TAKING STOCK

Impacts of 50 Years of Policy Research at IFPRI

Peter Hazell and Frank Place

INTERNATIONAL FOOD POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE
IFPRI

ABOUT IFPRI

The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), a Research Center of CGIAR, provides research-based policy solutions to sustainably reduce poverty and end hunger and malnutrition in low- and middle-income countries. IFPRI was established in 1975 to identify and analyze alternative national and international strategies and policies for meeting the food needs of the developing world, with particular emphasis on low-income countries and on the poorer groups in those countries. Partnerships, communications, capacity strengthening, and data and knowledge management are essential components for translating IFPRI's research to action and impact. The Institute's regional and country programs play a critical role in responding to demand for food policy research and in delivering holistic support to country-led development. IFPRI collaborates with partners around the world.

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The Independent Impact Assessment Reports are the product of externally conducted impact assessment studies of IFPRI's research. These studies are organized and overseen by an impact assessment coordinator appointed by IFPRI who arranges for external experts to conduct the studies and who oversees a peer review of the draft reports by at least one internal and one external reviewer. Any opinions expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the opinions of IFPRI.

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Peter Hazell

Frank Place

Independent Impact Assessment Report No. 48

October 2025

International Food Policy Research Institute

Washington, DC

AUTHORS

Peter Hazell
IFPRI Research Fellow Emeritus
Email: P.Hazell@cgiar.org

Frank Place
Consultant
Email: F.Place@cgiar.org

INTERNATIONAL FOOD POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

A world free of hunger and malnutrition

IFPRI is a CGIAR Research Center

1201 Eye Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005 USA

T. +1-202-862-5600 | F. +1-202-862-5606 | Email: ifpri@cgiar.org | www.ifpri.org | www.ifpri.info

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors thank several IFPRI staff members who helped compile materials for this report, especially Indira Yerramareddy (Communications and Public Affairs), Monica Dourado (Human Resources), James Fields (Finance), Dan Gilligan (Poverty, Gender, and Inclusion), Claudia Ringler (Natural Resources and Resilience), and Ruth Meinzen-Dick (Director General's Office).

They received helpful comments on an earlier draft from two external reviewers and several IFPRI staff members, as well as Derek Byerlee, John McIntire, and Jock Anderson. They also thank Alan de Brauw for overseeing the peer-review process and Claire Davis for editing the report.

ACRONYMS

A4NH	CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health
AAEEN	African Agricultural Economics Education Network
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AERC	African Economic Research Consortium
ASARECA	Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa
ASTI	Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators
ATA	Agricultural Transformation Agency, Ethiopia
BMGF	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CAAS	Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences
CAFTA-DR	Dominican Republic–Central America Free Trade Agreement
CAPRi	CGIAR Systemwide Program on Collective Action and Property Rights
CGE	computable general equilibrium
CIAT	International Center for Tropical Agriculture
CSA	Central Statistical Agency, Ethiopia
CSSP	Country Strategy Support Program
DfID	Department for International Development of the United Kingdom
DSM	Direct Seed Marketing Program
ERHS	Ethiopian Rural Household Survey
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

FES	Foundation for Ecological Security
GFPR	Global Food Policy Report
GIS	geographic information systems
GRP	global research program
ICARDA	International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas
IDB	Inter American Development Bank
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IITA	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMPACT	International Model for Policy Analysis of Agricultural Commodities and Trade
ISI	Institute for Scientific Information
ISNAR	International Service for National Agricultural Research
LFA	less-favored areas
LMICs	low- and middle-income countries
MP	multicountry program
NAIP	National Agricultural Investment Plan
NARS	national agricultural research systems
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	nongovernmental organization
NPCA	NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency
NSSP	Nigeria Strategy Support Program
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAANSA	Policy Analysis and Advisory Network for South Asia
PBI	picture-based insurance
PBS	Program for Biosafety Systems
PIM	CGIAR Research Program on Policies, Institutions, and Markets
POR	policy-oriented research
POSHAN	Partnerships and Opportunities to Strengthen and Harmonize Actions for Nutrition, India

PROGRESA	Programa Nacional de Educacion, Salud, y Alimentacion (Mexico)
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Program (Ethiopia)
RENEWAL	Regional Network on AIDS, Livelihoods and Food Security
RePEc	Research Papers in Economics
ReSAKSS	Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support Systems
SAKSS	Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support Systems
SAM	social accounting matrix
SPEED	Statistics on Public Expenditures for Economic Development
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WEAI	Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index
WFP	World Food Programme
WTO	World Trade Organization

SUMMARY

Objectives of the Report

As the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) marks its 50th anniversary, the Institute and its key stakeholders pause to take stock of what is known about its policy influence and impact over the years. What does the available evidence tell us about IFPRI's achievements as an international research institution? Have its activities contributed to better policy and investment decisions by governments, development agencies, nongovernmental organizations, the private sector, and others involved in the economic and social development of low- and middle-income countries (LMICs)?

This report builds on a stocktaking paper published for IFPRI's 40th anniversary, whose findings were generally favorable, by using more recent external sources of evidence to provide updated answers to these questions. It synthesizes bibliometric and download data, as well as a series of independently conducted impact assessment studies of many of IFPRI's research programs and projects. This task has been facilitated by the availability of 40 such evaluations, commissioned by IFPRI, the CGIAR Research Programs on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health and on Policies, Institutions, and Markets, or project donors. Additionally, other agencies commissioned several evaluations of specific country and regional policies that IFPRI helped influence. This wealth of independent assessments is rare for a policy research institution. Moreover, IFPRI's commissioning or co-commissioning of 36 impact assessments over 25 years demonstrates a serious commitment to an impact evaluation culture and a willingness to learn from its experiences.

Background Information about IFPRI

IFPRI's mission has evolved over the years from a relatively narrow focus on food security to encompass a much broader range of contemporary food systems issues. Its current mission, as stated in a 2025 strategy paper, is "to provide research-based policy solutions to improve food security, nutrition, and livelihoods, contribute to empowerment for all, and promote sustainable, climate-resilient food systems" (IFPRI 2025, 4). Its main geographic mandate remains the entirety of LMICs.

To fulfill its mission, IFPRI undertakes a range of activities related to policy research, country assistance, communications and outreach, and capacity building. Until recently, IFPRI's research activities were mostly grouped into research themes or programs that aimed to generate new knowledge products, often called international public goods, on regional and global policy problems that would be valuable to many, if not all, LMICs. Much of this work involved case study research in a few countries selected to enable broader generalizations.

Beginning in 2003, IFPRI adopted a decentralization approach that placed many of its senior research staff in country and regional program offices. While the Institute's early work focused on thematic issues prioritized by the Washington, DC-based research agenda, IFPRI's country and regional programs aim to provide more cohesive and demand-driven support to country and regional economic development strategies. As of January 2025, 33 percent of IFPRI's senior research staff of 137 were outposted to 14 country programs (9 in Africa and 5 in Asia) and 3 regional programs (2 in Africa and 1 in South Asia).

IFPRI has grown substantially since its establishment in 1975. From 1976 to 2015, its annual expenditure—and net of passthrough funds to other CGIAR Centers—grew at an annual average rate of 10.6 percent in 2024 prices, then peaked in 2015 at US$160.2 million and shrank by 30 percent to US$113 million in 2023. In its early years, the Institute received most of its funding as unrestricted core funds, but these funds became increasingly scarce over time and disappeared by 2012. Almost all of IFPRI's revenue now comes from bilateral sources or CGIAR programs. These funds are typically tied to specific projects that meet the often short-term priorities of a donor agency or program leadership. This situation makes it more difficult for IFPRI to retain a thematic and longer-term research focus on key issues that can lead to international public goods, as currently demonstrated by IFPRI's more diverse and less structured research agenda.

IFPRI's Performance as a Research Institution

Convincing evidence demonstrates that IFPRI has been successful as a research institution in terms of its publications and international recognition. Over the past 50 years, the Institute published more than 4,000 articles in journals tracked by the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI); of these, about two-thirds were produced in the past decade. During this period, IFPRI has also produced about 1,000 publications of various other types each year. IFPRI's publications are generally well cited and/or downloaded, and the 10 most cited ISI-tracked journal articles each year attract significant international attention, as measured by their citation and Altmetric scores.

IFPRI is committed to open access and makes most of its publications freely available online, along with many of the datasets acquired through its research. These datasets, which include many household surveys, have been downloaded more than 2.2 million times in the past decade. In addition to making all these resources freely and widely available, IFPRI actively disseminates them through newsletters, briefs, blogs, seminars, and conferences, among other platforms, to a broad audience that includes academics, policymakers, influencers, and the media. Since 2002, three IFPRI staff members have been recognized by the World Food Prize for their work on the 2020 Vision Initiative, biofortification, and maternal and child undernutrition. In 2020, the Global Go To Think Tank Index ranked IFPRI 19th among the world's international development think tanks; Research Papers in Economics (RePEc) rated IFPRI number one among all agricultural economics departments and in the field of agricultural economics, and fifth in the field of development. IFPRI has also been successful in attracting and collaborating with a large array of partners at all stages of its impact pathways, including research collaborators from top universities and research centers around the world.

Policy Influences and Impact

Although the available evaluations cover much of IFPRI's past work, there are important gaps that prevent this report from providing full coverage of the Institute's influence and impact over the past 50 years. Nevertheless, the available evaluations provide ample evidence that IFPRI has influenced and contributed to policy choices by many governments, donors, and implementing partners. This influence is demonstrated for a wide range of IFPRI's work, including research related to environment and sustainable agricultural production, poverty, health and nutrition, markets and institutions, development strategy, foresight modeling, and methodology development. Existing evaluations also cover IFPRI's cross-cutting work on capacity building, country and regional programs, gender, statistical indexes, and outreach and advocacy.

Most evaluations only went as far as assessing policy influence, but some were able to go beyond influence to quantify the economic impacts of the policy changes and programs to which IFPRI contributed. These impacts were found to be substantial, as in the cases of the Agricultural Transformation Agency in Ethiopia, the Dominican Republic–Central American Free Trade Agreement, and several safety net and nutrition programs. Some evaluations singled out IFPRI's contributions, showing that under plausible assumptions, the Institute's own investments generated very favorable cost-benefit ratios, as in the cases of its work on rice market reforms in Viet Nam; the Programa Nacional de Educacion, Salud, y Alimentacion (PROGRESA) in Mexico; the Productive Safety Net Program in Ethiopia; and Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators. Several evaluations also demonstrated that IFPRI has made important contributions to strengthening research capacity in countries where it has worked, particularly within the context of country and regional programs. While some evaluations indicated less favorable outcomes on policy influence, these cases were relatively few. Overall, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that IFPRI has been a successful catalyst for change, and the economic returns to its investments are likely large.

Lessons for Achieving Greater Impact

Several factors have contributed to IFPRI's success in influencing policies, but the Institute's decentralization policy is perhaps foremost among them. Many of the evaluations cited in this report note the value of country programs with resident staff, with several emphasizing that IFPRI has more influence on policy outcomes when there are embedded staff and close working relationships with local researchers and government departments and policymakers. Where these are absent, IFPRI's influence is weakened. IFPRI's decentralized approach has been successful in part because the country-based teams are supported by researchers based in the Washington, DC, and regional offices, who provide specialized skills as needed.

As another important lesson from the evaluations reviewed in this report, enhancing policy influence requires articulating a deliberate strategy of influence from the beginning of a research project. Doing so helps to ensure demand for the research within the country and a sense of research project "ownership" within the policy circles that the research is designed to influence. The more formal priority-setting process involved within a country program can make this process easier, but the development of in-country research partnerships is also important, including with local researchers who can act as "champions" within local policy circles. Where government agencies have a research function, integrating them into partnerships is recommended. As one evaluation report argues, advancing from research to actual policy change requires either developing more finely targeted and actionable research along the impact pathway or relying on other applied policy research institutes, often with closer relationships with policymakers, to undertake such research.

Outreach and communication strategies are also critical for success and should be articulated early in a research project. Several different audiences exist for IFPRI's research, including the broader research and donor communities, in-country policy community, and field practitioners. Information demands differ among these groups, and in some cases, there may be little overlap. Catering to these different needs requires strategies that go beyond publishing research findings or holding research workshops. To achieve project impacts beyond a specific case study context, a targeted and coordinated publication strategy should be developed, which, in addition to publishing research outputs, could involve creating project webpages on IFPRI's website with readily downloadable reports and briefs during a project's implementation phase. These recommendations are reinforced by an evaluation that examined 18

stories of successful policy influence, as identified by IFPRI's country program leaders. Although variations existed in the types of research, outreach, and capacity-strengthening activities, all cases demonstrated the importance of having IFPRI's researchers effectively embedded in the local policy ecosystem, establishing relationships of trust and credibility with key policymakers, ensuring adequate financial resources and flexibility to respond to emerging and longer-term policy issues, and effectively communicating results to decision-makers. The study also highlighted how the existence of a relevant problem, propitious timing, or a focusing event such as a food crisis can create an opportunity for policy change, as well as the importance of credible research (often involving primary data collection) that yields unique quantitative results about the consequences of policy choices (or cost-benefit analysis).

Given IFPRI's increased emphasis on demand-driven country and regional work, maintaining its ability to produce significant international public goods will present a challenge. The Institute's earlier strategy of linking country case studies to multicountry research programs was a successful model for generating these goods, but some of that focus may have been lost through the recent shift toward more diverse and less interconnected research areas.

A Final Word

Although IFPRI has been prolific in commissioning or co-commissioning independent evaluations of its work, the funding for future evaluations seems less secure in the absence of unrestricted funds. IFPRI now produces many briefs and blogs about impact stories, which are short narratives describing select outcomes associated with a project, such as a study that contributed to the design or modification of an investment project undertaken by a government or aid agency, or a safety net program. Many such outcomes are drafted for CGIAR reporting purposes if there is evidence that the outcome occurred and IFPRI contributed to it. These short impact stories are a response to the relatively short reporting frameworks (three to five years) now required for most CGIAR and bilateral funding. However, for projects involving new fieldwork, such as household surveys or randomized trials, more time is needed for policy influence to mature into economic and social impacts along the projected impact pathways. Impact stories appear to be valuable to IFPRI's donors, can help researchers focus on policy changes throughout their research, and can provide useful evidence for subsequent impact assessments. However, they are not independently verified, do not assess research impacts beyond possible policy influence, and do not provide much basis for deeper learning about the strengths and weaknesses of a research program.

As another reason to continue with impact assessments, several major donor agencies now place greater emphasis on how their investments in institutions such as IFPRI can benefit their own countries, not just LMICs. Past research showed that CGIAR research on the development of improved wheat and rice varieties for LMICs generated substantial spillover benefits for the United States through genetic improvements to its own crops, but there have been few such studies of spillover benefits. While the desired metrics for contemporary relevance are still fluid, IFPRI may need to demonstrate that its projects help to reduce international migration, grow foreign markets for high-income-country exports, help expand markets for genome-edited crops by strengthening biosafety systems, and contain contagious diseases of plants, animals, and people, among other effects. Assessing such impacts would require more thorough analysis of outcomes and impacts along IFPRI's impact pathways than can be provided by simple narratives of success.

1. INTRODUCTION

As the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) marks its 50th anniversary, the Institute and its key stakeholders pause to take stock of what is known about its policy influence and impact over the years. What does the available evidence tell us about IFPRI's impact on food and rural policies? How might IFPRI achieve more policy influence and impact in the future?

This report draws on a stocktaking paper written for IFPRI's 40th anniversary, which found generally favorable results, as well as more recent external sources of evidence to provide an updated assessment. The evidence used for this report consists of bibliometric data, a series of independent evaluations of some of IFPRI's research programs and projects commissioned by IFPRI and/or CGIAR Systemwide Programs (the CGIAR Research Programs on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health [A4NH] and on Policies, Institutions, and Markets [PIM]), some of the Institute's donors, and external evaluations, commissioned by other agencies, of select policies or programs that IFPRI helped to inform. Most of these evaluations only assessed policy influence (or outcomes) but enough of them included estimated economic impacts to illustrate that IFPRI's policy research can lead to positive economic returns. Additional details about the evaluation studies are provided in the annex, and all are publicly available.

Some limitations exist in this study:

- The choice of evaluations commissioned by IFPRI, PIM, A4NH, and their donors present a risk of selection bias. However, any such bias is likely small for the following reasons: (1) until about 2014, IFPRI's research projects were grouped into multicountry programs (MPs) or global research programs (GRPs) (see Section 2.2), and because many evaluations were commissioned at these levels, they provide comprehensive coverage of many related projects; (2) some assessments of individual projects or country programs were also undertaken, but often at the request of donors or PIM rather than as the result of IFPRI's own selection criteria; (3) evaluations commissioned by or with PIM focused on international public goods research areas (such as Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators [ASTI], Foresight, Statistics on Public Expenditures for Economic Development [SPEED], and computable general equilibrium [CGE] modeling) rather than on country-based work where biases might more easily arise; and (4) all available evaluations were used except two noted in the annex.
- Given the methodology used in this report, some gaps exist in the coverage of past and ongoing research programs that have not been independently evaluated. Readers seeking a fuller history of IFPRI's activities, together with less constrained narratives about its influence and impact, are referred to reviews provided by Farrar (2000) for the 1975–1985 period, Pinstrup-Andersen (2000) for 1975–2000, von Braun and Pandya Lorch (2005) for 1975–2005, and Swinnen and Barrett (2025) for 1975–2025. These sources also synthesize many of IFPRI's contributions to the research literature over the past 50 years, while this report focuses more narrowly on assessing IFPRI's policy influence and impact.
- Most of the impact assessments used in this report lack scientific rigor, and hence must be viewed with some caution. However, all were undertaken by external experts who were free to make their own judgments based on careful study of the available evidence, with the exception of three assessments (see annex).

