Territorial approaches, public policy and rural governance: perspectives from the Jiquiriçá valley in Northeast Brazil

Paper submitted to the RTD conference in Quito, 5 – 7 June, 2012

Julian Quan, Natural Resources Institute, University of Greenwich

Abstract
The paper discusses whether or not rural territorial development as pursued in Brazil promises democratic modernisation of rural governance, through the lens of the Jiquiriçá Valley in Bahia. Agrarian sector based territorial policies are overlaid on generally positive but differentiated rural dynamics, arising from the valley’s geographic features, agrarian structure, market linkages and effects of broader national and sector policies. Analysis of network relations amongst local actors revealed that participation in the territorial collegiate forum was dominated by a pre-existing social coalition of union activists and state agents with strong collaborative links rooted in a specific part of the valley, and allied politically to the governing party. The private sector was absent, local government only weakly engaged, and various parallel territorial initiatives overlap. Although specific local networks and leaders have established successful development partnerships at municipal scale, territorial policy itself has made little progress in stimulating broader productive innovation and diversification in the valley.

The findings echo recent criticisms of Brazil’s territorial policies. While they conform quite well emerging RTD programme guidelines for effective rural policy in seeking to devolve territorial funds a civil society led forum, the official territory is too large, the institutional framework as a whole is not coherent, and without pathways to strengthen democratic participation and governance. The state is not sufficiently engaged in building capacity and facilitating actor collaboration, and more radical institutional change and modernization are needed to sustain inclusive growth and deepen democratic engagement in potentially dynamic rural regions such as this.

1. Introduction
Do Brazil’s territorial development policies have the potential to strengthen public management and democratic accountability in the development of rural areas?

Shifts towards a new territorial paradigm for rural policy, have arisen as a result of growing diversification of rural areas and the demands on them, alongside persistent rural poverty and inter regional – inequalities (Schejtmán and Berdegué 2008, 2004, Favareto 2007, OECD 2006, IICA 2001). Instead of more traditional centrally defined and sector-led development planning, the new territorial approaches seek to adapt and improve the coordination of government policies in rural areas, strengthen social inclusion and mobilize the capacity of
local actors to address the needs and potential of specific rural areas in synergistic ways. Since 2003 Brazil has experimented with territorial development policies, originating in the agrarian sector, to strengthen social participation the management and delivery of public policies, and assist the transformation of rural power relations, characterized in NE Brazil by the traditional dominance of municipal prefects and land owning elites (Leite 2010, MDA 2006, 2004).

This paper discusses the role of the state in rural development and the place of Brazil’s territorial development policies in strengthening democratic participation, through the lens of a rural territory in Northeast Brazil, the Jiquiriçá Valley and in relation to emergent findings of the RTD programme. It draws on field research and network analysis and broader findings of the RTD programme to consider the results implications and adequacy of the territorial development policy approaches adopted for improved rural governance. “Governance” refers to the formation and stewardship of the formal and informal rules that regulate the public realm, the arena in which state as well as economic and societal actors interact to make decisions (Hyden et al 2008)¹ – in other words the institutional arrangements that provide oversight and guidance to public policy and planning, including mechanisms for participation and accountability, in addressing multiple, often conflicting interests, to bring about shared societal objectives.

The synthesis of findings of 19 case studies of territorial dynamics in 11 countries, (Berdegué et al 2011) identified seven key factors which interact to shape development trajectories and outcomes in rural areas: quality and productivity of natural capital; agrarian structure; integration with dynamic markets; economic diversification; urban linkages; public investment and policy; and the presence of coalitions of social actors pursuing a shared development vision or project. The Jiquiriçá Valley study (Quan et al 2011) highlighted the role of spatial variation in natural productivity and agrarian structures, changes in agricultural markets, and public policies including federal financial transfers in determining geographically diverse but generally positive development outcomes.

The Jiquiriçá valley is a grouping of 20 municipalities forming a Território de Identidade under current Brazilian development policies. It comprises the upper and middle portions of a medium sized river basin and has a total population of approximately 320,000. Agriculture is the main source of employment, with a high proportion of small to medium scale family farmers producing a wide range of tropical crops for market, although the service sector, including public services, is more significant in value terms. The valley has a diversity of natural conditions, farming systems and land holding structures; semi-arid areas where large scale land owning is prevalent are less dynamic and more dependent on public financial transfers.

¹ The definition used by the World Governance Assessment Civil. Governance involves six separate but interrelated arenas: civil society, political society, government, bureaucracy, economic society, and the judicial sphere. “Good governance” was taken to involve six principles: participation, fairness, decency, accountability, transparency, and efficiency (Hyden et al 2008).
The paper’s argument also relates to emerging findings of two RTD synthesis studies which examined dynamics in various territories including the Jiquiriçá valley. An study of market development and the role of public policy in predominantly agricultural territories (Favareto et al forthcoming) assessed the combined importance of “hard” factors in economic geography (Krugman 1996) and of “soft” social and institutional factors such as the nature of property rights, rules of exchange, governance arrangements and dominant forms of control of markets and natural resources (Fligstein 2002) in determining the dynamism, inclusiveness and sustainability of agricultural markets. Coalitions of social actors have stimulated institutional changes and applied public policies to innovative productive projects in specific locations in the Jiquiriçá valley (Quan 2011) and the programme made a comparative assessment of factors influencing the emergence and territorial development impacts of progressive social coalitions actors in (Fernandez et al 2012 / forthcoming).

