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*Household resilience and future food consumption: a meta-analysis*

Abstract

Household resilience to food insecurity has been a hot topic both in development research and policy debate over the last years, probably because of the increase of risks (natural as well as economic) the households are facing. It can be defined as the capacity of a household to keep a certain level of wellbeing (e.g. being food secure) notwithstanding shocks and stresses (Alinovi *et al.*, 2008).

Despite the importance of this concept, it is relatively new in the development field and there is no consensus yet on how it should be measured (Romano and D'Errico, 2015). The most solid approach to quantitatively assess the household resilience is the so called FAO-RIMA (Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis), which employs a latent variable model (Structural Equation Models – SEM) to estimate a resilience index of a given household as the resultant of a series of determinants (cf. D'Errico *et al.*, 2015).

This paper through a meta-analysis of two studies, aims at providing an evidence of: (i) what are the most important determinants of the household resilience index, and (ii) whether or not the resilience index is a good predictor of household future food consumption.

This is carried out using two panel-datasets from the Living Standard Measurement Studies (LSMS) of the World Bank: the Tanzania National Panel Survey (TZNPS), covering three rounds (2008-09, 2010-11 and 2012-13) and the Uganda National Household Survey (UNHS) covering three rounds (2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12).

The analysis shows that the most important determinants of the resilience index have been consistently assets and adaptive capacity, which in turn are determined primarily by livestock and agricultural assets and by education, respectively.

Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regressions have been run to test the predictive capacity of resilience index, controlling for other covariates, on household food consumption. The analysis shows that the resilience index has consistently proved to be a robust predictor of food security

(employing both the food consumption score and food expenditure as indicators of food security).

The policy implication is that the resilience index, estimated according the FAO-RIMA, can be adopted as a good predictor of food security in ex-ante analyses and should be monitored to assess the ability of a household to withstand shocks and stressed should they occur.