The authors of this report previously had connections with IFPRI as staff and consultants, so they cannot be considered completely independent evaluators. However, this study is only a synthesis of publicly available evidence about IFPRI's performance, which did not involve undertaking any new evaluation work or forming lessons or recommendations beyond those in the available evaluations, thereby minimizing the scope for bias.

This report is structured as follows: The next section provides basic information about IFPRI and describes its mission, types of activities, evolution of its research and country programs, staffing, and levels of investment. Section 3 provides a theory of change, outlines the main impact pathways linking IFPRI's activities to desired outcomes and downstream impacts, and discusses difficulties in applying these concepts to an ex post assessment of IFPRI over 50 years. Section 4 provides an evaluation of IFPRI as a research institution in terms of its publications and datasets, its international recognition, and the types of partners with whom it has collaborated. Section 5 examines the available evidence about IFPRI's policy influence and impact by selected research programs, based on bibliometric data and independent evaluations. Section 6 then applies the same approach to the cross-cutting issues of country and regional programs and capacity strengthening. Section 7 assesses IFPRI's contributions to international public goods. Section 8 summarizes key lessons and recommendations from past evaluations that could help IFPRI increase its impact in the future, and it suggests priorities for future impact evaluation studies.

2. IFPRI'S RESEARCH PROGRAMS, STAFFING, DECENTRALIZATION, AND LEVELS OF INVESTMENT

2.1 Types of IFPRI Activity

Over the past 50 years, IFPRI's mission has evolved from a relatively narrow focus on food security to encompass a much broader range of contemporary food systems issues. In the 1970s, IFPRI's mission was to "identify and analyze alternative strategies and policies for meeting food needs in the world, with particular emphasis on low-income countries and on the poorer groups in those countries" (IFPRI 1985, 5). As stated in a 2025 strategy paper, the Institute's current mission is "to provide research-based policy solutions to improve food security, nutrition, and livelihoods, contribute to empowerment for all, and promote sustainable, climate-resilient food systems" (IFPRI 2025, 4). Its main geographic mandate remains the entire group of low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).

To fulfill its mission, IFPRI undertakes a range of activities related to policy research, country assistance, communications and outreach, and capacity building. Most of IFPRI's policy research work involves the collection and analysis of primary datasets, such as household surveys, along with census data and spatially referenced geographic information systems (GIS) data. These research activities generally fit into studies of a diagnostic nature that aim to shape discourse on emerging problems or opportunities or on the evaluation of interventions or policies on various development indicators. Another important policy research activity involves the development and improvement of models and their use in analyzing likely effects of policy choices. This work is typically undertaken in close collaboration with national partners in specific countries.

2.2 Evolution of Research Themes and Links to CGIAR

After IFPRI's establishment in 1975, it developed a research program around five clusters of global issues: world food trends, agricultural production policies, food subsidies, agricultural trade policies, and agricultural growth linkages. Some of this early work involved research in individual countries, especially India, but IFPRI's primary emphasis was on generating new knowledge products, often called international public goods, about regional and global policy problems that would be valuable to many, if not all, LMICs.

As IFPRI's research expanded into a wider range of issues, the Institute became more engaged in country-specific studies. Most of these were undertaken within an overarching framework that sought to create international public goods by generalizing findings from a small sample of country cases to multiple countries. For example, IFPRI's early work on food subsidies was based on a set of carefully chosen country cases, which led to results and recommendations that could be extrapolated and provide guidance to a much wider set of countries that had, or were considering, food subsidy programs.

In the early 1990s, this type of generalization provided the conceptual underpinning to structure IFPRI's entire research program around a set of multicountry programs, each of which addressed a well-defined policy issue of regional or global importance (Table 1). This underlying principle remained unchanged for about two decades, although the issues addressed and the program names inevitably evolved. By 2004, the Institute created several new global research programs (Table 1). By 2014, however, the research agenda was structured around broader research themes, with many more loosely defined projects and programs within each theme. The same more diversified pattern held in

2023, although the research themes had been modified. The same thematic structure extends into plans for 2025 and beyond, though as Table 2 shows, there is an even greater shift toward more diverse and less interconnected research areas.

This thematic structure may offer greater flexibility to address fast-emerging issues in a rapidly changing world. It may also be better suited for the opportunistic fundraising currently needed, given that bilateral grants and CGIAR Window 3 grants now account for most of IFPRI's total revenue (see Section 2.5). However, this structure makes it difficult to identify the level at which regional and global spillovers (or international public goods) are expected to emerge or how they could be monitored and tracked.

Table 1: IFPRI's Research Programs, Selected Years

1984	1996	2004	2014	2023
World food trends	MP1: Agricultural input market reforms	Special project on global trends	Global futures and strategic foresight	Fostering climate-resilient and sustainable food supply
Agricultural production	MP2: Agricultural output market reforms	Spatial analysis	Sustainable natural resource policies	Promoting healthy diets and nutrition for all
Food subsidies	MP4: Agricultural research, extension, and education policy	GRP5: Sustainable development of less-favored lands	Science, tech, and innovation policy	Building inclusive and efficient markets, trade systems, and food industry
Agricultural trade policy	MP5: Rural finance policies for food security and the poor	GRP22: Water resource allocation policies	Integrated agriculture, nutrition, and health programs and policies	Transforming agricultural and rural economies
Agricultural growth linkages	MP7: Marketing, institutional, and infrastructural policies for agricultural diversification and export promotion	MP11: Property rights and collective action	Value chains for enhanced nutrition	Strengthening institutions and governance
	MP8: Arresting deforestation and resource degradation in the forest margins of the humid tropics	GRP1: Genetic resources policy	Food and water safety	Transforming agricultural and rural economies
	MP9: Policies for sustainable development of fragile lands	Program for biosafety systems	Macroeconomic and trade policies	Cross-cutting theme on gender
	MP10: Water resource allocation: Productivity and environmental impacts	GRP26: Pathways from poverty	Institutions and infrastructure for market development	
	MP11: Property rights and collective action in natural resource management	GRP28: Large-scale interventions to enhance human capital	Input markets	
	MP12: Macroeconomic policy reforms, agricultural growth, and rural development	MP14: Urban challenges to food and nutrition security	Agriculture's role in national development strategies	
	MP13: Regional integration, agricultural trade, and food security in developing countries	GRP24: Diet quality and diet changes of the poor	Public investment priorities and impacts	
	MP14: Implications of urbanization for agriculture, food, and nutrition	GRP33: HIV/AIDS and food and nutrition security	Structural transformation, employment, and rural-urban linkages	
	MP17: Strengthening food policy through intrahousehold analysis	GRP25: Policy processes in food security and nutrition	Policies, institutions, and investments for resilient food systems	
	MP18: Safety nets and food security	GRP 2: WTO, regional trade, and globalization	Policies, institutions, and investments for resilient social and ecosystems	
	MP19: Agricultural strategies for micronutrients	GRP23: Institutions and infrastructure for market development	Inclusive and effective collective action and strengthening of property rights and assets	
		GRP 27: Participation in high-value agricultural markets	Political economy of development policy and investment processes	
		GRP29: South Asia Initiative	Role of decentralization for public service provision	
		GRP32: Country development strategy	Gender and assets project	
		GRP3: Priorities for public investment	Biofortification	
		SAKSS: Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System	2020 Vision Initiative	
		GOV: Governance		
		CRSP: Country and regional support programs		
		Rural-urban linkages		
		GRP 29: Institutional change and innovations systems		
		GRP30: Organization and management of agricultural research		
		GRP31: Agricultural science and technology policy		
		L&CS: Learning and capacity strengthening program		
		HarvestPlus: Breeding crops for better nutrition		
		2020 Vision Initiative		

Source: Farrar (2000); Hazell and Slade (2015); IFPRI (2024).

Note: GRP=global research program; MP=multicountry program.

Table 2: IFPRI's Research Areas and Themes, 2025

Department	Food and Nutrition Policy			Transformation Strategies			
Unit or theme	Markets, trade, and institutions	Nutrition, diets, and health	Poverty, gender, and inclusion	Development strategies and governance	Foresight and policy modeling	Innovation policy and scaling	Natural resources and resilience
Research area	Trade policy and global market analysis	Health and nutrition programs	Social protection	Growth and pro-poor rural transformation	Future food systems	Strengthening of agricultural innovation systems and networks	Identification of equitable climate adaptation and mitigation strategies
	Efficient domestic food markets	Multisectoral programs	Livelihoods	Public investment for agrifood system resilience	Inclusive transformation	Evaluation of impacts of innovation in delivery and scaling	Governance of natural resources management
	Financial markets for climate-resilient food systems	Food systems, consumers, and food environments	Gender and empowerment	Food security under agrifood system modernization	Spatial development	Bridging of gaps between policy design and implementation	Digital innovations for food and environmental systems
	Political economy analysis of reforms	Supporting policies, capacities, and investments for nutrition	Governance and voice				

Source: IFPRI (2025).

In addition to the complexity of IFPRI's research programs, the Institute has been a member of CGIAR since 1979 and has linked many of its research activities to CGIAR's thematic priorities. These endeavors include linkages to some of CGIAR's Systemwide Programs in the 1990s (including leadership of the Collective Action and Property Rights program), especially the ecoregional programs, followed by the Challenge Programs of the early 2000s, the systemwide priorities of the 2005–2015 period, and the CGIAR Research Programs, such as PIM and A4NH, from 2012 to 2021.

As a result of the recent consolidation of all CGIAR Centers, nearly all of IFPRI's work is now aligned with the CGIAR Science Programs and Accelerators (essentially, research programs). A mapping of IFPRI's research programs onto CGIAR-wide programs lies beyond the scope of this study. However, it is noteworthy that these linkages have become increasingly important for IFPRI's funding. They provide a framework for IFPRI to build stronger partnerships and better integrate its policy research with the food-related technology research of other Centers, as well as offering scaling opportunities for successful research outputs. Yet these linkages also mean that some of IFPRI's research impacts can only be captured through assessments of relevant CGIAR programs.

2.3 Regional and Country Decentralization

Until 2003, most of IFPRI's staff were based at its headquarters in Washington, DC, but a few senior researchers were outposted to LMICs to work more closely with national counterparts. From 1988 to 2002, about eight senior staff members were outposted each year, on average, but thereafter the number of outposted staff expanded rapidly as part of IFPRI's decentralization strategy. By 2015, only 63.7 percent of the senior research staff remained in Washington, DC, and this share fell to 51.1 percent by 2025 (Table 3). In 2015, 29.2 percent of the total senior research staff were based in IFPRI's country and regional offices, and this share increased to 32.8 percent by 2025. As of 2024, IFPRI had country programs in 14 countries (including Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, and Sudan in Africa, and Bangladesh, China, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, and Tajikistan in Asia) and had previously undertaken these programs in Central America (this functioned as a regional program, with an IFPRI office in Costa Rica), Democratic Republic of the Congo, India, Mozambique, Pakistan, and Uganda. IFPRI also has staff outposted to regional programs in Africa (Ethiopia and Senegal) and South Asia (India).

Some of the Institute's early in-country work focused on thematic issues prioritized by the headquarters-based research agenda, but for country programs, IFPRI structures its activities to provide broader and more cohesive support to the respective country's economic development strategy. In some countries, mostly in Africa south of the Sahara, IFPRI also launched Country Strategy Support Programs to develop a common approach to policy analysis that can support each country's economic development strategy, including the design and establishment of Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support Systems (SAKSS). The SAKSS are now part of an analytical support system of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).

Table 3: Location of Senior Research Staff, 2015 and 2025

Location	January 1, 2015		January 1, 2025	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Headquarters (Washington, DC)	98	63.7	70	51.1
Regional offices	23	14.9	17	12.4
Country offices	22	14.3	28	20.4
Other (remote workers and others)	11	7.1	22	16.1
Total	**154**	**100**	**137**	**100**

Source: IFPRI Human Resources Unit.

2.4 Levels and Types of Staff

In IFPRI's early years, most staff were economists, but the disciplinary mix has since diversified along with the range of issues addressed. This trend has continued in the past decade (Table 4), with more sizeable shares now represented by nutrition and health specialists (11.7 percent) and social and political scientists (4.4 percent), as well as unspecified disciplines (10.2 percent). The composition of IFPRI's senior research staff has always included a sizable share of nationals from LMICs; that share remained stable at 40 percent over the past decade (Table 5). The share of women among the senior research staff was also stable at 37 percent (Table 5).

Table 4: Trends in Number and Disciplinary Specialty of Senior Staff

	January 1, 2015		January 1, 2025	
Discipline	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agricultural economics and economics	115	74.6	96	70.1
Nutrition and health	14	9.1	16	11.7
Agriculture, environment, and natural resources management	8	5.2	5	3.6
Anthropology, sociology, and human development	4	2.6	3	2.2
Political science	3	1.9	3	2.2
Other	10	6.5	14	10.2
TOTAL	**154**	**100**	**137**	**100**

Source: IFPRI Human Resources Unit and authors' analysis.

Table 5: Background of Senior Research Staff

	January 1, 2015		January 1, 2025	
Location	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Men	96	62.3	86	62.7
Women	58	37.7	51	37.3
Global North origin	92	59.7	82	59.8
Global South origin	62	40.3	55	40.2
TOTAL	**154**		**137**	

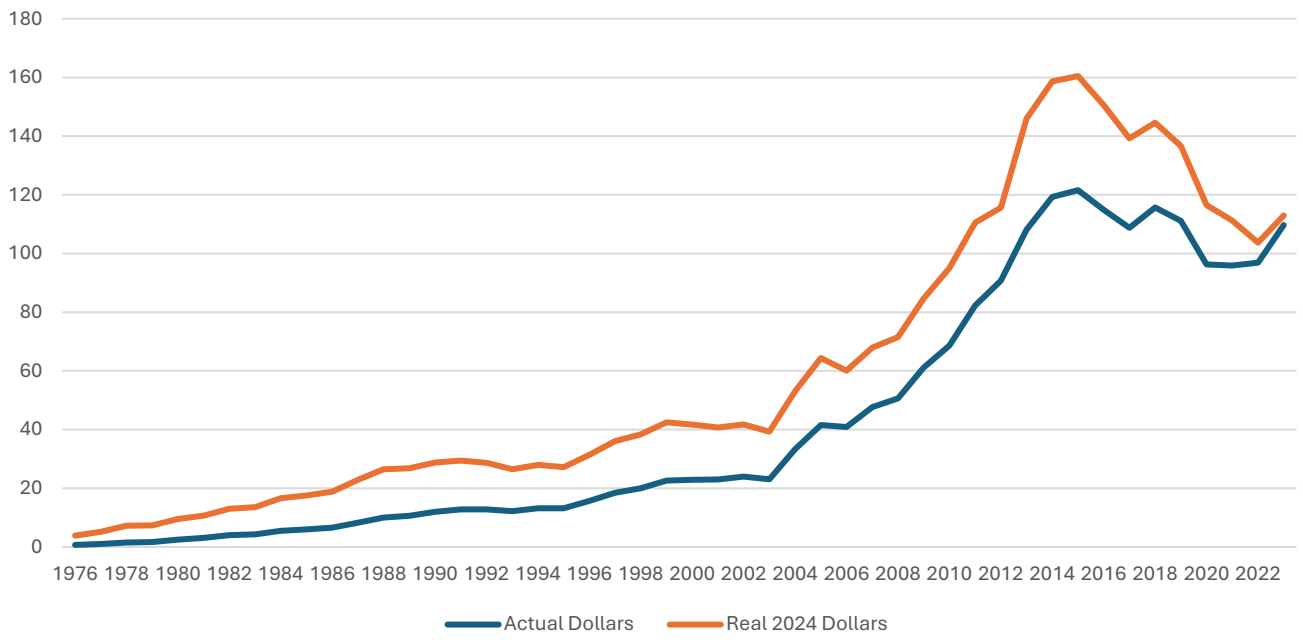
Source: IFPRI Human Resources Unit.

2.5 Levels and Types of Investment

IFPRI expanded at a remarkable rate over its first 40 years: total annual expenditure increased almost every year, reaching a peak in 2015 and growing at an average annual rate of about 10.64 percent in constant prices (Figure 1). However, it declined sharply by 30 percent between 2015 and 2022, though it experienced a minor rebound in 2023. The figures for 2024 were not available when this report was written; funding for 2025 was uncertain and expected to experience another sharp decline. These figures represent the net of all passthrough funds to other CGIAR Centers through the CGIAR Research Programs and HarvestPlus, thereby showing how much IFPRI spent on its own activities.[1]

IFPRI remains a relatively small player among international agricultural organizations. For example, IFPRI's spending in 2023 was about 3.4 percent of the total expenditure of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) for its 2022/23 financial year (US$3.14 billion)[2] and about 13 percent of the total budget of CGIAR in 2023 ($870 million). The recent decline in expenditure and growing funding uncertainties might be expected to affect IFPRI's performance, though this impact has not been demonstrated by available bibliometric data measuring outputs per senior researcher per year (see Section 4.1).

Figure 1: IFPRI Annual Expenditures 1976–2022, (millions of US dollars)



Source: IFPRI Finance, IFPRI Audited Financial Reports, and authors' calculations.