A starting point for assessing the role of the state in rural areas development is an assumption that, some modernisation is needed to enable the state to engage effectively with the drivers of development, due to the changing and differential territorial dynamics, implying reforms and innovations in public policies and institutional arrangements for planning, management and service delivery. Moreover, Brazil’s history of dictatorship, social exclusion, and continuing, albeit reducing poverty require that citizenship involves not only universal access to social rights, but also constitution of active social agency and extension of opportunities for participation in shaping government policies and their application. This is something advocated by Brazil’s social movements and already widely reflected in the emergence of multiple arenas for citizen participation at different levels and in different sectors (Cornwall et al 2008).

How can the state engage effectively with the drivers of territorial development to help achieve shared, sustainable prosperity in rural areas? In the Jiquiriçá valley, do Federal and State government territorial development policies assist in consolidating and strengthening an apparently positive development trajectory? Do new democratic spaces for citizen participation play a role in improving the governance of rural development processes?

Schjetman and Berdegué (2008, 2004) identified a set of normative criteria to appraise territorial development policies, including: attention to the needs for simultaneous productive and institutional change; adopting a broad conception of the rural; viewing “territory” as rural space with a specific social identity; addressing diversity amongst rural territories; achieving synergy amongst sector policies and involvement of the full range of actors; addressing the multiple livelihood strategies of poor households and adopting medium to long term perspectives. Similar perspectives were also articulated by IICA (2001) and have informed development of the EU LEADER programme in Europe. Some empirically informed policy guidance has emerged from the RTD programme’s analysis of nineteen territorial dynamics case studies (Rimisp 2011):

---

2 A full statement of these criteria is available on the “Comunidad DTR” web site for posting and exchange of working documents https://www.mycb.org/wst/rimisp/comunidadDTR/default.aspx (accessed 15 March 2012)
(i) Territorial cohesion at national scale as a strategic objective to reduce inter-regional inequalities, requiring a national overview informed by territorially disaggregated data, and examination of combined and differential impacts of national policies through a territorial lens.

(ii) Proactive development of innovative social coalitions within rural territories that can link up with, adapt and build on broader national development processes to meet their own needs. Territorial development funds can play an important role provided they are managed by representative bodies involving government, civil society and private sector with real capacity and legal authority, and the invest in public goods that relate to the drivers of successful territorial development through medium-term cross-sector projects that outlast electoral cycles.

(iii) Government decentralisation that transfers effective power, capacity and resources to local government in a context of genuine social participation and exercise of citizenship – necessary to avoid elite capture of power and resources.

The paper explores how far state engagement by the in the Jiquiriçá Valley and in Brazil measures up to the challenges of democratic modernisation. It reviews the main policy impacts and then considers the role of territorial development policies and practice based on analysis of collaborative territorial network in the valley before reviewing the findings in relation critical debate in Brazil and proposed policy guidelines.

2. Policy impacts in the Jiquiriçá valley

The effects of public policies on rural areas in Brazil have gradually changed and developed in terms of the state’s interaction with and responsiveness to stakeholder interests and civil society social movements and the emergence of an increasingly developmental state. Until the late 20th Century the state’s main rural development roles were the extension of territorial administrative control though support to municipal government, and centralised sector policy for development and regulation of agricultural production and natural resource exploitation. Centralisation was most pronounced during the military dictatorship, when the Church, Trade Unions and rural social movements struggled actively for social and labour rights. They subsequently played important roles in democratic development, helping to shape the 1988 Constitution which also strengthened decentralisation and financing of local government for delivery of education and health services previously unavailable in rural areas. In response to popular pressure the FHC social democratic government created an Agrarian Development Ministry (MDA), which assumed responsibility for assistance to small scale farming and land reform, entirely separate from the Agriculture Ministry, concerned primarily with large scale commercial farming. Rural unions and social movements continued campaigning for policies to support the rural poor and for more radical, extensive land reform, giving broad support for Lula’s Workers Party (PT) Government elected at the end of 2002. Since then the state has stimulated unprecedented economic growth, associated, unlike previous booms of the 1960s-70s, with increasing social inclusion and poverty reduction (Anderson 2011).
A broad raft of public policies now promotes development in rural areas and including greatly expanded programmes for social welfare (Bolsa Familia), small farmer credit (PRONAF), food security, rural infrastructure, energy and housing, and the recently renewed investments in input supply, technical assistance, and rural extension (following state withdrawal under 1990s structural adjustment). Redistributive land reform has however lost political momentum, arguably as a result of the success of programmes for family income and welfare support. Predominantly centralised, sector-led Federal policies and State government interventions have had differential impacts in the Jiquiriçá valley as a result of its varying natural conditions, agrarian structures and changing market conditions, and their social consequences.

Publicly funded infrastructure notably construction of the Jiquiriçá valley railway in the early 20th century enabled agricultural settlement and development to occur. Since its closure in the 1960s, rural investment in rural roads has been weak but has expanded since 2003 alongside provision of basic services improving social and economic living conditions in rural communities. Agricultural policy interventions have affected production of key commodities, with differential effects in different sub-regions of the valley. Sporadic and continuing coffee eradication campaigns since the 1930s have had huge impact on the valley’s economy and farm employment. Tightened sanitary regulations have restricted dairy and meat marketing. Until the 1990s, research, extension and credit were almost entirely directed towards large and medium scale producers. Since the 1960s promotion of cocoa by CEPLAC has benefited small farmers greatly due to their predominance in cocoa growing areas, but neo-liberal reform in the 1990s dismantled state managed extension services in Bahia leaving both CEPLAC and EBDA with greatly reduced resources.

