches- Issuance of the SRCs and their Delivery to the ROs- Types of the SRCs)</i></p>
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***Street-Level Bureaucrats and Service Delivery
influencing Targeting Mechanism***

SLBS Experience and Practices
Interconnected Factors and Service Delivery
Working Conditions and Service Delivery
Access and Demand of Service

*SLBs qualifications and Experience
(Qualifications and Promotion Systems-
Experience and Skills)*

*Communication between the ROs
employees and Beneficiaries (Mass
Processing and Work management-
Training Programmes-Psychological
disempowerment- Barriers between the
SLBs and Top management-Dissatisfied
workplace and Pressurized Work
environment-Formal Complaint
Channels for Beneficiaries-
Mistreatment Behaviour- Stigma)*

*Working Conditions and Resource
availability (Salaries- Motivation and
Incentives- Employees Performance-
Physical Workplace and Location-
Office Supplies- Policy Conflict- SLBs
Behaviour and Practices-Coping
Mechanisms of the SLBs- Overcrowding
and Noise-Private Space- Dignity-
Security inside the RO-Intimidation,
Aggressiveness, Violence and Abuse
inside the RO)*

*Rationalism of the Benefit Practices
Monetary Costs (Formal Costs-
Informal Costs and informal service
practices), Non-Monetary Costs (Queue- Time- Crowding- Private Costs-
Bureaucratic language and the Means
of spreading the updated news and
information about the system)*