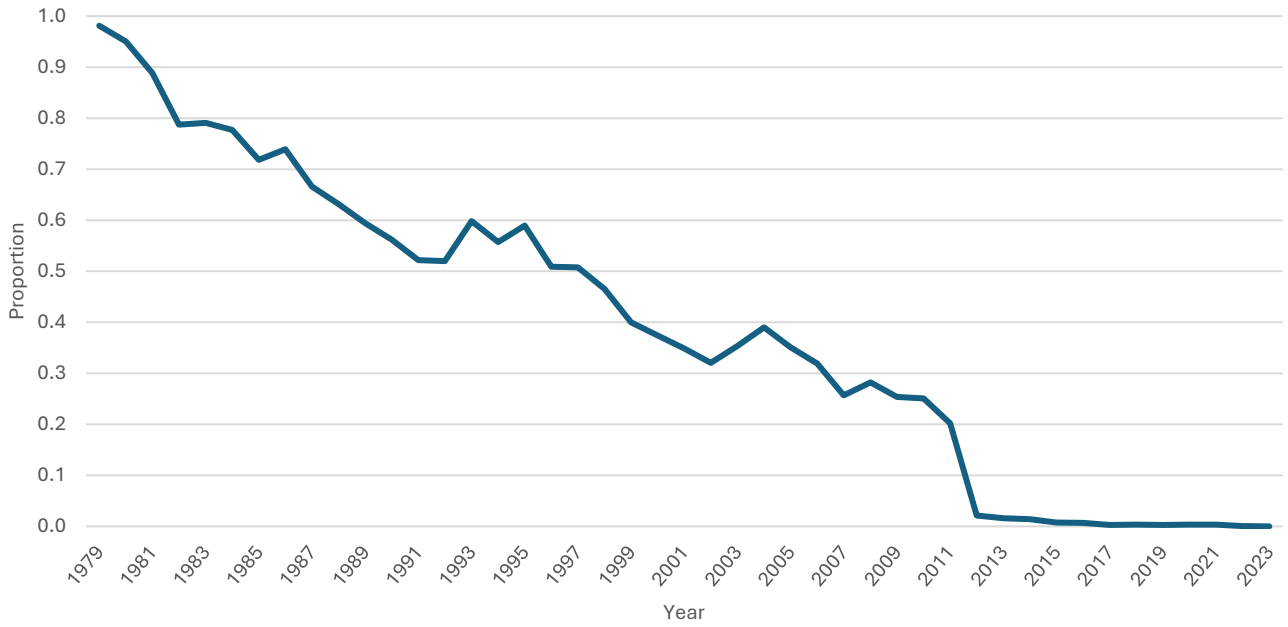
Note: Corrected for CGIAR passthroughs to reflect what IFPRI retained to spend on research.

1 All passthrough amounts to other CGIAR centers were removed for the 2013–2023 period when that was explicitly accounted for in IFPRI financial statements. Between 2002 and 2012, further analysis of annual financial statements was made to remove passthroughs to CGIAR Centers through the HarvestPlus program, which was the major source of such passthroughs. Some CGIAR passthroughs could not be captured, such as when IFPRI led a challenge program prior to 2012. The expenditure data include subcontracts with non-CGIAR partners that IFPRI selected to contribute to its research. Some very small changes in reserves occurred in some years, which have not been corrected for in the annual figures in Figure 1.

2 Unless noted otherwise, all dollars are given in US dollars.

Changes in the sources of IFPRI's funding are also concerning. In the early years, IFPRI received most of its funding as unrestricted core funds, but these became increasingly scarce over time and had virtually disappeared by 2012 (Figure 2). Almost all of IFPRI's revenue now comes from bilateral sources or CGIAR programs. These funds are typically tied to specific projects that meet the often short-term priorities of a donor agency or program leadership. This situation makes it more difficult for IFPRI to maintain a thematic and longer-term research focus on key issues that can lead to international public goods, and this funding trend may be associated with the current research portfolio, which is more diverse and less tightly structured.

Figure 2: Proportion of Unrestricted Funding to Total Revenue, 1979–2023



Source: IFPRI Finance Unit, IFPRI Audited Financial Statements, and authors' calculations.

3. ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF IFPRI'S RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

3.1 Theory of Change and Impact Pathways

IFPRI's primary mission is to conduct policy-oriented research to help inform policy decisions at national, regional, and global levels, which can contribute to the Institute's overall vision of a world free of hunger and malnutrition. To achieve this vision, IFPRI currently engages in four types of activities:

- Research leading to the creation of improved evidence-based knowledge, datasets, and research tools
- Communications and outreach aimed at informing relevant audiences at country, regional, and global levels about research findings
- Technical assistance to help policymakers and donor agencies design and scale up improved policies and investments, especially those resulting from IFPRI's research
- Capacity strengthening of individual researchers and relevant food systems–related institutions at country and regional levels

Taken together, these activities aim to influence government policymakers, donor agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), international financial institutions, and others in improving their policies and investments at country, regional, and global levels, all of which contribute to outcomes at those levels and to a world free of hunger and malnutrition (Figure 3). This section elaborates on impact pathways for the three primary target groups—countries, regions, and global—although there may be strong overlap between them.

3.1.1 Country Level

At the country level, IFPRI first identifies relevant activities and aligns with key national stakeholders to prioritize them. For country programs, priorities are expected to be demand driven and are typically set through formal consultations with local policymakers and donor agencies. Once priorities are agreed upon, IFPRI collaborates with national partners to undertake research, identify solutions, test their effectiveness, and communicate results to policymakers and donors. If recommended solutions are accepted, IFPRI may follow up with local partners and implementing agencies to scale them up, evaluate outcomes, and revisit the design of the solutions, as needed.

This technical assistance has become more common within IFPRI's agenda, both in the context of country programs and the design of social safety nets, nutrition programs, and other activities that involve randomized trials as part of their evaluation efforts. As an important part of its country programs, IFPRI also undertakes activities aimed at more general capacity strengthening of institutions, individuals, and data systems within a country.

For impact assessment, measures of outcomes at the country level might include evidence of key recommendations being accepted and implemented in the form of changed policies and investments, and the number of households or people reached, such as adopters or beneficiaries. Measures of impact may include improvements in agricultural productivity, food supplies, markets and trade, resilience, and environmental services; increases in household welfare such as incomes, nutrition,

health, women's empowerment, equality, and youth; improvements in subnational income distribution and poverty reduction; possible macroeconomic benefits, such as in GDP growth, trade balance, and employment; and enhanced national capacity to undertake research and improved data systems.

Given that the generation of international public goods is an important part of IFPRI's mission, the work undertaken in individual countries is often integrated into multicountry programs that can produce spillover benefits for other countries at the regional level or create knowledge that is useful at global levels. IFPRI's publications and communications activities help to more widely disseminate knowledge generated by its country research.

3.1.2 Regional Level

The impact pathways for IFPRI's regional-level work are similar to those of country work, though with a larger group of stakeholders and partners. These typically include policymakers and research partners within each participating country, as well as collaborative arrangements with regional institutions that help prioritize, coordinate, and communicate the work. Where suitable regional institutions do not already exist for policy research, IFPRI may sometimes establish a policy research network that brings together teams from participating countries to work on common policy issues. For example, IFPRI has collaborated with CAADP, an Africa-wide institution, to support many African countries' agricultural development strategies and investment plans. IFPRI has also filled regional policy research gaps, including through a regional policy network in eastern and southern Africa established by its 2020 Vision Initiative and an ongoing network in South Asia run by its South Asia Office.

Once priorities are agreed upon, IFPRI collaborates with country and regional partners to undertake research, identify solutions, test their effectiveness, and communicate results to policymakers and donors throughout the region. As one advantage of a regional approach, not all member countries need to undertake research on the same policy issues; by instead focusing research in a sample of representative countries, findings on common policy problems can be shared with all participating countries. Additionally, IFPRI often helps to strengthen the research capacity of regional institutions and data systems.

Expected outcomes from a regional program include the acceptance and implementation of key policy recommendations by participating countries and regional institutions, where appropriate. Other measures of outcomes and impacts are usually assessed within participating countries and are the same as for country-level work. In some cases, improvements may be expected in regional trade, security, resilience, and environmental outcomes, among others, as well as enhanced regional capacity to undertake research and improved data systems. As with IFPRI's country work, the work undertaken at regional levels may also generate international public goods that are valuable for other regions.

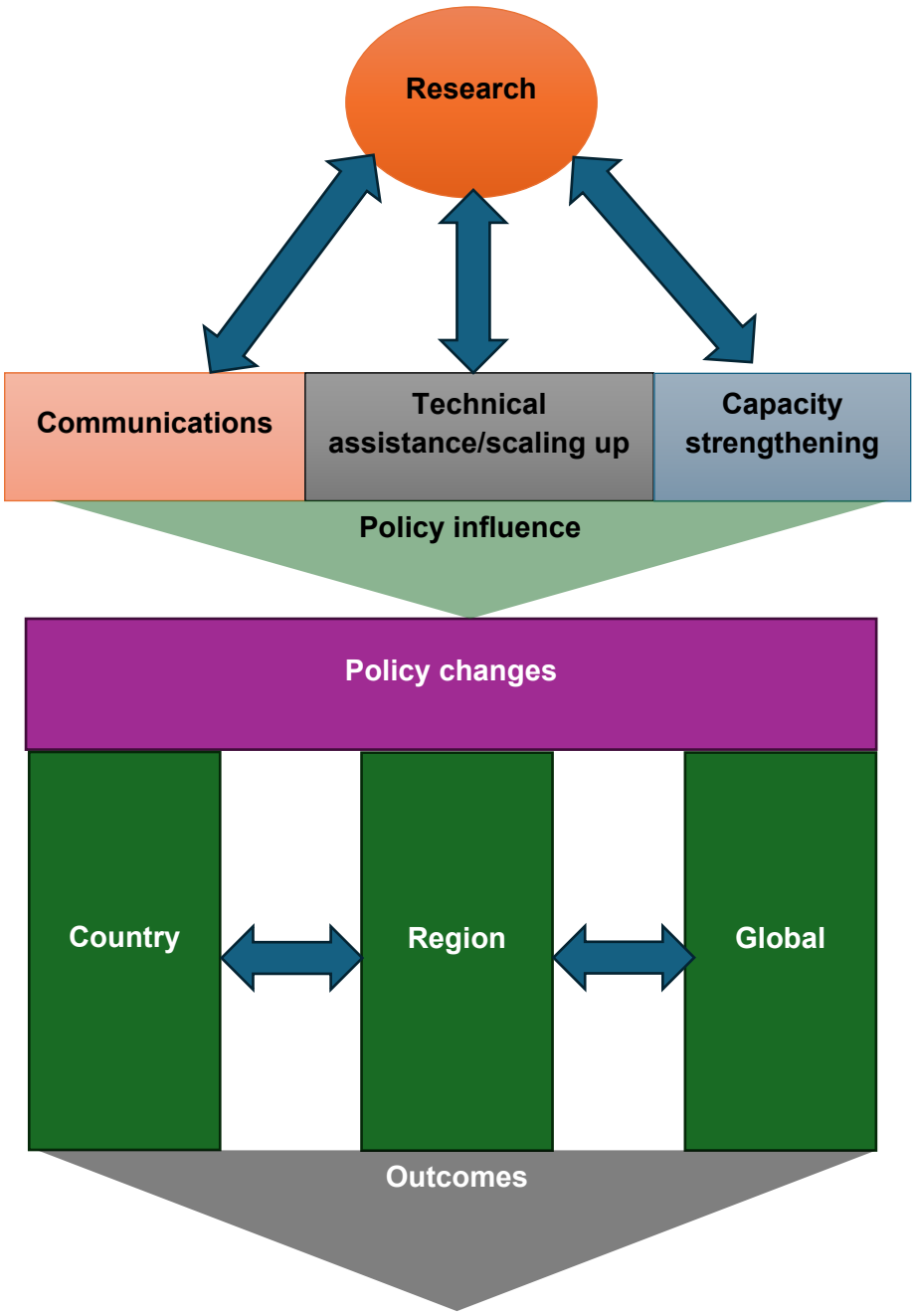
3.1.3 Global Level

IFPRI's work at the global level is more directly focused on international public goods, but it is useful to distinguish between two types of these goods. The first involves contributions to global knowledge on specific topics, which are based on inferences drawn from multicountry case study research. Except for very country-specific and demand-driven research, most of IFPRI's research at the country level fits within an overarching thematic framework that aims to generate spillover benefits at regional, if not global, levels. These contributions to global knowledge, many of which are discussed elsewhere in this report, include IFPRI's work on the effectiveness of different policies for social safety nets, nutrition programs, biofortification, water management, and property rights and collective action. The impact pathways for these types of international public goods fit within the country and regional pathways discussed in prior sections.

The second type of international public good involves outcomes from research addressing global issues that do not require scaling up from country-specific studies. These goods were IFPRI's main output in its early years, including work on forward-looking projections about the world food situation, and the role of world food stocks, international price stabilization schemes, and other trade-related policies. These goods remain an important component of IFPRI's research and outreach agenda. They include a wide array of conference and advocacy activities, innovative tools, indexes, analysis of future world food scenarios, and datasets that are freely accessible to users around the world.

Outcomes of these goods can include contributions to the international community's adoption of a consensus on key recommendations and implementation through changed policies and investments at country, regional, and global levels. Subsequent impacts might include improvements in international agricultural trade, food security, resilience, poverty reduction, and environmental outcomes. The generation of new research tools and databases could also lead to an enhanced global capacity to undertake international food policy research. However, tracking these goods from specific research activities is particularly fraught, given their long and widely diffused impact pathways. Also, as Lynam (2016) observed in his evaluation of IFPRI's science and technology program, some of the Institute's research that leads to international public goods is only undertaken at higher levels of the impact pathway, and without additional investment in implementation, these efforts may not lead to more direct and traceable impacts at lower levels.

Figure 3: Theory of Change for IFPRI



Source: Authors.

3.2 Challenges in Applying the Framework

The conceptual framework for IFPRI's impact pathways is reasonably clear, and the Institute often articulates it in the ex ante benefit analyses and reporting frameworks of project proposals submitted to donors and CGIAR's Systemwide Programs. However, tracking and quantifying outcomes and impacts of policy-oriented research ex post presents some major challenges. Box 1 summarizes these challenges, including ones to which IFPRI and CGIAR's Standing Panel on Impact Assessment have made many contributions (see for example, Pardey and Smith 2004; Anderson et al. 2005; Raitzer and Ryan 2008; Renkow and Byerlee 2010; Place and Hazell 2015; Slade et al. 2020).

Box 1: Challenges in Assessing the Impact of Policy-Oriented Research

Assessing policy influence and attributing it to a specific source of policy-oriented research (POR) presents a major challenge. Analysts usually assess influence through interviews and surveys with key informants, including decision-makers. Sometimes, citations of research outputs can help trace a pathway to decision-makers. Analysts also adopt conservative assumptions when making attributions to a specific POR source, in the hope that any bias in the benefits estimation would be reduced. While most analysts are keen to make attributions to specific POR outputs, attributing influence directly to the research organizations involved in developing those outputs is not always desirable. This may be the case, for example, when the output represents the joint efforts of several agencies or builds on the work of others, or if there are political sensitivities about identifying specific institutions, especially those external to the country.

Another major challenge involves specifying an appropriate counterfactual—that is, what would have occurred in the absence of the research. In one possible counterfactual situation, there would have been a policy change anyway, and the POR led to a more informed change with a better outcome. In this case, the relevant counterfactual is the alternative policy change that would have occurred. In some situations, the counterfactual might be a later and/or slower implementation of a policy or set of actions than would have occurred without the POR. In other cases, the policy would not have changed without the POR as, for example, where the POR played an important diagnostic role in identifying problems with the old policy. In this example, the relevant counterfactual is the existing policy. Another possibility is that the POR convinced policymakers not to make a planned change to the existing policy and helped prevent a worse outcome. In this case, the relevant counterfactual is the new policy that would have been put in place. Choosing the right counterfactual in an ex post impact assessment is much easier if the POR research team first develops an ex ante theory of change outlining the policy they hope to influence, the steps involved, and the timeframe.

A third challenge is estimating the welfare effects of a policy change and its relevant counterfactual. While randomized trials are now popular for testing the design of some policies and investments, they are less useful for assessing impacts when those interventions are scaled to regions or countries. Outcomes depend on the performance of implementing agencies and on possible economic and social spillover effects, not just on the intervention itself. Some forms of quasi-experimental econometric approaches may be possible with a suitable control,

such as an unaffected but similar region. Another approach is to estimate the outcomes and impacts through a simulation modeling exercise that compares the policy change scenario with the assumed counterfactual. However, POR is generally not conducive to quantitative exercises, and important social, institutional, and environmental impacts cannot be captured in this way. Thus, many evaluations of POR remain qualitative, and the counterfactual is treated as a plausible narrative. Even when quantitative assessments of a policy's or program change's impacts are possible, attributing estimated benefits from the change to a specific POR or research institution typically remains elusive.

An additional challenge for this study involves assessing the totality of IFPRI's impact over 50 years, not just the impact of individual lines of policy-oriented research. The available historical evidence about IFPRI's past impact also presents a constraint: while some aspects of IFPRI's global impact can be captured through its publications, bibliometrics, download statistics, media coverage, and social media activity, deeper analysis must be based on activities that have been subjected to external evaluations.