Agrarian development policies have also had differential effects across the valley because of its variegated agrarian structure. Family farming credit programme was widely taken up across the forest belt but to a much lesser degree elsewhere. Yet technical advice to small farmers lagged behind credit: weak or absent extension support was the most frequently cited constraint in farmer field surveys, and in 2006 only 6.7% of farmers in the Jiquiriçá valley received any technical assistance3. In the same year credit lines were restricted due to widespread default and growing indebtedness; Federal government has since introduced a credit-linked advisory scheme (Agroamigo), and in 2011 Bahia state government expanded EBDA’s budget. Federal policy now foresees a pluralist extension system operating through networks of public and private providers, NGOs, and farmers’ organisations based on common principles and farmer-participatory methodologies, but such a network is yet to emerge in the Jiquiriçá valley. Following improvements in agricultural development and service support, agrarian reform has provided some new opportunities in in cassava, passion fruit, small scale dairy and irrigated and horticulture flower production in semi-arid and transitional areas but does not address the problems of excessive land fragmentation and limited land access as a result of rural population growth in more productive forest areas.

3 2006-07 Agricultural census data, IBGE
where even larger land holdings fall well below the threshold for expropriation\(^4\). Following the cocoa boom land values are too high for group purchase under the land credit programme, and since most unutilised estates are degraded or located in low rainfall or rocky upland areas where soil and water management is difficult and costly, farmers are reluctant to move to unfamiliar less productive conditions. Without large investments in land acquisition and restoration land reform does not offer them sustainable alternatives.

Gradual “emancipation” of new small municipalities since the early 20\(^{th}\) century in response to expectations for better access to government, health and education services and efforts by large rural landowners to achieve localised political control has fragmented local government\(^5\). Large increases in *federal financial support to municipalities* flowed from the decentralisation provisions of the 1988 Constitution. While this has improved access to education, health, and social care and helped to attenuate out-migration, it has also assisted generally conservative municipal prefects in patronage and purchase of political loyalty through public employment creation and selective service provision, despite erosion of traditional economic power base of landowning elites, due to drought, market crises, and strengthened labour rights. From 2000 to 2004 the valley’s municipal budget receipts rose by 50% and the share attributed to federal transfers by 82%, far exceeding the values of municipal taxation and agricultural production\(^6\). In small rural towns of semi-arid and former coffee producing municipalities public administration is now the largest economic sector, an “economy without production” (Gomes 2001), a situation still prevalent in Northeast Brazil.

*Social income transfers* to the poor resulted from struggles for social rights during dictatorship, their incorporation into the Constitution and subsequent expansion by successive Federal Governments, notably the Lula government since 2003. Rural pensions paid to former labourers and tenant farmers on coffee and other estates are now an income source of major importance in rural communities. *Bolsa Familia*\(^7\) is now paid to 43,789 families in the Jiquiriçá valley, corresponding to approximately 47% of households\(^8\). Social income transfers appear to have multiplying effects on income distribution, employment and economic growth in productive areas where farmers have planted cocoa or taken up horticulture, contributing to household resilience against price volatility and adverse weather conditions, subsidising farm diversification and small scale agro-processing and providing additional stimulus to trade and services. In semi-arid and former coffee producing municipalities public administration is now the largest economic sector, income transfers provide a

---

\(^4\)The minimum land area for expropriation is defined centrally by INCRA as 15 *modulos fiscais* (“fiscal modules”). For the semi-arid municipalities of the valley a module is 65 hectares and in the forest zone 35 hectares.

\(^5\)The number of municipalities in Brazil increased from 4,102 to 5,507 between 1984 and 1997, an increase of 34.3%. 52% of the newly created municipalities had fewer than 5,000 inhabitants (Gomes 2001).

\(^6\)figures from IBGE and the National Confederation of Municipalities

\(^7\)Households with monthly income below 50% of the minimum wage are entitled to receive *Bolsa Familia*, on the condition that the children attend school. At the end of 2010 the value of the grant was R$140 per month per household member for households with children under 17, and R$70 per month for households without children.

\(^8\)IBGE 2010 census data. In the 2010 census 63% of all families and up to 80% of families in semi arid municipalities where poverty is concentrated declared incomes below half the minimum wage, and are thus eligible to receive *Bolsa Familia*. RTD fieldwork data suggests that approximately 90% of small farm households in isolated locations are now in receipt of the grant.
safety net for small towns otherwise entirely reliant on seasonal migration, longer term migrant remittances and public employment since there is no mechanism to link the transfers to productive local economic development, threatening sustainable of poverty reduction should they stop.

*Regional economic development* policy, led by Bahia’s State Government has adopted centralised approaches emphasising private sector agglomeration in selected urban industrial and commercial development poles (Porto 2003). These have focused primarily on “hard”, predominantly exogenous factors in economic geography, such as location, distance and infrastructural development and state directed assistance to private sector investment. Without a major city, the Jiquiriçá valley has not benefited directly from these regional development policies. Development of Santo Antonio de Jesus as a neighbouring regional city has improved access to industrial goods and administrative services specialised health care and education, but also inhibited the growth potential of local towns. Small scale spill-over industrial and infrastructure investment and establishment of higher education campuses in the valley are the result of lobbying by local actors but not from economic development policy. In contrast local economic development thinking (GTZ 2004, Albuquerque 2001), has more to offer rural territorial development by also focussing on “soft” human, social and institutional factors capable of catalysing local economic development, for instance by strengthening collective action and entrepreneurship in civil society, focussing on practical mechanisms to assure access to markets, secure of property rights, deliver effective services provision, develop skills, and building multi-stakeholder platforms for innovation (Quan et al 2006).