Fortunately, IFPRI has commissioned a generous number of external evaluations of its major activities over the past 25 years, far more than other similar policy research institutions. Additional external evaluations have been conducted by funding agencies and CGIAR. Taken together, these evaluations are sufficient to qualitatively assess the impact of most of IFPRI's activities over its 50 years, as well as to quantitatively analyze some aspects of its impact.

4. IFPRI'S SUCCESS AS A RESEARCH INSTITUTION

How successful has IFPRI been in achieving policy influence and impact? This section aims to assess IFPRI's influence from an aggregate perspective. Several sources of external evidence exist for this purpose: IFPRI's bibliometric statistics and number of downloads of papers and online datasets; its ranking as an institution among its peers; awards and recognition of its staff and their work; and the number and types of partnerships IFPRI engages with to conduct its work.

4.1 Publications and Citations

The number of research publications and their citation by other researchers are standard measures of the performance and peer influence of a research organization. The number of papers published in leading journals, as tracked by the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI), and the number of citations received in those same journals are the most widely recognized measures consistently collected throughout IFPRI's existence (Table 6).

During its first 40 years, IFPRI published 1,515 papers in ISI-tracked journals, which were cited 21,249 times, an average of 14 citations per paper. From 2015 to 2024, IFPRI published another 2,573 papers in ISI-tracked journals, which received a total of 76,077 citations by 2024, or 29.5 citations per paper. Part of the increase in the average citation count for IFPRI undoubtedly reflects a general pattern of increase in average citation counts in economic journals over recent decades, but part of it may also reflect a greater number of papers published in high-impact journals. It is also notable that despite the sharp decline in IFPRI's funding since 2015 (see Section 2.5), research productivity, as measured by the number of ISI-tracked journal articles per senior researcher, increased from 1.6 in 2015 to 2.2 in 2024.

Table 6: Total IFPRI ISI Publications by Year and Cumulative ISI Citations

Year	ISI publications, by number	Cumulative citations in ISI publications, by number	Cumulative citations by top 10 ISI publications, by number (and %)
Total 1975–2014	1,515	21,249	N/A
2015	249	10,122	2,479 (24)
2016	201	8,531	2,698 (32)
2017	266	8,858	2,792 (32)
2018	241	13,156	7,058 (54)
2019	264	15,101	8,569 (57)
2020	256	8,821	2,935 (33)
2021	295	7,170	1,757 (25)
2022	263	2,661	662 (25)
2023	296	1,463	644 (44)
2024	242	194	N/A
Total 2015–2024	2,573	76,077	29,594

Source: IFPRI Communications and Public Affairs Unit and authors' calculations.

IFPRI's high average citation statistic is bolstered by a few widely cited journal articles, which are often published in highly impactful journals. Table 7 shows all the journals that published at least four of IFPRI's annual 10 most cited papers. During the 2015–2024 period, the most widely cited journal articles accounted for 24–57 percent of the total citations from all papers published each year, which amounted to more than 200 annually. The percentages are highest in 2018 and 2019 due to three papers published in high-impact journals (*Lancet*, *Nature*, and the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*).

As Table 7 shows, journals publishing IFPRI's top cited papers focused on agricultural economics and economic development dominate overall, but the range of journals has broadened over time, with growing numbers of top articles published in nutrition, food, and environmental journals, a direct reflection of the increasing diversity of IFPRI's research agenda and its researchers' disciplinary breadth.

Table 7: Journals Publishing Top IFPRI Articles by Citation Count, 1983–2024

	Number of annual 10 most cited IFPRI papers			
	1983–1999	2000–2014	2015–2024	All Years
World Development	25	15	2	42
Food Policy	23	9	4	36
American Journal of Agricultural Economics	16	3	1	20
Economic Development and Cultural Change	11	4	2	17
Lancet	0	6	10	16
Journal of Development Studies	7	8	1	16
Journal of Nutrition	2	11	1	14
Agricultural Economics	3	8	2	13
Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences	0	7	4	11
Journal of Development Economics	10	1	0	11
Global Food Security	N/A	0	9	9
Agricultural Systems	0	4	5	9
Science	2	3	3	8
Journal of Agricultural Economics	3	3	1	7
Nature Climate Change	N/A	1	4	5
World Bank Economic Review	4	1	0	5
American Journal of Clinical Nutrition	3	2	0	5
China Economic Review	0	4	1	5
World Bank Research Observer	3	1	0	4
Nature	0	0	4	4
Nature Communications	N/A	0	4	4
Nature Food	N/A	N/A	4	4
Agricultural and Forest Meteorology	0	2	2	4
Social Science and Medicine	4	0	0	4
Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics	2	2	0	4

Source: IFPRI Communications and Public Affairs Unit and authors' analysis.

Note: N/A means the journal was not published during that period.

IFPRI has also published many other outputs in non-journal outlets, including books, book chapters, working (discussion) papers, research reports, and briefs. Between 2015 and 2024, IFPRI generated between 600 and 1,400 of these outputs per year. These publications were downloaded around 300,000 to 400,000 times per year, with a low of 310,199 in 2015 and high of 573,783 in 2017. According to Google Scholar citations, the most impactful publications include the annual Global Food Policy Reports, the Global Nutrition Reports that IFPRI published in 2015 and 2016, the Global Hunger Index published in 2016 and 2017, the Africa Agriculture Trade Monitors published between 2018 and 2020, and syntheses of COVID-19 impacts and responses in 2020 and 2022. Apart from these synthesis publications, other top impact papers spanned all of IFPRI's major research themes, various geographical locations, and different research approaches (ex ante studies, impact evaluations, and political economy, among others).

Comparing journal articles with other IFPRI publications is not straightforward, partly because of the difficulty in interpreting Google Scholar citations[3] and the relative importance of downloads for IFPRI publications. Using the Altmetric score and some of its components, IFPRI's top journal articles were found to generate much more attention than its other leading outputs. The average Altmetric score for a top 10 journal article between 2015 and 2024 was 510, compared to 81 for other IFPRI publications. Similar differences exist between journal articles and other IFPRI publications with respect to citations in policy documents and the number of news outlets mentioning IFPRI publications.

Notwithstanding the caveat about Google Scholar citations, the correlation coefficient between citation and Altmetric scores for the top journal articles published each year between 2015 and 2024 was estimated to be 0.88. This very high coefficient might be explained by the high reputations of the journals where IFPRI's most cited work appears and the expectation that such articles will have high policy relevance. For top non-journal publications during the same period, however, the correlation was only 0.30, suggesting that publications are more likely to resonate with academics or wider audiences, but not necessarily both.

4.2 Datasets and Downloads

IFPRI's policy stipulates that its datasets should be made publicly available online. Between 2015 and 2024, 579 datasets were published and made available. These datasets were downloaded more than 2.2 million times by early 2025. Table 8 shows the top 10 datasets during this period by number of cumulative downloads. All are household survey datasets, except for a spatially disaggregated dataset on crop production statistics. These 10 datasets accounted for about 1.4 million downloads over the 2015–2024 period.

Other datasets that received the highest cumulative number of downloads in their year of publication include household-level datasets from Malawi, two datasets related to impact evaluations in Malawi and Ethiopia, an updated version of Statistics on Public Expenditures for Economic Development (SPEED) in 2022, and an updated dataset of the Global Spatially-Disaggregated Crop Production Statistics Data in 2024 (Table 9).

3 These are not exclusively citations in a reference list; they also count mentions of articles in other sections of a document.

Table 8: Top Datasets, 2015–2024 Period

Top 10 during the entire period	Cumulative downloads by number
Bangladesh Integrated Household Survey (BIHS), 2015	341,132
BIHS, 2018–2019	283,404
Ethiopian Rural Household Surveys, 1989 –2009	233,783
BIHS 2011–2012	150,748
Pakistan Rural Household Panel Survey (PRHPS), 2014, Round 3	106,768
Chronic Poverty and Long Term Impact Study in Bangladesh	76,014
PRHPS, 2012	72,750
Global Spatially Disaggregated Crop Production Statistics Data for 2010 Version 2.0	57,735
PRHPS, 2013, Round 2	56,918
Medium and Large-Scale Farmers and Agricultural Mechanization in Ghana	44,373

Source: IFPRI Communications and Public Affairs Unit.

Table 9: Top Datasets by Year, 2015–2024

Top dataset by year	Year	Number of downloads in that year
Pakistan Rural Household Panel Survey (PRHPS), 2012	2015	4,265
Bangladesh Integrated Household Survey (BIHS), 2015	2016	15,097
PRHPS, 2014, Round 3	2017	40,262
Smart Subsidies for Catchment Conservation in Malawi	2018	1,654
Global Spatially Disaggregated Crop Production Statistics Data for 2010, Version 1.0	2019	5,392
BIHS, 2018–2019	2020	20,682
Agricultural Extension Services and Technology Adoption Survey, 2018	2021	2,713
Statistics on Public Expenditures for Economic Development by Economic Classes (SPEED-EC)	2022	752
Strengthen PSNP4 Institutions and Resilience (SPIR), Ethiopia: Endline Survey	2023	1,286
Global Spatially Disaggregated Crop Production Statistics Data for 2020, Version 1.0	2024	11,773

Source: IFPRI Communications and Public Affairs Unit.

4.3 Awards and IFPRI's Ranking Among Peers

IFPRI is ranked by the Global Go To Think Tank Index, which ranks the top 150 global think tanks and is compiled by the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program at the University of Pennsylvania. The index shares some characteristics with opinion polls and can be similarly volatile. Nonetheless, IFPRI was ranked 16th among the world's international development think tanks in 2014, though it had fallen to 19th place by 2020.

The Research Papers in Economics (RePEc) database provides another measure of IFPRI's ranking among its peers. RePEc uses publication counts, citations, and download statistics to rank institutions. IFPRI was ranked number one among agricultural economic departments in all years tracked since 2015 and almost all years for the field of agricultural economics (Table 10). It has also been ranked first or second in the field of Africa between 2018 and 2024 and between fourth and sixth in the field of development. RePEc also rated IFPRI as number 15 in Environmental Economics in 2024 and number 48 among hundreds of economic institutions, a much higher ranking than many prestigious universities.

Table 10: IFPRI Rankings among Global Peer Institutions and Departments, by Thematic Area

Year	Agricultural economics departments	Field of agricultural economics	Field of Africa	Field of development
2024		1	2	5
2023	1	1	2	5
2022	1	1	2	5
2021	1	1	2	4
2020	1	1	2	5
2019	1	1	2	6
2018	1	2	N/A	N/A

Source: RePEc.org.

IFPRI's work has also been recognized by three World Food Prizes. In 2001, Dr. Per Pinstrup-Andersen, then Director General of IFPRI, received the award in recognition of his role as "the catalyst behind the groundbreaking 2020 Vision Initiative, and for his contribution to agricultural research, food policy, and uplifting the status of the poor and starving citizens of the world" (World Food Prize Foundation n.d.-a). In 2018, Dr. Lawrence Haddad, previously with IFPRI, received the award with Dr. David Nabarro for "their individual and complementary global leadership in elevating maternal and child undernutrition to a central issue within the food security and development dialogue at national and international levels" (World Food Prize Foundation n.d.-b). In 2016, four scientists, including Dr. Howarth Bouis of IFPRI, received the award for "their development and implementation of biofortification, breeding critical vitamins and nutrients into staple crops, thereby dramatically reducing 'hidden hunger" (World Food Prize Foundation n.d.-c).

4.4 Partnerships

IFPRI's ability to attract and collaborate with a large array of partners at various stages along its impact pathways also demonstrates the Institute's success. In its research work, IFPRI collaborates with research institutes and universities to co-generate outputs. These include universities in high-income countries (such as Cornell University, Michigan State University, Tufts University, Wageningen University and Research, and Oxford University), as well as universities and research centers in most of the LMICs where IFPRI works (such as the India Council of Agricultural Research, Bangladesh Institute for Development Studies, China Academy of Agricultural Science, Akademiya2063, and Ethiopia Policy Studies Institute).[4]

Moving down the impact pathway, IFPRI collaborates with governments in most countries in which it works. In places where the Institute has a field presence, these relationships are very strong. IFPRI works with ministries of agriculture, environment, nutrition and health, and finance, as well as with offices of planning. Other types of government collaborations include work with policy advising authorities or units such as the Philippine National Economic and Development Authority and INVEST Honduras. Government partners are a major client of IFPRI's research and increasingly shape the nature of its research in a demand–supply relationship.

In addition to delivering outputs to research partners and engaging with governments, IFPRI collaborates with a range of other organizations that are important for achieving impact. At a very high level, the Institute collaborates with global and regional organizations such as the World Bank, FAO, World Food Programme (WFP), UNICEF, regional development banks, and regional unions and economic communities. IFPRI works with other implementation partners at the national and global levels, including NGOs, to test programs and interventions for their effectiveness. These include BRAC International, CARE, Digital Green, Hellen Keller International, and World Vision. IFPRI also collaborates with the private sector, though this is less common. Examples include partners in the finance and insurance space such as ACRE Africa and Equity Bank in Kenya. HarvestPlus has also engaged with many private sector partners involved in supplying farmers with seeds. Last, IFPRI views its relationships with many funding agencies and foundations as partnerships in learning.

As an example of these collaborations, in their evaluation of IFPRI's work on agricultural insurance over the 2012–2020 period, Hazell and Timu (2021) found case study work had been conducted in five countries (Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, and Uruguay) and involved a total of 39 partners. Of these, 9 were universities or research centers in the United States or Europe, 4 were universities or research centers in the case study countries, 13 were insurance or reinsurance companies, 4 were financial institutions, 6 were government departments, and 3 were international NGOs.

Over the past 50 years, IFPRI has broadened the types of partners it works with and strengthened these partnerships. In countries where IFPRI has had sustained investments, this change partly reflects IFPRI's own capacity-strengthening work (see Section 6.2). This has helped build capacity within a wide range of national and regional institutions for undertaking, communicating, and utilizing evidence-based policy research. The availability of stronger national and regional partners has contributed to IFPRI's own ability to rely more heavily on local partners, thereby leveraging its own investments and enhancing their impact.

[4] Lists of partners are not exhaustive.

5. IMPACT EVIDENCE BY RESEARCH THEME

As discussed earlier, the assessment of the deeper impacts of IFPRI's activities is based on past external evaluations, which are described in the annex. Given that the external evaluations are more often based on theme than geography and that most country and regional activities have contributed to international public goods, the evidence in this report is organized by research themes and cross-cutting issues rather than by country, region, or global level.

The assessments are grouped around the following themes: environment and sustainable production; poverty, nutrition, and health; trade, markets, and institutions; development strategy; country and regional programs; capacity strengthening; and global public goods that are not scaled from multicountry studies. This grouping correlates closely with the structure of IFPRI's research, capacity strengthening, and communications divisions, and it also helps identify any major gaps in the available assessments.

5.1 Environment and Sustainable Production

IFPRI's early work on agricultural production focused on policies to enable the spread of Green Revolution technologies, particularly in Asia and Africa. This involved research on fertilizer subsidies, irrigation development, and agricultural pricing policies. Another set of studies addressed early concerns that new technologies were more vulnerable to weather and pest risks and that their widespread adoption was destabilizing national food supplies. In contrast, IFPRI's work demonstrated other important sources of increasing variability in aggregate food production, but it also highlighted the importance of plant breeders in seeking to reduce yield instability and increase average yields when selecting new varieties. While most of this early work was not externally evaluated, some indication of its influence is evident from bibliometric data. Well-cited outputs include *Agricultural Price Policy for Developing Countries* (Mellor and Ahmed 1988), *Accelerating Food Production in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Mellor et al. 1987), and *Variability in Grain Yields* (Anderson and Hazell 1989).

5.1.1 Science and Technology

In 1994, IFPRI launched a policy research program on science and technology to address the role of new technologies in sustaining agricultural productivity growth. It began as GRP1 (Agricultural Research, Extension and Education Policy) with the objective of undertaking research to understand the financial, regulatory, institutional and organizational management of the process of scientific discovery, technology development, and delivery.

At the time, the GRP1 team was closely linked with the International Service for National Agricultural Research (ISNAR). When ISNAR closed in 2004, IFPRI absorbed parts of its science and technology agenda and retained some staff members. The transfer also included the ASTI database (see Section 5.7.2) and the Program for Biosafety Systems (PBS). Major research focused on methods of priority setting for agricultural research and development, which was later expanded to include spatial analysis using newly emergent geospatial data. The spatial analysis work eventually evolved into HarvestChoice, an open-access GIS database of harmonized multidisciplinary indicators jointly developed and managed by IFPRI and the University of Minnesota to inform strategic investment and policy decisions in sub-Saharan Africa.

In 2016, IFPRI and PIM commissioned an external assessment of the impact of IFPRI's science and technology work over the 1995–2012 period (Lynam 2016). In addition to a review of supporting documentation, a bibliometric analysis, and interviews with key informants, two case studies were selected for more in-depth study. The first was an evaluation of IFPRI's research on conservation of genetic resources, and the second was an assessment of how the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA), a regional research organization, applied priority-setting methods developed by IFPRI in its strategic planning.

The assessment found that the science and technology group had produced an impressive number of well-cited publications by 2012. As Lynam noted, "These data speak for themselves in terms of the influence that IFPRI research in the STI [science, technology, and innovation] area has on the larger policy research community" (45). He also found that IFPRI's science and technology research had a significant influence on subsequent research in critical thematic areas. The earlier work on investment in agricultural research and returns to such investment had a broader influence across the policy research community than did later work on genetic resources, biotechnology, and innovation systems—areas with a narrower research focus, fewer researchers, and a more direct impact pathway. In these latter areas, it was possible to demonstrate how IFPRI research helped to clarify that impact pathway, moving the research agenda to more actionable policy recommendations. In the case of in situ genetic resource conservation, subsequent research further down the impact pathway was taken up by Bioversity International.

Other important outputs included a range of creative research papers that explored different breeding topics, including, for example, work on returns to maintenance research in wheat breeding (Marasas et al. 2003), the distribution of trait preferences as inputs into banana breeding (Edmeades and Smale 2006), the relationship between varietal turnover and genetic diversity in wheat (Smale et al. 2008), and several papers on the potential role of participatory plant breeding in maintaining crop genetic diversity at the farm level. These publications framed a topic, used innovative analytical methodologies, and generated first-order research findings.

Case study on conservation of genetic resources

IFPRI's research agenda on genetic resources evolved from originally focusing on ex situ conservation (mainly seed banks) to building understanding on the determinants of in situ conservation by farmers and communities. IFPRI undertook a major study on ex situ conservation as part of the Systemwide Genetic Resources Program, developing the methodology and conducting the costing of the gene banks in a draft report in 2000.

As the SGRP's annual report summarized, "The [IFPRI] study concluded that the annual cost of conserving and distributing genetic resources from the in-trust collections is about US$5.7 million. The 1994 promise to continue these core gene bank services for all time could be realized through an endowment fund of approximately US$150 million" (quoted in Lynam 2016, 33). Lynam concluded that although the line of causality was not direct, IFPRI's research played a key role in providing the evidence needed to justify the creation of the Global Crop Diversity Trust.

Lynam found that IFPRI's research on in situ conservation led to pioneering methods that were applied in some of the first case studies of farmers' decisions on crop genetic diversity, as well as studies of how farmers and their communities valued this diversity (see, for example, Smale 2006). The researchers also developed methods to identify the social value of biodiversity, which is needed to guide public policies and investments to support in situ conservation.

Case study on priority setting for R&D with a subregional research program in sub-Saharan Africa

IFPRI's collaboration with ASARECA was a downstream undertaking that involved applying select methods for prioritizing R&D investments at a regional scale. The limited objective was that ASARECA would adopt the commodity and spatially identified development domain priorities as a central part of its new strategy.

Lynam found general agreement that ASARECA adopted the commodity priorities and, to a lesser extent, the development domains. These were included in the eventual strategic plan produced by ASARECA. However, any additional impacts were muted by difficulties in trying to implement the plan, especially amid tradeoffs between the funding interests of individual national agricultural research systems (NARS) and the funding needs of ASARECA's coordinated plan.

As one expert noted to Lynam (2016), the study "generated valuable discussion on how the NARS in the region could cooperate more efficiently to generate widely applicable research results, but it was never meant to be used as a sole basis for priority-setting; the more important contribution was the mapping of development domains that made a strong case for regional cooperation and the promotion of spillovers" (40). While experts agreed that IFPRI's study achieved the impacts usually associated with a priority-setting framework by improving resource allocation within the context of a subregional research program, they also felt that the study never discussed the "how" question.

IFPRI research on biotechnology: Program on Biosafety Systems

Since the development of the first biotech crop varieties, IFPRI worked to analyze the potential costs, risks, and benefits of these varieties for farmers and consumers in LMICs. As part of this effort, the Institute published two well-cited books: *Seeds of Contention: World Hunger and the Global Controversy over Genetically Modified Crops* (Pinstrup-Andersen and Schiøler 2001) and *The Politics of Precaution: Genetically Modified Crops in Developing Countries* (Paarlberg 2001).

The need for effective biosafety regulatory systems was considered crucial to helping LMICs benefit from biotechnology innovations, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) began funding IFPRI's PBS in 2003. A key aspect of this program aimed to support the establishment of legal and regulatory frameworks in countries at all phases of biotechnology development and dissemination. This involved developing strong national partnerships to build countries' technical and communication capacity in biotechnology issues so that they could better engage in discussions and make informed decisions on these issues.

USAID commissioned an evaluation of PBS after its second phase ended in 2013 (Potter Consulting 2014). The evaluation focused more on the effectiveness of PBS's implementation modalities than on its overall effectiveness. In addition to document reviews and virtual interviews with key stakeholders, the consultants visited three PBS countries (Indonesia, Malawi, and Uganda). The evaluation authors recognized the difficult political environment for biotechnology in agriculture, noting:

> *PBS has been an effective force in increasing the technical capacity of countries to handle the regulatory aspects of agricultural biotechnology up to the stage of confined field trials. In all three of the countries visited, PBS can take considerable credit for the fact that there is a system for the application, review, approval and monitoring of confined field trials of transgenic plants, together with some form of regulations and standard operating procedures to ensure that these are carried out with minimal risk to the environment and human or animal health. There is even noted progress*

in addressing the technical aspects of risk assessments for approval of foods and feeds and environmental release in both Indonesia and Uganda. (30)

The review team also noted that the next step—achieving approval of biotech products for cultivation—had not been completed. Subsequently, PBS provided evidence to CGIAR's reporting system that between 2014 and 2021, it contributed to a curriculum for biosafety inspectors (Malawi), informed regulatory improvements (such as in Viet Nam, Indonesia, and Nigeria), supported advanced testing of biotechnology products (such as in Tanzania), and therefore indirectly contributed to releases of Bt cotton (Malawi) and Bt cowpea (Nigeria) (PIM 2016; 2017; 2018; 2019; 2020; 2021; 2022).

5.1.2 Property Rights and Collective Action

IFPRI's research on property rights and collective action began within the team working on water management issues, but the same issues overlapped with most of the natural resources management research that was first conducted by the Environment and Production Technology Division in the early 1990s. In 1994, this led to the development of a new research initiative on these issues called Collective Action and Property Rights (CAPRi), which became a CGIAR Systemwide Program in 1996. IFPRI led CAPRi as a cross-Center program until 2012, when it became PIM's Governance of Natural Resources Flagship. It continued in that capacity until 2021, when the CGIAR Research Programs ended.

CGIAR's Science Council commissioned Bruce and colleagues (2002) to evaluate CAPRi after seven years of operation. CAPRi began with very modest funds (around $200,000 annually), but it soon attracted interest from all CGIAR Centers and several funders. By 2002, CAPRi helped to generate 110 research projects within its mandate, involving more than 400 organizations. Bruce and colleagues (2002) found that CAPRi's thematic focal areas were highly relevant to CGIAR's goals of sustainably increasing production through technology adoption, and that it was very effective in generating new knowledge about the roles of property rights and collective action through commissioned papers and workshops, and in disseminating this information. The assessment also demonstrated that CAPRi played a key role in creating increased awareness by CGIAR Centers and NARS of the role of collective action and property rights research in their work on natural resources management and technology adoption. It found that the relationship between IFPRI, the convening organization, and CAPRi was exemplary.

More recently, Andersson and Emmelhainz (2021) were commissioned by IFPRI and PIM to assess the PIM flagship on Governance of Natural Resources. They found that the flagship had 144 organizations as core users, many of which actively contributed to the design and development of its outputs. Together, these organizations represented a variety of actors with a role in policy decision-making processes. The assessment concluded that "the flagship researchers are productive and influential contributors to new knowledge on property rights and natural resource governance" (2), and that the flagship was a leader for the entire CGIAR in its research on effective partnership strategies and the development of innovative impact pathways. However, the authors also found that more attention and investment was needed to monitor the use of outputs and design studies to assess the impacts of CGIAR innovations in collective action and property rights innovations. CAPRi's engagement with the Foundation for Ecological Security in India serves as an example of the program's grassroots influence (Box 2).

Box 2: CAPRI's and IFPRI's Engagement with and Contributions to the Foundation for Ecological Security

Established in 2001, the Foundation for Ecological Security (FES) is an India-based nongovernmental organization that enables rural communities to secure legal rights to their commons, prepare resource management and governance plans, and access public investment to support environmental improvement. In 2004 and 2005, the CGIAR Systemwide Program on Collective Action and Property Rights (CAPRi), led by IFPRI, held a training program in India on the importance of collective action, property rights, and the commons. FES sent their staff to the training, who found it very helpful to their own work. They used the materials to shape their interventions, thus beginning a longstanding collaboration with IFPRI. In 2010/11, the two organizations jointly developed the CAPRi Sourcebook, and FES began to frame its work around the theme "Promise of the Commons." IFPRI helped FES articulate the Promise of the Commons strategy and contributed experiential learning methods that were integrated into its approach (Andersson and Emmelhainz 2021).

An important experiential game involved the management of groundwater. After initial testing of the game showed positive results, IFPRI, FES, and the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics launched it in 2,053 communities across six Indian states in 2020. Impact evaluations conducted in nearly 500 communities showed that the game improved investment in water infrastructure and documentation of water management and use rules. As a result, the approach was adopted by FES and a diverse range of government, civil society, and private sector actors, who reported applying it in more than 6,500 communities as of June 2024.

More broadly, FES has strengthened 57,128 village institutions, bringing 6 million hectares of land under community governance and reaching 34 million people. A quasi-experimental impact assessment evaluated how this capacity development and reach has affected common land resource quality and benefits (Hughes et al. 2024). Using village-level propensity score matching techniques and mixed data collection methods to construct panel data, the team measured the effect of the FES approach on environmental indicators and the use of common land resources by villagers. The results were mixed: positive effects were found mainly for Rajasthan (not Karnataka or Odisha), where tree cover, vegetative cover, and reduced soil erosion were measured between 2000 and 2022. These results mostly pertained to the earlier FES sites that had more time under improved management. There was no measured effect of offtake of common land resources, though use for grazing purposes was not well measured. A paper with IFPRI co-authorship (Sandhu et al. 2023) presented a systematic review of studies of the value of the commons in India. Using the value transfer method, the authors estimated the average annual value of ecosystem services provided by 66 million hectares of land commons in India to be $90.5 billion (ranging from $24 to $192 billion).

IFPRI has undertaken other research on property rights and collective action within the context of several research programs on natural resources management (especially water, pastoral farming systems in Africa and the Middle East, and less-favored lands in Africa and Central America). Some of this research is captured in the relevant sections below, as well as in several well-cited books: *Land*

Tenure and Natural Resource Management: A Comparative Study of Agrarian Communities in Asia and Africa (Otsuka and Place 2001), *The Emergence of Land Markets in Africa: Impacts on Poverty, Equity and Efficiency* (Holden et al. 2009), *Collective Action and Property Rights for Poverty Reduction: Insights from Africa and Asia* (Mwangi et al. 2011), and *Property Rights, Risk and Livestock Development in Africa* (McCarthy et al. 2000).

5.1.3 The Sustainable Development of Less-Favored Areas

While the Green Revolution initially benefited many irrigated and high-potential rainfed areas in Asia and Latin America, it left behind many areas disadvantaged by poor agroclimatic conditions, lack of irrigation, poor infrastructure, and remoteness from markets, as well as much of Africa. Rural poverty became increasingly concentrated in these regions (Ghani 2010). In 1998, IFPRI launched GRP5, a research program on the sustainable development of less-favored areas (LFAs). It aimed to provide empirical evidence on appropriate development strategies and public investments for improving the well-being of individuals living in LFAs and to assess the appropriate targeting of various public investments to LFAs rather than favored areas. The latter topic was covered by the GRP3 team working on priorities for public investment (see Section 5.4.1). After an initial phase of conceptualization, the research team undertook empirical work in the tropical highlands of East Africa (Ethiopia and Uganda), in collaboration with the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), and in Central America (Honduras), in collaboration with Wageningen University and Research.

IFPRI commissioned an external evaluation of GRP5 after nearly 10 years of work. English and Renkow (2007), the evaluation's authors, note that the program's research activities generally were confined to addressing the first set of objectives, as study sites were focused mainly in LFAs without equal balance with comparative sites in favorable areas, and largely in Ethiopia, Honduras, and Uganda. IFPRI and collaborators collected and analyzed household, community, and GIS data, leading to many publications including working papers, journal articles, and policy briefs and held national-level workshops to disseminate the findings. In addition, the book *Strategies for Sustainable Development in the East African Highlands* (Pender et al. 2006)synthesized a large portion of the research.

English and Renkow interviewed stakeholders in Ethiopia, Honduras, and Uganda to understand the research's use and value, finding:

> *There was general agreement that IFPRI's approach to the research was rigorous, well-conceived and well-executed, and that the information generated is highly useful as a description of the realities of agricultural households in LFAs; that the training aspect of the research was generally acknowledged by those involved in the programs. (This included both the formal graduate training and interaction with students and faculty staff at local academic institutions); and there was widespread sentiment that the research had succeeded in drawing attention to, and contributing to policy debates surrounding, poverty issues in LFAs. (viii)*

However, stakeholders were unhappy with how long it took for the main research reports to be published after the research was completed. They were also dissatisfied that there was not more follow-up with the wider policy community or general public after the high-profile summary workshops presenting the research findings.

English and Renkow identified examples of research uptake and influence, such as its use in the design and implementation of rural development projects in Honduras (such as the Rural Land Management and Project Access to Land). In Tigray, Ethiopia, IFPRI's research findings informed

state-level policies and programs, and IFPRI assisted the World Bank in developing a sustainable land management project, which was then under preparation for financing by the Global Environment Facility.

However, they concluded, "…it is far more difficult to see clear links to policymakers who approach their jobs with their own particular agendas. This in no way diminishes the value of the research per se, but it certainly calls into question its sustained influence on the policymaking process" (ix). They also noted that engagement with policymakers waned over time, and, in the case of Honduras, a change in government midway through the data collection work caused irrevocable harm to previous relationships. The weakening of relationships was partly due to project cycles and limited staff to continue engagement locally.

The Mashreq and Maghreb Project

Led by the International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA) and funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Mashreq and Maghreb Project aimed to sustainably develop low rainfall areas (less than 400 mm) in North Africa and West Asia. It included major components for improving the productivity of relevant food and forage crops, livestock, and extensive communal and tribal grazing areas. IFPRI provided inputs on agricultural policies to promote diffusion of improved technologies and manage droughts, and on ways to strengthen property rights and collective action over common grazing lands. The project's varied outputs included the book *Agricultural Growth, Sustainable Resource Management, and Poverty Alleviation in the Low Rainfall Areas of West Asia and North Africa* (Oram et al. 1999), several journal articles, and contributions to several national and regional workshops, conferences, and meetings.

IFPRI commissioned Sanders and Serghini (2003) to evaluate the Institute's economic contributions to the Mashreq and Maghreb Project and its influence on policy outcomes and impacts. They found that immediate outcomes included the strengthening of a network of economists within the region and contributions to development projects that expanded the Mashreq and Maghreb Project's approach in various regional countries. At the policy level, Sanders and Serghini stated, "the community modeling, the multimarket work, and the resulting public-policy discussions in the workshops have to be given some of the credit for the gradual shift in most [Mashreq and Maghreb Project] countries from emergency relief through feed subsidies to stimulating investment in the drylands system, specifically in drought-tolerant plants, feed blocks and improved rams and other technologies to increase the productivity of sheep" (13).

In addition, some economic analyses of specific technologies and practices influenced subsequent public investment decisions. While Sanders and Serghini did not find explicit policy responses to the property rights aspects of the research, the project team brought the issue of common access to the forefront of policy discussions around the rangelands. They also laid out institutional alternatives to state control of land, including recommending more community control through mechanisms such as cooperatives and increased privatization to stimulate more productive investment.

5.1.4 Water Research

IFPRI's portfolio of water research ranges from global studies on future water resources to local management of water resources. This work covers issues related to water governance, pricing, efficiency, equity, irrigation potential, water rights, and intersections with food and energy systems. IFPRI developed an early global water-food modeling system within its IMPACT model (see Section

6.3.3), which provided new insights on the relationships between water and agricultural production. This work helped raise awareness that water was an increasingly limiting factor for growth in global food production. IFPRI developed early hydro-economic modeling systems at the river basin level, which enabled analyses of likely effects (including trade-offs) of alternative development pathways and how policy options might influence those pathways. IFPRI was also at the forefront of water market systems analysis, including the use of economic incentives to motivate improved water management.

In 2013, IFPRI commissioned an independent evaluation of its water research (Bennet 2013), which was being operationalized under GRP22 (Water Resource Allocation: Productivity and Environmental Impacts). The evaluation concluded that the topics addressed by the research team were largely at the leading edge of water research. In addition to its interdisciplinary character, the work was found to embody the development of sophisticated modeling of natural and social systems, and it introduced the notions of institutional economics into water policy. The author also noted that the research group was notable for its promotion of price as a means of dealing with water scarcity. The evaluation attempted to identify the influence of the research through case studies in Ghana, India, and Viet Nam, but did not find evidence of research influence on specific decisions, policies, or programs in Ghana or Viet Nam. In India, the author noted:

> *The shared view of those interviewed was that IFPRI's research outputs have contributed to the continued reform of water policy in India at both the national and the state levels. In particular, the movement away from a water management approach that was predominantly "command and control" to one that is more heavily weighted toward community participation is supported by IFPRI findings. The shift from a focus on infrastructure construction with an emphasis on the inputs of engineers and scientists in the policy deliberation process to one that concentrates on the management of water resources from a socioeconomic perspective is also associated with IFPRI influence. For instance, IFPRI work on water user associations has been used in formulating mechanisms by which governments have interacted with the community. (29)*

During the 2012–2021 period, IFPRI participated in the CGIAR Research Program on Water, Land and Ecosystems. IFPRI's contributions included developing research on pathways from irrigation to improved nutrition and implementing assessments to understand which pathways were operating and under what conditions. This led to a World Bank Guidance Note on nutrition-sensitive irrigation and water management, jointly authored with World Bank staff (Bryan et al. 2019).