*Territorial development approaches* emerged in Brazil in the late 1990s and have been influential in academic research, policy and development practice (Abramovay 2003, Favareto 2007, Veiga 2004). Brazil has pursued a range of initiatives which foster greater social engagement sector coordination and are territorial in the sense of being place centred, albeit originating in different branches of government and operating at various scales including region-wide, municipal, inter-municipal and location specific (Favareto 2009). The approach introduced by a new Secretariat for Territorial Development (SDT) in MDA in 2004 was designed to build coherence amongst agrarian development and other policy interventions directed towards the rural poor and small scale farmers in different territorial settings and to deepen civil society engagement in development planning and management, in partnership with rural social movements and other actors.

The approach involves selective establishment of collegiate planning bodies (*colegiados*) composed of representatives of civil society, municipal authorities and state agencies from groups of municipalities considered to have broadly common socio cultural identity, economic and environmental features, typically comprising 15 -25 municipalities (MDA 2004, 2006). The programme provided *colegiados* with limited funding for facilitation and technical assistance to access the MDA/ SDT PROINFRA budget line to develop priority cross municipal projects each territory switching control of resources for local infrastructure development from control by municipal prefects into broader social control. The *colegiados*
were also expected to draw in municipal government participation and assume a role in joint planning with government agencies and to influence the implementation of rural credit, land reforms and other rural investment programmes. Six rural territories in Bahia were designated following a national process of debate and consultation with farmers, rural workers and land reform organizations conducted by MDA in 2003. Six more were added in 2009.

In promoting place-based policy, multi-sector and cross-municipal coordination, social participation and accountability in public funding, Brazil’s approach appears to meet well the criteria advanced by the RTD programme (Remisp 2011) for sound territorial policy. Territórios de Identidade as meso-scale assemblages of municipalities with shared characteristics, mutual affinities and comprising both rural and urban space present potential for modernization of public governance. Brazil’s 27 States are divided into more than 5,500 municipalities. Bahia alone has 416 (SEI 2005), but no intermediate level of government corresponding to economic or natural regions. As in much of Northeast Brazil, many municipalities are simply urban centres and immediate rural hinterlands configured around land ownership and political power historically established by dominant, colonial families. They are generally too small to support a thriving economy and effective local management capacity, a situation typified by much of the Jiquiriçá valley. Sustainable economic development requires strategic planning based on larger territorial units incorporating rural towns and intermediate cities (MDA 2004; see also de Janvry 2003). Although a high degree of decentralisation has enabled some municipalities to direct social expenditure towards local priorities with some a degree of accountability, in more isolated rural regions political capture of public development finance by local elites, is a more common scenario.

MDA (2006 p.104) views rural territories as “embryonic projects for sustainable development and democratic participation because they involve, besides production, aspects of culture and identity”. In official philosophy the concept of territory is founded on the cultural identity of social groups, and social identification with geographic space, and territorial development is viewed as a long-term approach, part of an extended process of democratization. The principles and methodologies for territorial development processes set out by government emphasise formation of territories and consolidation of collegiate fora as emergent processes involving construction of shared rural development vision, and leading to incremental steps in planning, project development and monitoring so as to bring rural development under democratic social control (MDA 2004). Perico (2009), an IICA researcher and SDT collaborator, describes Territorialization is an emergent, dynamic process involving the recognition of shared identity and the emergence of collective enterprise amongst the local actors as opposed to a top-down technocratic process of regionalization, or determination of planning territories.

While Territórios de Identidade remains a sector-led and oriented towards peasant and family farming sectors, the approach has achieved broader buy-in and presidential support. In 2008

---

9 States have developed their own regional divisions for purposes of administrative planning and resource allocation, frequently based as in Bahia, on the micro-regions designated by IBGE as spatial units for statistical analysis
Federal Government announced an expanded national programme, Territórios da Cidadania in some of the most disadvantaged territories, designed to promote: economic and universal basic programmes for citizenship via a sustainable territorial development strategy [in which] social participation and integrated actions by Federal, State and Municipal government are fundamental. The association of territory and citizenship in policy discourse is symptomatic of policy aspirations in government, since territorial development forms part of broader, longstanding efforts in Brazil to establish more decentralized, deliberative democracy and to strengthen citizen participation in planning.

Adoption of a territorial approach in Bahia has involved a number of institutional reforms intended to strengthen citizen participation. While the state still remained under conservative political control, MDA sponsored formation of a civil society coordination body Coordenação Estadual dos Territórios (CET), which proposed 26 territories covering the entire state. In 2007 a newly elected Workers Party (PT) led government in Bahia appointed a variety of figures from rural social movements to its ranks, and formally adopted all 26 of these territories as planning units. State government proposed to assist establishment of colegiados and participatory rural development plans in those territories not already assisted by MDA. These included the Jiquiriçá valley which had earlier been identified as a “potentially emergent territory” in an assessment of engagement and performance of local government and social movements in territorial initiatives and development visions (Athayde Filho 2004 p.155). Other innovations in Bahia’s governance framework were creation of CEDETER, a joint state – civil society planning council for territorial development in the state, and using the 26 territories as a basis for more accountable development planning and budgeting through the PPA (Planeamento Pluri-annual) Participativo. State government resourced a process of popular assemblies in all of these territories to debate priority investments and established CAPPA, a monitoring council composed of elected territorial delegates drawn from the colegiados.