5.2 Food Security, Poverty, Health, and Nutrition

Some of IFPRI's earliest work on household food security centered on policies to help households cope with famine. This research focused on understanding the causes and impacts of famines, evaluating interventions such as food distribution and famine relief, and providing evidence-based recommendations to prevent recurring famines and build resilient food systems. Another important line of research involved the design and targeting of food subsidies, with the aim of identifying subsidy policies that would ensure large benefits to the poor while minimizing economic distortions for farmers and markets. These multicountry research projects were not externally evaluated, but they led to well-cited books such as *Famine and Food Security in Ethiopia* (Webb and von Braun 1994), *Famine in Africa: Cause, Responses and Prevention* (von Braun et al. 1999), and *Food Subsidies in Developing Countries: Costs, Benefits, and Policy Options* (Pinstrup-Andersen 1988).

Beginning in the early 1990s, IFPRI's work on poverty, health, and nutrition focused on social protection programs and was organized as MP18: Safety Nets and Food Security. Over time, the agenda broadened to include a wide range of issues related to nutrition and health (and relatedly, maternal and child nutrition and health), food systems, women's empowerment and gender equality, livelihoods, and governance and voice (see Table 2). This work now comprises two separate units at IFPRI.

IFPRI's contributions to this field have been recognized by two World Food Prizes. In 2018, Dr. Lawrence Haddad (previously with IFPRI) received the World Food Prize with Dr. David Nabarro for "their individual and complementary global leadership in elevating maternal and child undernutrition to a central issue within the food security and development dialogue at national and international levels" (World Food Prize Foundation n.d.-b). In 2016, four scientists, including Dr. Howarth Bouis of IFPRI, received the World Food Prize for "their development and implementation of biofortification, breeding critical vitamins and nutrients into staple crops, thereby dramatically reducing 'hidden hunger'" (World Food Prize Foundation n.d.-c). Given the breadth of the Institute's work on poverty, health, and nutrition issues, this section separately considers IFPRI's contributions to social protection and nutrition and health, though there are substantial links between these two themes, such as gender and women's empowerment.

5.2.1 Social Protection

A defining characteristic of IFPRI's work on social protection has been the use of causal impact evaluation methods to test and monitor the effectiveness of social safety net programs within individual countries. These methods were initially applied in Mexico, where the IFPRI team evaluated the Programa Nacional de Educacion, Salud, y Alimentacion (PROGRESA). The program made conditional cash transfers to the poor, which were targeted specifically to mothers and conditional on beneficiary households making specific investments in education, health, and nutrition. IFPRI contributed to the implementation of this program through a rigorous impact evaluation using randomized controlled trials. An impact assessment commissioned by IFPRI (Behrman 2007) concluded that the Institute's evaluation of PROGRESA advanced the flow of benefits, protected program continuity, and provided high-quality and politically convincing evidence of successful program performance.

IFPRI commissioned a comprehensive assessment of its work on social protection over the 2000–2012 period (Nelson et al. 2015). The assessment included an extensive review of public goods produced by the program, stakeholder perceptions of its public goods and research activities, case studies (Bangladesh, Mexico, and global policy decision-makers such as the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom [DfID], Inter American Development Bank [IDB], and WFP), and policy or programming changes that resulted from IFPRI-sponsored research, capacity strengthening, and research-policy linkages. More than 40 interviews were conducted with national stakeholders, donors, IFPRI staff, government officials, and individuals who participated in or had knowledge of the Institute's social protection activities during this timeframe.

Nelson and colleagues (2015) found that between 2000 and 2012, IFPRI's research activities:

> *…provided relevant, high-quality, evidence-based research on a wide range of topics related to social protection broadly and contributed greatly to the body of knowledge regarding social protection and social safety nets, and particularly of conditional cash transfers (CCT). By mid-decade, the program was considered to have contributed to a global "evaluation culture" about social-protection and safety-net programming. In particular, IFPRI's credible evidence-based impact evaluation of Mexico's PROGRESA served not only to help usher in the evaluation culture, but it*

> *also served as a model for social-protection policy and programming in other countries, both inside Latin America (for example, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua) and more broadly (for example, Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Ethiopia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Turkey, and Uganda). (xiv)*

As the authors noted, stakeholders felt that IFPRI's research activities had influenced government policies in several countries, including Bangladesh, Ethiopia, and Mexico. In Mexico, IFPRI's work with PROGRESA (now known as Prospera) was key to government acceptance of the need to use evidence in developing social protection policies and programming. Many of these policies remained intact 18 years later. IFPRI's work with Red de Protección Social in Nicaragua provided the government with evidence that helped to strengthen the program's implementation to improve targeting and the understanding of program elements by beneficiaries. As a result of IFPRI's evaluation of the Bolsa Alimentaçao conditional cash transfer program in Brazil, the targeting approach for its successor program, Bolsa Família, was changed and a monitoring and evaluation system was adopted.

IFPRI's evaluation of Bangladesh's Rural Rationing Program in the early 1990s led to its replacement with one of the first-ever food-for-work programs. The program provided poor households with a monthly ration of grains, conditional on school attendance by primary school students. Stakeholders credited IFPRI with providing evidence of leakage[5] in WFP's Vulnerable Group Development program, which the government addressed by shifting from weighing to measuring rations. IFPRI conducted several assessments, which Bangladesh's government used to inform policy decisions on primary and secondary school systems, including better targeting in these schools. IFPRI conducted several studies that compared food and cash transfer programs. These not only assessed school outcomes but also food security and livelihoods impacts, the findings of which influenced WFP's social protection policy.

In Ethiopia, IFPRI played a key role in monitoring and evaluating the Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP), including through evaluations conducted in 2006, 2008, and 2010. In their broader assessment of IFPRI's work in Ethiopia, Renkow and Slade (2013) highlighted the Institute's monitoring and evaluation of the PSNP, noting that it significantly contributed to improved performance of the program's subprograms and ultimately resulted in welfare gains for many vulnerable beneficiaries, including gains to food security and accumulation of productive assets.

Targeting and other program management challenges led to operational changes that ultimately resulted in substantial improvements in household well-being. IFPRI's work found that the PSNP's impact increased with greater participation: households that participated in both public works and a complementary food security program, Household Asset Building Program, showed the most improvements in food security, use of credit, and use of improved agricultural technology. For households that only minimally participated in public works, however, almost no evidence of impact was found (Hoddinott et al. 2012). Results from IFPRI's studies have influenced decisions on the appropriate wage for public works beneficiaries, graduation criteria (Hoddinott et al. 2007), targeting (Coll-Black et al. 2011), and the timing of payments to beneficiaries.

The PSNP's overall success suggests that social protection programs can be effective in poor countries that face constraints on administrative resources and capacity, as well as physical infrastructure (Gilligan et al. 2009). Renkow and Slade estimated that the impact from the public works wage recommendation was $37.8 million over a five-year period. IFPRI's social protection research team has continued to be very active in supporting programs, notably in Bangladesh, Egypt, Ethiopia, and Mali.

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5 Leakage is used by economists in this context to mean that food is diverted to non-targeted households, that is, "corruption."

5.2.2 Nutrition and Health

IFPRI has made numerous contributions to the field of global nutrition, ranging from influencing global programming and investments to generating innovations such as biofortified staple foods that are now disseminated, grown, and/or eaten in dozens of countries.

Beginning in the 1980s, IFPRI's research found that contrary to common misconception, agricultural commercialization not only increased incomes of small farms but also led to improved nutrition (von Braun and Kennedy 1994). Later research showed that high-value agriculture was a promising market opportunity for many small farms to climb out of poverty (see Section 5.3.2) (as noted in the external evaluation by Kydd 2015). Other research in the 1980s showed that additional income for women was associated with higher per capita calorie and protein intake, as well as faster increases in children's growth. These results were linked to gender roles within the household, and in the 1990s, IFPRI began to emphasize the central role of women in food and nutrition security and to frame gender as a cross-cutting issue that should be integrated into all research. The Institute was among the first to document and draw attention to the double burden of malnutrition, a term which refers to undernutrition and obesity and is now widely recognized by policymakers and practitioners. This work also confirmed the critical importance of early nutrition for development later in life.

In 2003, IFPRI launched a GRP on diet quality and health of the poor. It aimed to build global understanding on the main drivers of trends in diet quality and dietary changes, with the broader goal of identifying effective policy levers to improve the diet quality of the poor, reduce food insecurity and under- and overnutrition, and redirect nutrition transitions toward healthy outcomes, especially for the poor. In 2004, the Institute launched its Poverty, Health, and Nutrition Division (PHND), which lasted until 2023, when IFPRI reorganized its research structures. Around the same time, the HarvestPlus program was established, with significant leadership from IFPRI (see following section).

During the 2000s, IFPRI established a strong reputation for rigorous impact evaluations of nutrition interventions and programs (see evaluation by Lowder 2025 in Section 7.3), some of which were published in high-impact journals such as the *Lancet*. Important research and events during this period included collaborative research in Guatemala, where links were established between early childhood nutrition interventions and outcomes in adulthood. These findings confirmed IFPRI's hypothesis that nutrition can act as a driver for economic growth. In an external evaluation of the Institute's nutrition research, Behrman and Ghosh (2019) noted, "A key impact of IFPRI's capacity building and training has been to change the language of evaluation—moving governments away from a focus on monitoring to evaluation, including systemic comparisons to generate counterfactuals" (xii).

In the early 2010s, the Institute expanded into new ventures. In 2011, IFPRI held the 2020 Conference called "Leveraging Agriculture for Improving Nutrition and Health" in New Delhi. Attended by more than 1,000 participants from 65 countries, the event led to cross-sectoral shifts in thinking about how to combine nutrition and agriculture. According to an independent impact assessment of the conference (Paarlberg 2012), the UK Department for International Development used the momentum to help significantly expand its funding in the agriculture, nutrition, and health arena, and FAO evaluated its own nutrition work (see also Section 6.3.1).

The conference also helped lead to the CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH), which launched in 2011 under PHND leadership (Paarlberg 2012). A4NH was designed to fill a research gap between agricultural development and its health and nutrition benefits. IFPRI's GRP on better diets for health among the poor became one of the program's flagships, called

Integrated Programs and Policies for Nutrition. IFPRI hosted A4NH, with its scientists playing leadership and contributory roles in its flagship programs.

Outcomes from IFPRI's nutrition work included widespread uptake by several aid agencies, NGOs, and USAID's Title II programming guidelines of its recommendation to use a preventive approach to tackle childhood undernutrition, rather than a curative one. The Institute provided valuable evidence needed by the nutrition community, including the Scaling Up Nutrition movement, to universally agree that the first 1,000 days from conception to a child's second birthday is the critical window of opportunity for improving nutrition. This was incorporated in USAID's Multisectoral Nutrition Strategy 2014–2025, an outcome confirmed by an independent assessment of IFPRI's use of causal impact evaluations (Lowder 2025) (see Section 7.3). The Institute's impact evaluations also led to the use of double-duty actions to address the double burden of malnutrition (cited, for example, in WHO 2017). In their impact evaluation of IFPRI's research on diet quality and health of the poor, Behrman and Ghosh (2019) note that its lessons learned from the Alive & Thrive program led to the integration of nutrition and social behavior change communication into Ethiopia's PSNP to address gaps in nutrition outcomes.

Much of IFPRI's nutrition work has been carried out in India, where several successful outcomes have been reported. In their evaluation, Behrman and Ghosh (2019) note that Alive & Thrive helped develop a package of maternal nutrition interventions for India's Ministry of Health, which is responsible for antenatal health. Niti Aayog's monitoring of Sustainable Development Goal indicators related to nutrition and health refers to IFPRI's work, and international organizations working in India use the Institute's studies. An evaluation of IFPRI's high-value agriculture (Kydd 2015) focused on the supply-side issues of perishables, including fruits, vegetables, and animal-source foods. Of India, Kydd (2015) writes, "…IFPRI's work on diet diversification and the increasing importance of vegetables, fruits, and livestock products (especially milk) stimulated serious thinking about policies to promote high value agriculture. The result of this thinking has been encouragement of new institutional arrangements, such as producer companies and contract farming undertaken by public and private organization" (28). IFPRI also led the influential Partnerships and Opportunities to Strengthen and Harmonize Actions for Nutrition in India project, which is described in Box 3.

Box 3: Partnerships and Opportunities to Strengthen and Harmonize Actions for Nutrition in India Project

Launched in 2011, the Partnerships and Opportunities to Strengthen and Harmonize Actions for Nutrition in India (POSHAN) project primarily aimed to bring together data and evidence that could help support policy and program decisions to accelerate improvements to overcome malnutrition in India. It developed from the need for more knowledge on maternal and child nutrition by program managers and policy officials at national and state levels.

At the end of POSHAN's first phase in 2016, an internally commissioned external evaluation was conducted, with funding provided by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (which also funded POSHAN). Frongillo and Escobar-Alegria's (2021) evaluation drew upon 37 stakeholder interviews and reviews of more than 1,000 knowledge products, events, and social media postings. The authors found, "the POSHAN knowledge initiative contributed to evidence-based nutrition programming and policy making and helped create an enabling environment in India by

making knowledge available, mobilizing it, and engendering its use through engagement of policy and program communities, informed dialogue, consensus, and decision-making" (8).

Specific achievements included POSHAN's contribution to the institutionalization of the Coalition for Sustainable Nutrition Security in India, the creation of a multisectoral strategy, the National Nutrition Mission, and various state-level decisions. The program's second phase led to further knowledge sharing on nutrition and the supply of demand-driven evidence through deepening of partnerships.

Biofortification and HarvestPlus

In 2003, IFPRI's nutrition work led to the establishment of HarvestPlus (initially under the title of the Biofortification Challenge Program), a global multisector, multidisciplinary effort to improve nutrition and public health through the biofortification of staple foods that low-income people eat every day. HarvestPlus was led by IFPRI and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) and included as partners national agricultural breeding programs, NGOs, research institutions, and the private sector, including the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), ICARDA, International Rice Research Institute, and International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics. Numerous donors provided significant funding for HarvestPlus, including the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Micronutrient Initiative, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), World Bank, USAID, DfID, and Canadian International Development Agency.

The early years of HarvestPlus were devoted to proof-of-concept research to develop biofortified crop varieties. As this advanced, research expanded to include consumer acceptability, seed systems, and enabling environments. The International Potato Center's research on biofortified sweet potato, which predated HarvestPlus, led to the release of improved varieties in 2004. Crop varieties under the HarvestPlus partnership were released as of 2010. At least 309 new varieties of biofortified staples were released between 2011 and 2019, and by the end of 2024, 458 varieties had been released in 40 countries. Although exact numbers cannot be provided, it is likely that millions of farmers across Asia, Africa, and Latin America are producing biofortified crops, and as many as 300 million consumers consumed biofortified staples by the end of 2023.

HarvestPlus has worked with more than 3,600 partners since its inception. In 2024 alone, it directly trained more than 600,000 extension agents and farmers. It has also contributed to modifications of policies and programs in 24 countries to incorporate and promote the use of biofortified staple foods. In 2022, the African Union Commission endorsed the Declaration on Scaling-Up Food Fortification and Biofortification in Africa. Investment in biofortification is also mentioned in the CAADP 2026–2035 Strategy and Action Plan.

5.3 Markets and Institutions

IFPRI has undertaken considerable research over the years on international trade policies, which is reviewed in Section 7.4. This section examines IFPRI's work on domestic market reforms and institutions.

5.3.1 Domestic Market Reforms

In LMICs in the 1990s, the liberalization of domestic agricultural markets was a major policy agenda, which was partly stimulated by the structural adjustment policies of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank and the opening of world markets through various rounds of trade negotiations led by the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (and later, the World Trade Organization [WTO]). In response, IFPRI launched two research programs to help inform country policy choices: MP1 on agricultural input market reforms and MP2 on agricultural output market reforms. IFPRI's work on the reform of input and output markets in Africa and Asia led to several well-cited publications, including *Reforming Agricultural Markets in Africa* (Kherallah et al. 2002), *From Parastatals to Private Trade: Lessons from Asian Agriculture* (Rashid et al. 2008), and *The Subsidy Syndrome in Indian Agriculture* (Gulati and Narayanan 2003). Among IFPRI's market reform activities, only its work on rice market reforms in Viet Nam was externally evaluated.

Between 1996 and 1998, IFPRI undertook a major study of rice market reforms in Viet Nam. At the time, the government was shifting from central planning to market-based solutions and was receptive to informed advice. With funding from the ADB, IFPRI gathered extensive data from large-scale, nationally representative sample surveys and constructed a spatial equilibrium model (VASEM) to explore policy simulations using its own and other data. The study found that in addition to increases in productivity, future growth of the rice sector depended on a dramatic increase in rice exports, for which there was substantial potential. Export growth depended on the development of an efficient and effective privately centered marketing system, which would be able to meet the needs of domestic and international markets at low costs. However, several factors reduced the efficiency of Viet Nam's rice market, including policy restrictions on rice flows across regions, barriers to entry in the export sector, limited access to credit for marketing, limited access to information, and macroeconomic policies (inflation and exchange rate appreciation) that reduced farmer incentives. IFPRI made specific policy recommendations to address these shortcomings.

An independent evaluation by Ryan (1999b) demonstrated that IFPRI had successfully influenced the government of Viet Nam to adopt policy changes. He noted that at all stages, the project had been undertaken in close association with national institutions, which helped to build consensus on the nature of and need for policy change. In his assessment, Ryan used the VASEM model, developed by IFPRI during its research, to conduct policy simulations and eventually a cost-benefit analysis. This analysis assessed the economic value of IFPRI contributing to Viet Nam's rice policy changes and introducing the policy changes faster than would otherwise have been the case. He estimated that the net value of the policy changes to Viet Nam were $222 million until 2000, and under conservative assumptions about the value of IFPRI's contribution, the cost-benefit ratio from its investment was 56. Ryan emphasized the importance of the project's high-quality research, consensus building, good timing, training of researchers and policy advisers, close contact with government, and the value of funders with clout in contributing to the project's success.

5.3.2 High-value Agriculture

After the period of market reforms, IFPRI's research agenda on markets evolved to include promotion of high-value farming and contract farming, particularly in Asia and Africa. GRP27 (Participation in High Value Markets) was formed at the end of 2002; its definition of high-value agriculture included perishable agricultural commodities produced for the market that yielded high returns to land, labor, or both. GRP27 primarily aimed to undertake forward-looking global studies of structural change in high-

value markets and their implications for poverty reduction and sustainability; in-depth quantitative research on forces that promoted the scaling up of livestock production; and quantitative research on determinants of smallholder participation in high-value markets. The program also worked to identify constraints faced by small farmers and other poor households in their attempts to participate in agriculture. Empirical work was undertaken in several countries, often in collaboration with country programs, and particularly in Ethiopia, India, and Kenya. A cooperative program for livestock and dairy production was also conducted jointly with ILRI and FAO.

IFPRI commissioned an external assessment of GRP27's work from 1994 to 2010 (Kydd 2015). The study evaluated whether IFPRI had the right research strategy for this topic, focused on the right issues, was a leader in the field, used the most relevant approaches and methods, and succeeded in sensitizing or influencing the policies of governments, agribusiness, academia, civil society, and the international donor community. It also reviewed the impact of high-value agriculture policies that IFPRI influenced. The study included a review of IFPRI's published outputs on high-value agriculture, interviews with key stakeholders, and visits to India and Kenya.

In India, Kydd concluded that high-value agriculture was a highly relevant issue given its rapid growth, high labor requirements, and smallholder participation. He found that IFPRI addressed the right issues, but the focus on the export sector might have been excessive, given its limited role relative to the domestic market. He noted that IFPRI's quantitative work in India was undertaken well and used appropriate methods, which was demonstrated by the volume of relevant journal publications with an empirical component. Kydd concluded:

> *IFPRI's advice on [high-value agriculture] has been consistent with smallholder-dominated agricultural sectors' ongoing responses to the evolution of consumer demand and to global trends in value chains. IFPRI papers have argued that these developments need not be anti-poor: there is scope for a model of modernization that benefits poorer producers and low-income consumers, as well as other actors. But, on balance, government policies have worked against the actions of smallholder farmers. Smallholder agriculture faces a huge and critical task of modernization, which requires different policies. (31)*

He argued that IFPRI should continue to develop evidence-based narratives to help policymakers understand and support needed reforms.

Turning to Africa and the rest of the world, Kydd argued that GRP27's work was too scattered to afford IFPRI leadership in the field or to generate meaningful policy impact on the development of high-value agriculture. Furthermore, he noted that the work on Africa appeared to have a somewhat "probing" and "experimental character" along the lines of "let us see what we can do to open up this topic and then move on" (53). In his view, the work lacked consistent focus on a given topic over a sufficient period to engage advisors and policymakers and thus shift policy.

Regarding influence, Kydd concluded that the published outputs on Africa and the rest of the world were broadly satisfactory. IFPRI's work was accepted by appropriate refereed journals in the field and often attracted creditable numbers of citations. However, he could not detect any impact of influence on government, civil society, or international funding agencies, though this did not necessarily mean there was none. Even in Kenya, he found little evidence that relevant communities were aware of IFPRI's work. Kydd identified several weaknesses in GRP27's approach to communications and engagement with policymakers in Africa, noting "A distinction stands out as between IFPRI work in India and Africa and the 'rest of the world.' In India the IFPRI brand has a strong reputation going back over 35 years.

IFPRI has a substantial office in New Delhi and this facilitates links to Indian policy advisors and keeps IFPRI staff up-to-date on developments and policy debates in the sector" (52).

5.3.3 Institutions

Of the research on institutions undertaken by IFPRI, two themes have been subjected to evaluations: rural finance and agricultural insurance.

Rural Finance

In the late 1980s, microfinance emerged as a promising intervention for enabling poor people to access credit, motivated in part by the successful experiences of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh and urban microfinance in Latin America. However, unresolved issues limited support from donors and governments in many countries. In this context, IFPRI launched MP5 (Rural Finance Policies for Food Security of the Poor) in 1993. The program's objectives were quite broad: it aimed to determine whether microfinance really improved the welfare of the poor and, if so, through what channels, as well as how best to support microfinance institutions to ensure favorable and sustainable outcomes for the poor. Comparative case studies involving surveys of farm households and microfinance institutions were undertaken in four Asian and six African countries, leading to a broad cross-country synthesis as an international public good.

Upon completion of the research program in 2001, Alwang and Puhazhendhi (2002) provided an independent assessment of the program's impact. In reviewing its research outputs, they were impressed by the number and quality of published papers and the breadth and rigor of the analysis. They did not report any citation statistics, but stakeholder interviews with microfinance institutions, donors, policymakers, and researchers showed the program's influence in answering key questions about microfinance and offering forward-looking recommendations for improvements. The assessment's authors also found that the program influenced the practices adopted by the microfinance institutions that collaborated on research in the case study countries. For instance, several institutions abandoned strict reliance on group liability and experimented with individual lending models, which the research had shown to be more effective. The total cost of MP5 was estimated at about $3.5 million. Although the benefits are not known, the cost seems modest compared to the potential gains arising from the program's influence on the large and growing microfinance industry.

IFPRI has recently begun new research on rural finance, including a project on agricultural value chain finance with case studies in Indonesia, Viet Nam, and Myanmar (IFPRI), and on risk-contingent credit in Kenya and Ethiopia (see the following section).

Agricultural Insurance

Although IFPRI undertook significant research on agricultural insurance in the 1980s (Valdés et al. 1986), the Institute did not begin new work on this topic until 2009. While earlier work focused on the then-prevalent publicly provided multiple-peril crop insurance programs, IFPRI's work in 2009 aimed to explore newer forms of insurance such as index-based insurance and picture-based insurance (PBI). In principle, both of these newer insurance models were expected to overcome many of the problems that plagued earlier programs.

Despite many innovations by 2009, research studies and pilot programs demonstrated limited demand for agricultural insurance of all types by farmers, even when subsidized. Researchers at universities

and the World Bank had already begun to investigate the reasons for this low demand, identifying key constraints such as basis risk, cost, trust, and cash flow. Building on this work, IFPRI researchers explored factors constraining farmers' demand for insurance within selected research project sites in Bangladesh and Ethiopia. After prioritizing key constraints in project sites, the research effort quickly shifted to explore innovative ways of designing and delivering agricultural insurance to make it more attractive to local farmers.

An assessment of IFPRI's research on agricultural insurance from 2012 to 2020 by Hazell and Timu (2021) concluded that until 2015, this work contributed several well-cited papers to a growing literature on agricultural insurance. These efforts helped clarify the roles of basis risk, liquidity constraints, trust, premium prices, financial literacy, and prior payout experience on farmers' demand for insurance products. IFPRI also contributed to quantifying differences in insurance demand by gender and to evaluating the potential of group insurance for inclusive insurance coverage.

Since 2015, IFPRI work has focused on developing new forms of insurance such as flexible index contracts, gap insurance, and PBI that can help reduce basis risk at farm levels and make insurance more attractive to farmers. IFPRI has also investigated bundling these new forms of insurance with credit, improved seeds, and other agricultural services to enhance the value of insurance and to improve its impact on farm productivity and welfare. Although most publications from this phase of work are quite recent, they are well cited and have attracted a high level of attention, as indicated by Altmetric scores and download statistics.

Other well-cited, cutting-edge research includes IFPRI's work comparing different datasets and evaluating their potential to reduce basis risk, such as comparing rainfall and NDVI data, near-surface remote sensing imagery, and traditional satellite imageries and combining daily rainfall weather data with localized weather data. New research on using machine learning and artificial intelligence to improve the quality of insurance products, especially PBI, is also innovative. The assessment's authors also note that particularly since 2015, IFPRI's insurance work has surpassed initial experimental research to develop pilot programs with implementing partners who have a commercial interest in the insurance products. If successful, this action-oriented approach has potential to be scaled up by partners, leading to real development impacts.

5.4 Development Strategy

IFPRI's early research on development strategy focused on the role of agriculture in economic development and how agricultural productivity growth could generate powerful growth linkages to the rest of the economy. This work included case studies of growth linkages to the rural nonfarm economy within regions undergoing Green Revolutions, as well as studies of the linkages between agricultural transformation and industrialization in selected countries.

Regional case studies also addressed early criticism that the Green Revolution was mostly benefiting large farms and leaving smallholders behind, even dispossessing them of their land in some cases. IFPRI's studies found that while large farms were often the initial adopters, smallholders were able to catch up over time with the right policies and public investments, and that the Green Revolution often led to equitable and transformative outcomes.

This early research was not externally assessed, although as Pinstrup-Anderson (2000) argues, it was very influential. It led to several well-cited publications, such as *Agriculture on the Road to Industrialization* (Mellor 1995), *Agricultural Growth and Industrial Performance in India* (Rangarajan

1982), *Agricultural Growth Linkages in Sub-Saharan Agriculture* (Delgado et al. 1998), *Agriculture and Economic Growth in an Open Economy: The Case of Argentina* (Cavallo and Mundlak 1982), *The Green Revolution Reconsidered: The Impact of the High-Yielding Rice Varieties in South India* (Hazell and Ramasamy 1991), and *Nature and Impact of the Green Revolution in Bangladesh* (Hossain 1988).

5.4.1 Public Investment

IFPRI's GRP3 on public expenditure began in 1998 with research in India and China. This work aimed to quantify the marginal returns to different types of public investment in rural areas and demonstrated relatively high returns from investments in agricultural research and rural roads for increasing agricultural growth and reducing rural poverty. It also demonstrated that the marginal returns to these types of investments were often higher in marginal areas than high-potential ones, generally because of historic discrepancies in levels of public investment. The research was expanded to include select African countries and adopted as part of the country analyses undertaken for some countries as part of their CAADP process (see Section 5.4.2).

An independent assessment of GRP3 by Renkow (2010) found plausible evidence of policy influence in the program's countries of work:

> *…research has generated substantial global public goods. These take many forms, including an impressive array of scholarly publications, policy briefs geared more toward informed lay audiences, and multicountry data bases used by a variety of individuals from within the research and practitioner communities. The substantial recognition—and use—of these public goods represent a significant accomplishment of the GRP3 program to date and into the future. (26)*

The multicountry database on patterns of public spending was further developed into the Statistics on Public Expenditures for Economic Development (SPEED) (see Section 5.7.2).

5.4.2 Analytical Support for Development Strategies of African Countries through CAADP

CAADP arose out of the 2003 Maputo Declaration in which African leaders committed to allocating at least 10 percent of their national budgets to agriculture to generate the 6 percent annual agricultural growth then deemed necessary to halve poverty by 2025. Recognizing agriculture's pivotal role in transforming economies, the Maputo Declaration emphasized sustainable land and water management, market access, and agricultural research.

In 2014, the Malabo Declaration was revised to expand CAADP's scope beyond halving poverty. It introduced ambitious goals such as eradicating hunger, tripling intra-African trade in agricultural goods and services, and building resilience to climate shocks. It also emphasized inclusivity, focusing on women and youth, and accountability mechanisms through biennial reviews. This evolution reflected a paradigm shift in which agriculture was no longer treated as a sector but instead considered central to an interconnected system critical to economic development and sustainability.

IFPRI supported the CAADP process from the beginning. In its first phase, IFPRI collaborated with the African Union Commission and New Partnership for Africa's Development's (NEPAD) Planning and Coordination Agency (NPCA), regional economic organizations, and country governments to provide technical assistance for the CAADP framework, including the design of implementation road maps at the continental, regional, and country levels, with mutual reviews and accountability. As the process

moved forward, IFPRI deepened its collaboration with CAADP implementing partners to help develop modalities for national-level priority setting and implementation. IFPRI's analyses of agricultural growth and investment options for poverty reduction in more than 30 countries were used in the CAADP process of roundtables, country compacts, and National Agricultural Implementation Plans (NAIPs).

To meet CAADP's data and analytic needs, a network of regional knowledge platforms—known as Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support Systems (ReSAKSS)—was also developed. With regional nodes and country focal points, ReSAKSS serves as an essential tool to help African policymakers adopt practices of measuring, evaluating, and identifying evidence as the basis for policy and program planning and implementation. Three regional nodes and 15 country-level focal points were also established jointly by IFPRI, ILRI, IITA, and the International Water Management Institute in partnership with AUC, NEPAD, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, Economic Community of West African States, and Southern African Development Community.

ReSAKSS tracks CAADP's key performance indicators, which are published in the Annual Trends and Outlook Report. In 2020, ReSAKSS was transferred to Akademiya2063, an African institution based in Kigali, Rwanda. Many IFPRI staff who worked on ReSAKSS also transferred to Akademiya2063 to continue implementing its activities. IFPRI continued to provide technical support to AUC and NPCA with data and analysis in the production of CAADP's Biennial Review Reports.

In 2010, NPCA commissioned the Overseas Development Institute in London to lead a review of CAADP's progress over its first seven years (AUDA-NEPAD 2010). Using a mix of Africa-wide evidence and in-depth analysis of the experiences of Ethiopia, Ghana, and Rwanda, purposefully selected for their relative success, the report tracked how CAADP helped improve national planning for agricultural development, encouraged greater regional coordination, harnessed African expertise, and attracted additional and better coordinated financial support from aid agencies.

Establishing relevant counterfactuals was challenging, given that some countries had advanced their agricultural strategies before CAADP, but in general, the results were encouraging. Evidence of impact on agricultural growth was limited to the three case study countries, all of which experienced more rapid agricultural growth rates since the early 2000s (about 5 percent annually in Ghana, 8 percent in Ethiopia, and almost 5 percent in Rwanda). It was difficult to ascertain how much of this growth could be attributed to their involvement in CAADP, given that these countries were already prioritizing agricultural investments. The increased growth rates could also reflect lagged outcomes from earlier investments.

In 2015, USAID commissioned an independent evaluation of ReSAKSS (Tisch et al. 2015), which involved interviews with a wide range of African stakeholders and elicited views about various aspects of the relevance and usefulness of ReSAKSS. Several areas for improvement were identified, but the evaluation found that, "Overall, ReSAKSS is providing the right kind and level of information to support CAADP processes" (Tisch et al. 2015, 21). An internet survey with 135 respondents also found that the majority of respondents viewed ReSAKSS as being either very or somewhat useful in providing information to advance CAADP processes, strategies, or policies at country, regional, and continental levels. The highest approval ratings were for use at the country level.

In an ambitious study, Benin (2016) used panel data on 46 African countries from 2001 to 2014 and econometric methods to estimate the impact of CAADP on key outcome indicators representing agricultural spending, agricultural productivity, income, and nutrition. In one version of the model, the treatment variable was the year in which a country signed its compact. An alternative indicator was also

tried: it measured five stages of a country's involvement using the year in which a compact was signed but not yet implemented, the year in which a NAIP was prepared but not yet funded with external resources, and the years in which any of three levels of external funding were obtained for implementing the NAIP.

The study found that CAADP's external funding tended to substitute for domestic spending in the initial years after a country joined the CAADP process, but there was more domestic spending as countries reached more advanced stages of participation. Benin estimated that CAADP participation contributed to significant increases in agricultural value added, ranging from about 8 percent to 17 percent as countries moved from low to higher stages of involvement. The estimated impacts on indicators of income and nutrition were mixed, suggesting that more time is needed for the full benefits to spread to the general economy than could be captured in the relatively short data series.

Although 30 countries signed CAADP compacts by 2013 and 42 by 2016, their overall performance in meeting CAADP goals has not been impressive. For example, CAADP's biennial reviews report that only 10 countries met the primary goal of spending at least 10 percent of their total budget on agricultural development in 2017. Only four countries did so in 2019 and 2021, and none did in 2023. Performance on six other commitments was also disappointing and declined over time. Many countries made improvements in some years, but these were not sustained over time.

Benin (2024) questioned the reliability of recent biennial review indicators, given that in many countries, the data are inconsistent with other measures of agricultural and economic progress. He argues that the 10 percent agricultural spending target may be too ambitious for some countries if meeting it requires sacrificing expenditures in other key sectors that affect broader CAADP goals, such as reduced poverty and improved nutrition. CAADP recently prepared a new strategy and action plan for 2026–2035 with an even more ambitious agenda. It aims to reshape Africa's agrifood systems in their entirety, making them the cornerstone of economic growth and sustainability, and addressing challenges such as food insecurity, climate change, and structural inequities, all while aligning with Agenda 2063's vision of a prosperous, food-secure Africa (African Union 2024). IFPRI plans to continue to provide technical support to CAADP and selected countries.