3. Territorial planning and participation in practice

How does the official policy vision of collaborative territorial development bear out in practice? An assessment of collaborative networks and links amongst social, economic and state actors in the Jiquiriçá valley revealed limitations of these policies, as applied, in stimulating sustainable economic development and deepening democratic engagement. The investigation involved: identification and geographic characterization of network organisations in the valley; analysis of participation in six meetings of the collegiate territorial forum in 2009-10; analysis of networks and collaborative relations amongst a purposive sample of 30 informants from civil society, local government, state agencies and private sector in four municipalities; assessment of perspectives on territorial development gathered from semi –structured interviews, and identification and assessment of successful local partnership projects in the valley.

At the advent of the territorial development collegiate forum a variety of pre-existing network organisations were in place. These included an inter-municipal consortium (initially
established by conservative prefects aiming to improve environmental management and protect the River Jiquiriçá, and the networks of politically rival rural union Federations, FETRAF and FETAG, with affiliated local unions in different groups of municipalities, and organised around regional hubs also covering neighbouring municipalities outside the valley, in different regions. Current policies have also fostered parallel territorial initiatives led by different sectors of government and municipal level actors with different geographic scope, in addition to the Território de Identidade, including a river basin management committee and a short-lived food security planning council, and a re-vamped inter-municipal consortium for the valley also open to neighbouring municipalities, established formally under state law as a public consortium. This results in overlapping sets of collective actors.

Table 1. Territorial network organisations in the Jiquiriçá valley

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Network organisations</th>
<th>Geographic scope</th>
<th>Proponents and sponsors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Federal and State Government initiatives</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Territorial Development Collegiate Forum</strong></td>
<td>20 Municipalities of the middle/upper Jiquiriçá Valley</td>
<td>MDA, Bahia State Government Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONSAD – Council for Food Security and Development</strong></td>
<td>9 municipalities – Jiquiriçá Valley and neighbouring regions</td>
<td>Ministry of Social Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>River Basin Management Committee</strong></td>
<td>Assemblage of river basins passing through southern Recôncavo region – sub-committee for whole Jiquiriçá valley</td>
<td>SEMA, IMA - State Government Secretariat and Institute for Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local government initiatives</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MERCOVALE: Public consortium</strong></td>
<td>Whole Jiquiriçá valley but open to neighbouring regions</td>
<td>Municipal Prefects, led by Planaltino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CIVJ Intermunicipal - focused on consortium with environmental</strong></td>
<td>All municipalities in Jiquiriçá valley including lower / coastal portions</td>
<td>Municipal Prefects, led by prominent relatives of a former Prefect of Mutuípe. Now extinct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Civil society – farmers and workers unions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SINTRAF (Family Farmers and agricultural workers union) Family farmers) Polo Sindical de Amargosa</strong></td>
<td>Amargosa diocese – 7 municipalities in eastern Jiquiriçá valley and others in neighbouring territories</td>
<td>Affiliated to CUT (the main National Union Federation and to PT (Workers Party))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FETAG-BA (Bahia Federation of Agricultural Workers): Polo Sindical de Jequie</strong></td>
<td>Various municipalities in centre north and west of the valley; and others to the west and south</td>
<td>Affiliated to CONTAG (another national union federation) and directly to PCdoB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SINDIVALE Public Sector Workers Union</strong></td>
<td>Municipalities of central and upper valley but not</td>
<td>Affiliated to CUT and PT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis of different organisations’ participation in the Colegiado showed that during 2009–2011 engagement with the territorial collegiate forum by both local government and civil society was largely confined to a small group of contiguous municipalities in the eastern part of the valley coinciding with the area of influence of FETRAF. The most regular participants were FETRAF affiliated local unions and the Polo Sindical which provided coordination, alongside representatives of municipal governments and state officials active in the same part of the valley. Municipal participation was self-selecting and generally low. Some municipalities and agencies participated less frequently; others were not present at all. On the whole municipal participation was reliant on committed individuals working as municipal public servants officials rather than political support by ruling groups. Participation was strongly influenced by distance and location, particularly for community level organisations, only present when meetings were held locally.

[a network map of central and peripheral actors can be inserted in the final text and reviewed briefly in the slide presentation]

The analysis of network relations in the sample of 30 local actors demonstrated extensive webs of acquaintance and familiarity across municipalities amongst public officials, union leaders and others. Professional, political and business relations were less extensive than acquaintance. For those not engaged in the territorial forum or other network organisations, including municipal officials and particularly private business people, social and collaborative networks were largely confined to their own municipalities and counterparts in adjacent municipalities.

A key feature was a strong collaborative network centred on the SINTRAF affiliated rural unions, their allies and sympathisers in municipal government and state agencies. This, the dominant group in the colegiado, has a number of parallel, self-reinforcing linkages, including shared political and religious affiliations, friendships and family networks, alongside professional collaboration. Interviews revealed this to be part of a broader social movement cemented by political affiliation to the governing Workers Party, espousing a liberation theology based socialist philosophy and originating in community development work by the Catholic Church with the rural poor during and after dictatorship. A legacy is the presence of active local community and producer associations autonomous of local government in Mutuípe and some neighbouring municipalities. The movement’s network also included teachers and health workers organisations, public servants and a number of local NGOs, extending beyond the Jiquiriçá valley. While this coalition of actors has been central to implementation of agrarian policies and territorial organisation in the valley, its own cohesiveness and strong Workers Party political orientation provides some explanation of why the social and geographic coverage of the colegiado is so limited in practice.

Local government representatives consulted had narrow networks of acquaintances and collaborators confined to their own and adjacent municipalities, including regular
professional dealings with local union activists maintained independently of differing political affiliations. Local government participation in broader state initiated territorial networks was however self-selecting and generally low. Officials from municipalities politically allied to government and a few others had broader collaborative networks, in part via the **colegiado**, pursuing collaborative development projects in partnership with state agencies and civil society groups.

The private sector was not involved in the territorial **colegiado**, and business people interviewed were not aware of it. While MDA territorial policy has not sought to engage the private sector, this remains thin and weakly developed in much of the valley, represented by very small numbers of retail traders in the smaller municipalities. Business people maintain their own networks of suppliers, buyers and business associates in the wider region, but trade associations are absent or moribund, external investment is low, and private farmers’ organisations have collapsed, assailed by a series of crises and difficulties affecting the large commercial farm sector.

*Network maps of strength in collaborative actor relations can be reviewed briefly in the slide presentation*

State government agents in agricultural extension, education and cultural sectors and one notable political leader networked professionally across different municipalities and were actively engaged in partnership working with rural union, community associations, and local government. As identified by investigation elsewhere, these “street level bureaucrats“ (Tendler 1996) play an important role in extending the social capital resources available to marginalised groups (Bebbington 2008), providing contacts, expertise technical knowledge lacking amongst local rural unions and community groups, and able to utilise their own professional and policy networks to mobilise resources for local development projects.

A small number of central figures emerged from the analysis as brokers of relations between different groups and parts of the valley and with external actors. The ex-Prefect of Mutuípe, regarded by many as a territorial political leader and strong collaborator of the rural unions occupied the position of greatest centrality and power amongst all respondents by maintaining links with allied factions, prefects and officials of different political persuasions from other municipalities, and state government and federal agencies outside the valley. Other state officials and some union activists played similar but more restricted roles in brokering links between local groups and external players and in mobilising resources. These figures, and others interviewed from outside the sample group, acted as socio-political entrepreneurs engineering innovative development projects in different municipalities, in some cases linked to institutional and political changes. Principle examples of these partnerships merit brief mention:

- **DRS (Desenvolvimento Rural Sustentável)** a local government led partnership with the rural union and community associations in Mutuípe to achieve productive inclusion of the poorest localities. This integrated credit and finance from *Banco do Brasil*, and training and enterprise development by SEBRAE; centred on bananas as a poor farmers’ cash
crop, with CEPLAC support for producer groups in sustainable farming methods, and small scale processing and marketing for associated tropical fruit crops and products.

- **Participatory budgeting** also in Mutuípe and directly linked to the DRS program and involving a process of popular debate, decision making and monitoring for improved infrastructure and service provision through locally organized community assemblies and election of local representatives to a municipal budget forum (Souza 2010).

- **Public Municipal Food Procurement** linking peasant farmers to hospitals and schools and facilitating participation in broader markets with direct benefits to both producers and consumers. Initiated locally in Mutuípe, joint federal MDA / MDS policy now makes education and social sector funding for municipalities conditional on acquisition by schools and social projects of raw and pre-prepared foods from family farmers and producer associations stimulating community enterprise and marketing. Territorial networks mobilized by union activists and other **colegiado** members disseminate and implement practical development partnership projects across the valley, independently of political allegiance.

These projects combine decentralised participatory planning with local economic development thinking, in bringing together local producer and community organisations with other value chain actors including credit and service providers, training organisations, traders and buyers to expand opportunities in agricultural markets. Some municipalities had lobbied successfully to secure small scale industrial investments.

In addition to the FETRAF linked social coalition centred around Mutuípe, localised coalitions and factions are also evident amongst social networks in the valley. In Amargosa, a historically important regional town also now under PT political control, a group of actors allied to the administration, pioneered Atlantic Forest conservation projects, democratised municipal councils and also established a participatory budget process. With a broad network of collaborators locally and in the wider region, they maintain only weaker links with the **colegiado**’s dominant group. A significant political fissure in Bahia’s union movements, between PCdoB and PT aligned federations FETAG and SINTRAF has hindered participation in the **colegiado** from the semi-arid portion of the valley, which includes some of the poorest and most marginalised groups. Here spontaneous community led land reforms have emerged, with limited assistance from FETAG and MST. In this region shifting cross-party local coalitions of municipal officials, political leaders and community activists have established two remarkable initiatives: co-operative and small-scale private flower production in Maracas; and an inter-municipal educational network and in-service teacher training programme organised by Planaltino, supported by state government and private universities.

Except perhaps for the recent spread of municipal food purchase projects, none of these innovations result from MDA and Bahia State government’s territorial policies, although in the east of the valley the actors involved are also affiliated to the **colegiado**. In contrast, PROINFRA funded territorial projects for small scale agro-industrial and market development remain largely at early stages, hampered by lack of technical capacity, considerable federal bureaucracy and the need to secure collaboration from a municipality or
other body with legal authority to receive federal funds and assume management responsibility, which the *colegiado* itself is unable to do.

It was notable that although symbolic identification with the unifying concept of the “Valley” was widespread (and evident in the naming of local businesses, buildings and newspapers, etc.), in practice for local actors this refers to distinct but fuzzy geographical sub-regions comprising differing groups of municipalities, generally close to the river, but never to the whole valley, the territory as identified by government. Informants all agreed that smaller groupings of municipalities could provide better focus for collaborative planning, although those more closely allied to government also kept faith with the official aim of a collegiate territorial assembly spanning all 20 municipalities of the central and upper valley.

Despite relatively poor articulation of different social groups across the valley, actors displayed remarkably convergent views on *issues to be addressed at a cross-municipal or territorial level*. Recurrently cited priorities that exceed the scope and capacity of local government included: small- medium scale agro-industrial development; improved agricultural extension and technical assistance; environmental management, specifically deforestation, protection of water resources and waste disposal; technical professional education oriented towards local opportunities; tourism and eco-tourism development; emergency and specialist health care; incentives to retain youth in rural areas, and growing problems of violence and insecurity.

Those respondents more engaged in territorial networks made proposals for practical mechanisms and institutional changes to support for more coherent and sustainable territorial development: the direct presence in the valley of state government secretariats from different sectors to enhance the territorial focus of policies and programmes; a formal mechanism for collaboration amongst municipalities and state agricultural agencies to manage sustainable agricultural development in the valley; engagement of higher education institutes and universities with the *colegiado*, to focus research and professional training on territorial needs; reorganisation of regional administrative directorates for Health and Education to correspond better with territorial boundaries; institutional linkage between the municipal prefects’ consortium and the *colegiado* to strengthen civil society and local government engagement in territorial planning; and electoral change to a system of territorial representation and accountability of deputies to the state assembly, a topic under debate in the governing party.

4. Discussion

Collaborative networks in the Jiquiriçá valley are skewed geographically and not representative of its broader diversity, questioning its status as a territory based on shared social affiliation with geographic space. There is strong engagement by family farmers’ unions alongside and state agents in part of the valley, linked to the governing party, but other groups, local government and the private sector are not involved.
The Jiquiriçá valley *colegiado* remains without formal legal personality and receive and disburse funds and thus to relies on collaboration of other agencies to contract or employ. It has no formal constitution which qualifies it as a deliberative forum; to qualify for government support and to act as an umbrella whereby local coalitions can access project funding it is obliged to adhere to State Government rules prescribed by CEDETER, reflecting the general principles for *Territórios de Identidade* promulgated by SDT. *Colegiados* have limited control and technical capacity to manage funding decisions for a relatively limited and bureaucracy heavy Federal funding line; outside this forum informal networks of municipal prefects and local communities with state deputies, within which patronage based relations and practices of vote-buying weigh heavily, still offer the principle means to access resources.

Financial resources available to *colegiados* are minimal. In 2011, a circuitous state government administrative channel intended to resource those territories without MDA funding collapsed and the Jiquiriçá *colegiado* all but ceased to function, despite continuing government demands for it to mobilize participation for state-wide planning forums and debates. Although state government adopted *Territórios de identidade* for participatory planning purposes, there are no mechanisms or resources to support them or the local organisations engaged with capacity building, professional and management services, training, and enterprise development, despite a range of public and private bodies in Bahia qualified to do so.

The nature and strength of social capital is highly variable in the valley in terms associative activity (Putnam 1993, 1990) and density of network relations that individuals and groups can draw on (Bourdieu 2001). In isolated and semi-arid municipalities, patronage relations with landowners and political leaders (*coronelismo*) and an individualist *habitus* (Bourdieu 2005) can still predominate, militating against development of strong associative and cooperative relations. FETAG, despite campaigning for land reform and women’s rights, has no history of community organization in the region, unlike SINTRAF in the eastern valley. Although internal “bonding” capital may be high within associations and unions in some locations, “bridging” capital, linking different social groups or connecting them with external actors, (Portes and Sensenbrenner 2001), is generally weak and dependent on facilitation by key brokers. Territorial policy as applied has so far has enabled collaborative links to develop to only a limited and localized degree, amongst certain groups.

As a result, it has not yet been able in practice to achieve significant productive innovation and diversification in the Jiquiriçá valley. The potential of farmers’ organizations and private enterprise has been largely neglected by government. Without incentives and state assistance in development of agricultural value chains, a thriving local agro-processing and marketing sector to which the social coalition in the eastern Jiquiriçá Valley aspires is unlikely to develop beyond its present small, dispersed artisanal scale. There are risks of continued dependency on high levels of federal financial transfers, especially in less productive, semi-arid areas.
These findings echo criticisms emerging from broader assessments of Brazil’s territorial policies discussed by Sergio Leite (2010), interpreted and elaborated in relation to the Jiquiriçá valley.

The approach ignores conflicts and power relations, enabling more organized groups to dominate, disenfranchising others and leading to a partial project. The state has not grasped that territories need to be seen as fields of conflicting interests (Santos 1992, Rafestin 1993), and this compromises the potential to create new deliberative institutions that could strengthen governance in a genuine way. The absence of clear provision for representation within territorial forums enables specific groups and municipalities to utilize them to regain control over MDA project funding resources.

The failure to engage with territorial specificities derives, in part from uniform policy and excessive “normatisation”: the focus of territorial policy and studies on collective planning methodologies and bureaucratic rules. As Abramovay (2007) contends, this deflects from causal understanding and engagement with the dynamics drivers of territorial development. In the Jiquiriçá valley bureaucratic procedures exclude civil society from effective control over development funds, in the absence of professional support.

The state abdicates responsibility for managing territorial impact of its own policies. By shifting responsibility to incipient groupings organized in “territories” these assume the role of collective actors instead of properly constituted spaces for debate and decision making amongst conflicting interests (Brandão 2007, cited in Leite 2010). The policy emphasis on social identity and articulation of shared vision though a territorial forum, frequently counterposed to hegemonic bureaucratic or elite development visions, leads the term “territory” as adopted in policy discourse and by the participants, to acquire multiple meanings, referring simultaneously to an administrative grouping of municipalities, an emergent space of democratic debate, and a new form of collective actor. The Jiquiriçá valley “territory” can be viewed as an extension of government into civil society. Allied with government, the social movements risk co-option as voluntary partners in policy delivery, losing space for independent action and contestation (Cornwall et al 2008).

Innovation by addition (Favareto 2006): Territorial policy is not sufficiently far reaching in superimposing a new set of policy prescriptions on top of many others, without integrating resolving tensions and inconsistencies amongst them. Although this is what Territórios da Cidadania proposes, sector buy-in is not complete, and territorial assemblies have no formal jurisdiction over policy. Outside of that program, there are no obligations or incentives to route sector policy through rural territories, while the state also has other mechanisms for cross-municipal planning, and parallel sector initiatives. Despite the Bahia State Planning Secretariat (SEPLAN)’s adoption of Territórios de Identidade the health and education sectors have not modified pre-existing administrative planning regions. SEDUR, the Urban Development Secretariat leading infrastructural and industrial development planning is wedded to a more top-down city-regional approach, not aligned with rural policy.
5. Conclusions

In sum, the state has so far failed to institutionalise meso-scale mechanisms for democratic policy management. Through its territorial programs it is experimenting widely, and in some cases public institutions and collective actors in civil society may be able to craft new institutional arrangements that strengthen democratic participation and governance to help achieve more inclusive and sustainable economic development. The Jiquiriçá valley colegiado is so far only a tentative and partial innovation, a state-promoted but informal and relatively unstructured civic association. Participation is open to all and self-selecting, and there are no legal requirements or incentives for genuine participation by municipalities. As a network it offers opportunities to strengthen links and in this sense to extend social capital, but it does not change the rules of the game for planning and resource allocation and planning and it is not a mechanism able to adapt sector policies to territorial needs.

Administrative designation of the territory appears somewhat arbitrary: although linked to the role of specific interest groups allied to government, these are not fully representative. The division of the whole state into territories can be interpreted as a top down political move to strengthen the hand of rural social movements vis-a-vis municipal prefects and facilitate accountability in state planning. Although these are reasonable objectives, social, geographic and political distance and difference amongst territorial actors and the nature and status of existing networks and coalitions were not properly considered, or not understood. The sheer size of the territory, the geographic fragmentation of its social networks, and the importance of frequent contacts, common practical interests, and good communications for collaboration all suggest that it may be simply too large.

Although the states, and multiple state agents, are closely and directly involved in promoting rural territorial development, it is not sufficiently engaged in the right kind of ways. The Constitution ascribes a pre-eminent role in local affairs to municipal political leadership, and in which there is no effective intermediate or meso-scale level of government between generally very large States and small local municipalities, where institutions are quite densely developed, despite generally low municipal technical capacity in NE Brazil.

Returning to the RTD programme’s guidelines for sound territorial policy (Rimisp 2011), in the case investigated, and in all probability more broadly, territorial policy measures up poorly despite its superficial promise. Although Bahia now produces statistics organised according to rural territories, it does not analyse their dynamics and so is unable to respond proactively and manage policy impacts. In particular there is no effective diagnosis and support for the development of progressive local social coalitions and little investment in critical “soft” factors: human capacity, organisation development, and revised institutional rules and culture. Territorial funds are limited and difficult to access, and in most municipalities there is little or no direct citizen control of quite considerable decentralised finance, often still subject to elite capture and use for political purposes. Rural territories are not yet arenas for genuine social participation and exercise of citizenship.
More radical modernization of state policy is necessary to manage the sustainable development of potentially dynamic rural regions such as the Jiiquiricá valley. Eventual transformation of political-economic control by municipal elites and top-down centralised regional planning, both deeply rooted in Bahia, will require, closer alignment and coordination of sector policies, greater investment in human capacity and stronger institutionalisation of mechanisms for democratic territorial planning.

REFERENCES


Albuquerque F 2001 Desenvolvimento Econômico Local: caminhos e desafios para a construção de uma nova agenda política. BNDES, Rio de Janeiro


Favareto A, F Aguirre & Escobal J  2012 (forthcoming) *DTR, Mercados y Estruturas Produtivas*. Rural Territorial Dynamics Programme, RIMISP - Latin American Centre for Rural development, Santiago, Chile


Favareto A 2007 *Paradigmas do desenvolvimento rural em questão* São Paulo: FAPESP / Iglu Editora,


Gomes G M 2002 *Velhas secas em novas Sertões*, IPEA, Brasilia


MDA 2005 Desenvolvimento Territorial na Bahia, Information brochure, May 2005, Salvador, Bahia


Perico RE 2009 Identidade e território no Brasil Brasilia: IICA.


Putnam R 1993 The prosperous community: social capital and public life. The American Prospect March 21st 1993


Quan J, Olade AR and Rocha Souza VS 2011 Territorial Diversity and Inclusive Growth: development dynamics in the Jiquiriçá valley, Bahia North East Brazil Working Paper, Rural Territorial Dynamics research programme, Rimisp – Latin American Centre for Rural Development, Santiago, Chile, January 2011


Rimisp 2011 Proposiciones para el Desarrollo Territorial. Serie Políticas para el desarrollo territorial, September 2011, Santiago: RIMISP


SEI 2004 Analise territorial da Bahia rural, Salvador, Superintendência de Estudos Econômicos e Sociais da Bahia.