6. IMPACT EVIDENCE BY CROSS-CUTTING ACTIVITY

6.1 Country and Regional Programs

IFPRI's decentralization and the development of country and regional programs (see Section 2.3) have likely had important impacts on the type of staff that IFPRI recruits, its overall research portfolio, and the outcomes that can be expected at country and regional levels. This section draws on country-specific and cross-country assessments to address the impact of having resident IFPRI staff in participating countries.

6.1.1 Country Assessments

The earliest country evaluation (Ryan 1999a) examined the policy research and capacity-strengthening impacts of IFPRI's Malawi program from the late 1980s to the mid-1990s. The study cited several achievements, including the Institute's contribution to the government's response to the 1992 drought and famine. Ryan concluded that many of the achievements in Malawi were possible only because of sustained, in-country presence and noted that many stakeholders perceived the visitor mode of operation that succeeded the country program to be inferior.

Babu (2000) assessed the impact of IFPRI's research on public-resource allocation and food security in Bangladesh. He found that the two most significant contributions supported the abolishment of the Rural Rationing Program and establishment of the Food for Education Program. Moreover, he concluded that frequent dialogues with the government and efforts to strengthen capacity for communicating research results factored significantly in these successes.

Renkow's 2010 impact assessment of IFPRI's research program on priorities for pro-poor public expenditure explored research and outcomes related to China, India, and the CAADP process in Africa. Although not focused on country programs, the study noted, "IFPRI in-country staff were universally praised for their efforts as intermediaries between the US-based IFPRI researchers on the one hand and donors and local officials on the other, sometimes in trying circumstances. IFPRI has greatly increased its in-country presence over the last decade. By all indications, this decentralization has paid substantial dividends in terms of the effectiveness with which research and outreach functions have been melded together" (23).

Ethiopia

IFPRI's research activities in Ethiopia date back to the 1980s. Following a period of political instability and civil war in the country, IFPRI reengaged more significantly in the mid-1990s. Since then, research has been led by headquarters-based staff, regionally based staff, and since 2005, staff from the Ethiopia Strategy Support Program. In 2004, IFPRI established a country program office in Addis Ababa.

Renkow and Slade (2013) examined the impacts of IFPRI's work in Ethiopia from 1995 to 2010. They concluded that IFPRI's activities generated a steady stream of high-quality research outputs and evidence-based policy recommendations of value to both the country and, through the generation of international public goods, to other research endeavors within and outside of Ethiopia. The study notes that IFPRI "has played a key role in underpinning the formation and operation of a number of important Ethiopian organizations, most notably the PSNP, the Ethiopia Commodity Exchange (ECX), and the

Agricultural Transformation Agency (ATA). In addition, IFPRI has been instrumental in producing a number of 'intellectual institutions' such as the Ethiopian Rural Household Survey (ERHS), the GIS-based atlases, and the Ethiopian CGE model, that facilitate further generation of knowledge." Further, it states that "IFPRI's contributions to capacity building at the Central Statistical Agency (CSA), Ethiopian Development Research Institute (EDRI) and some universities are likely to produce a flow of additional benefits over the long run" (52). The authors found that IFPRI's monitoring work for the PSNP produced the most measurable benefits. Based on plausible assumptions, the authors estimate that IFPRI's contributions to the effectiveness of the PSNP "produced benefits over a 5-year period in excess of $37.8 million—an amount that is 29 times greater than the $1.3 million spent on IFPRI's monitoring of the PSNP" (34). They conclude that in comparison to the $20.2 million spent by IFPRI on its Ethiopia work between 1995 and 2010, the net benefits from the PSNP work alone exceed that entire expenditure by more than 85 percent.

As highlighted by Renkow and Slade (2013), IFPRI research played a significant role in the establishment of the Agricultural Transformation Agency. A BMGF-funded study led by IFPRI's Eastern and Southern Africa regional office identified several critical weaknesses within Ethiopia's extension system (Davis et al. 2009). Impressed by this work, the prime minister asked BMGF to fund additional studies related to input and output markets, finance, irrigation, and livestock, which IFPRI's Markets, Trade and Institutions Division then produced in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture. These rapid diagnostic studies, which built on IFPRI's prior work on similar topics, identified numerous policy and institutional recommendations and reinforced the need for a more coordinated effort to overcome sectoral constraints. The government then asked BMGF to co-develop and fund a new institution external to the Ministry of Agriculture: the ATA was launched in 2010 and functioned through 2021, when it became an institute focused on providing policy advice and systems options. More details on the Institute's work with the ATA, including the findings of an independent assessment undertaken by FAO in 2020, are provided in Box 4.

Box 4: Ethiopia's Agricultural Transformation Agency

Governed by a council of ministers and chaired by Ethiopia's Prime Minister, the Agricultural Transformation Agency (ATA) was managed as a technical implementing agency to achieve ambitious goals. The ATA developed a number of projects aimed at improving the livelihoods of smallholder farmers across Ethiopia, working primarily in four regions: Oromia; Amhara; Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's region; and Tigray. The projects included agricultural commercialization clusters around priority commodities and thematic ones related to seeds, fertilizers, agrochemicals, irrigation, mechanization, markets, and extension and advisory services.

IFPRI played a supportive role by collecting and analyzing data related to ATA programs, including the Direct Seed Marketing Program (DSM). Research centered on agricultural transformation also shed light on the pace of change on farms and in the sector. The DSM was designed to incentivize private and public seed producers to sell directly to farmers rather than through the state apparatus. IFPRI conducted two assessments of the DSM during its piloting stage that provided sufficient evidence to warrant its scale up.

In 2020, the ATA requested that FAO undertake an independent review of its impact. FAO conducted a quantitative impact assessment for ATA's interventions in its priority areas (seeds, fertilizers, agrochemicals, irrigation, mechanization, markets and extension, and advisory services) and priority crops (wheat, maize, teff, barley, and horticulture). The first part of the evaluation (FAO 2020) used quantitative quasi-experimental evaluation methods with micro-level data to compare household-level outcomes and impacts in ATA treatment areas against a counterfactual population. The second part of the evaluation used the micro-level results as inputs for a computable general equilibrium model to measure impacts on the economywide and multisectoral functioning of the Ethiopian economy.

The FAO study found the ATA to be highly impactful, concluding:

> *As a result of the ATA's interventions, enhanced efficiency in both service delivery and the introduction of innovation led to a more efficient and productive agriculture system, impacting positively on several key priority areas – access and enhanced utilization of agricultural inputs, extension services, irrigation, mechanization, and facilitation of market access. Agricultural productivity of smallholders increased thanks to an improved environment for agricultural production, commercialization, and investment, which also led to a rise in growth in the agriculture sector and in other economic sectors, ultimately helping to reduce poverty. (x)*

Among other findings, the study demonstrated that the likelihood of input use rose by more than 10 percent for improved seeds, agrochemicals, and organic and mineral fertilizers; wheat yields doubled; and teff yields rose by about 40 percent. The evaluation estimated that the ATA contributed $1.7 billion to the country's GDP between 2013 and 2019. Poverty headcounts were estimated to have declined by 210,000 and 76,000 in rural and urban areas, respectively.

Although the FAO evaluation did not find significant effects on maize, a separate study by IFPRI found that DSM did have significant impacts on improved maize seed purchases and maize productivity (Mekonnen et al. 2025). Using a quasi-experimental difference-in-differences approach suitable to handle variation in treatment timing, the study finds that DSM led to a 14-percentage point increase in the proportion of farmers purchasing maize seed, a 45 percent increase in the quantity of maize seed purchased per hectare, and an 18 percent increase in maize yield.

Central America Regional Office

In 2003, IFPRI launched a regional program for Central American countries, which was run by a senior researcher based in San Jose, Costa Rica. At the time, the priority policy issue centered on the Dominican Republic–Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR) between Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Guatemala, and Nicaragua in Central America, the Dominican Republic, and the United States. Although the US market accounted for more than half the region's total exports, the agreement seemed to offer substantial benefits. Nevertheless, it sparked a lively debate within the region about potential risks and benefits, with fears that more open competition with the US would have

devastating impacts on smallholder farmers and many small- and medium-sized manufacturing enterprises.

IFPRI undertook detailed background studies to better inform this regional debate. The research team developed CGE models for Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua to simulate ex ante the likely trade and macroeconomic consequences of the agreement for each country and undertook in-depth value chain analyses of likely impacts on important agricultural commodities, especially those important to the poor (Jansen and Torero 2007). The studies identified key bottlenecks to realizing potential gains from the trade agreement in equitable and pro-poor ways.

These studies and others anticipated that real gains were likely to occur in manufacturing, especially textiles: without CAFTA-DR, Central America would lose its exemption from rules of origin for intermediate inputs and duty-free access to the US market for textile exports, which would result in an estimated loss of 400,000 jobs in the *maquila* (manufacturing) sector (Jansen et al. 2007). Although increased US agricultural exports were thought to reduce food prices for consumers, undertaking critical public investments to facilitate trade was recommended. To buffer potential losses for smallholder farmers, it was recommended that several agricultural products be labeled “sensitive” and given more time to reduce their tariffs.

IFPRI’s research helped to inform both the debate around CAFTA-DR and the final agreement. By 2004, all parties except Costa Rica signed the agreement, and it took effect in 2006. IFPRI also played an influential role in informing a protracted national debate in Costa Rica that led to a national referendum, after which the country signed the agreement in 2007. An ex post assessment of CAFTA-DR demonstrated favorable economic impacts, which were generally consistent with IFPRI’s research projections (Box 5).

Box 5: Impact of the Dominican Republic–Central America Free Trade Agreement

Simple analyses of the periods before and after the implementation of the Dominican Republic–Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR) show that the agreement led to only minor impacts on trade performance. However, such analyses can obscure the impact of other driving and possibly offsetting forces, including growing export competition from China and the parallel impacts of other regional trade agreements such as the Central American Common Market.

To create appropriate counterfactuals, the World Bank conducted an independent study that used quasi-experimental methods based on a structural gravity model to control for other factors. It found more sizeable impacts that aligned more with IFPRI’s ex ante analyses (Lee and Cunha 2024): CAFTA-DR significantly increased trade within the region by 27.4 percent, especially trade in manufactured and high-value agricultural products (11 percent). Agricultural exports increased significantly to the United States (a rise of 13 percent), but contrary to early concerns, the increase in agricultural imports from the United States was not statistically significant. This was partly due to the protracted period for reducing tariffs on sensitive agricultural products. Increases in trade were distributed unequally across member countries, with Honduras and Costa Rica gaining the least in net trade (exports minus imports), and El Salvador gaining the most. However, these trade estimates did not include services, which are

relatively more important for Costa Rica. The study also found significant increases in foreign direct investment in the region, with Costa Rica and Panama benefiting the most.

A complementary analysis of welfare impacts using panel household data from Guatemala and Nicaragua found real household income gains of 1.4 percent in Guatemala and 3.7 percent in Nicaragua from 2006 to 2025. Income gains were distributed favorably within these two countries and contributed to poverty reduction. Overall, CAFTA-DR led to worthwhile benefits, but these could have been greater if member countries had fulfilled more of the infrastructure and policy recommendations made at the time of signing.

6.1.2 Cross-Country Assessments

In a global assessment of the effectiveness of IFPRI's capacity-strengthening activities, Kuyvenhoven (2014) examined IFPRI's experiences in several countries, including some designated by IFPRI as country programs. Regarding the country programs, Kuyvenhoven found that "comparison of the effectiveness of capacity strengthening activities over time in the selected countries suggests that the local presence of IFPRI staff in a country has an important and positive bearing on the effectiveness of capacity strengthening activities" (xvi). Collaborative research was the main mechanism for capacity strengthening. However, Kuyvenhoven noted that subsequent policy influence and impact from the strengthened capacity were difficult to demonstrate.

As part of a general evaluation of IFPRI's country programs conducted by Hazell, Place, and Tollens (2018), the authors closely examined the Country Strategy Support Programs (CSSPs) in Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, and Uganda. Based on progress reports, prior external evaluations, field visits, and stakeholder interviews, they concluded that "the CSSPs have made valuable contributions to their host countries, with many instances of contributions to national policy and strategy development and to national capacity for undertaking and using evidence-based policy analysis. These contributions are widely recognized by national stakeholders and the donors who finance the country programs" (57).

Interviews with a wider range of current and former country program leaders also revealed many examples of work that they felt had contributed to successful policy outcomes, often providing supporting documentation: "This is not to say that all country programs have been equally or consistently successful, or that problems and failures have not arisen. Indeed, some CSSPs have experienced failures as well as successes in influencing policies, and some were more influential in their early phases than in later phases. Likewise, some have done better at influencing policy than building capacity" (57). Tollens concluded that there was no uniform structure or approach that would lead country programs to succeed, writing:

> *They need the flexibility to adapt to local contexts. However, this study confirms the crucial importance of [country program] teams becoming effectively embedded within the local policy ecosystem and building long-term relationships of trust and credibility with key policymakers. Building these relationships takes time (often several years), resources, and appropriately skilled [country program] leaders. It also helps if IFPRI already has an established reputation in a country through prior research. (Hazell et al. 2018, 57)*

6.2 Capacity Strengthening

IFPRI's capacity-strengthening work is a vital complement to its research agenda that helps to build capacity at country and regional levels for undertaking, communicating, and utilizing evidence-based policy research. Stronger national and regional capacities also enhance the types of partnerships available to IFPRI for conducting its research and communicating results to policymakers.

In the Institute's early years, capacity-strengthening activities mostly took the form of training individuals through collaborative research on specific projects. Early evaluations of IFPRI's country-specific work found that this "learning-by-doing" approach was appreciated and effective (Ryan 1999a in Malawi and Babu 2000 in Bangladesh), and it was also endorsed by CGIAR's External Program and Management Review of IFPRI in 2006 (Gardner et al. 2006). As IFPRI evolved and became more involved in country and regional policy issues, its capacity-strengthening activities expanded to include formal training courses, the establishment and support of regional policy networks to reach more countries facing common policy issues, support for university students at postgraduate levels, and training of postdoctoral fellows at IFPRI. After 2003, when IFPRI began to scale up its country programs and many of its staff were outposted, capacity-strengthening work in those countries became more strategic. This work was based on a needs-assessed approach to strengthen key national research and data collecting institutions and government ministries.

Examples of the breadth of IFPRI's capacity-strengthening activities are provided in Box 6 and other sections of this report (such as IFPRI's support to ReSAKSS in Africa, ASTI, and CSSPs).

Kuyvenhoven (2014) undertook an independent assessment of IFPRI's capacity-strengthening activities from 1985 to 2010 to ascertain which were most effective. In addition to a desk review of available documents, he visited several countries with IFPRI country programs and organized an e-tracer survey of IFPRI's former trainees in several African and Asian countries. His findings confirmed that effective ways to train individual researchers included engaging in collaborative research, assigning visiting fellows and postdoctoral fellows to IFPRI headquarters, and providing support to master's and doctoral students. Investments in building and supporting national capacities for organizing data systems, survey work, and related data processing and analysis activities were also successful forms of capacity strengthening, particularly when undertaken in a systematic way within the context of country programs. As a cross-cutting finding, he found that the local presence of IFPRI staff in a country had an important and positive effect on the effectiveness of capacity strengthening activities. Kuyvenhoven also highlighted the success of capacity strengthening carried out within the context of research and training networks, CAPRi (see Section 5.1.2), and a regional degree program in Africa (the Collaborative Masters of Agricultural and Applied Economics) that IFPRI helped to develop (see Box 6).

In their 2019 review of GRP24 and A4NH, Behrman and Ghosh also highlighted the important role that capacity strengthening can play within a research network:

> *Although the primary goal of the PHND and A4NH programs was policy-relevant research, they also contributed to researchers' and stakeholders' capacities through "learning by doing" and more general support for research and evidence-based policies. Explicit efforts were made to build capacity for evaluations, including for example, short courses for district officials on nutrition and data in India and work with local universities, local investigators, and research assistants in IFPRI projects in Ethiopia. Work with Ethiopia's Central Statistical Agency (CSA) on evaluation of the PSNP generated capacity for panel data collection, electronic data collection, and ensuring data quality. A key impact of IFPRI's capacity building and training has been to change the language of*

evaluation—moving governments away from a focus on monitoring to evaluation, including systemic comparisons to generate counterfactuals. Despite these strengths in building partners' capacities, some interviewees suggested that it would have been better to have devoted more resources to direct capacity building, particularly of younger researchers. (xii)

Evaluations of capacity strengthening undertaken within the context of other regional policy networks led to similar findings. Frankenberger and Nelson (2011) reviewed capacity strengthening within the IFPRI-led (African) Regional Network on AIDS, Livelihoods and Food Security (RENEWAL) and concluded that, "Although the stakeholders interviewed clearly appreciated capacity development initiatives supported by RENEWAL, and a number of graduate students received training as part of the program, there was a general feeling that capacity strengthening under RENEWAL was not enough" (37). In his review of IFPRI's policy networks, Paarlberg (2005) found that while IFPRI's Policy Analysis and Advisory Network for South Asia (PAANSA) and the 2020 Vision network in East Africa both contributed to strengthening national capacities within member countries, PAANSA was more successful, partly because the initial research capacity of its member countries was stronger and hence better able to take advantage of new opportunities. The PAANSA network eventually helped to create demand for establishing IFPRI's South Asia Office. Members of the network (notably former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Isher Judge Ahluwalia) were instrumental in requesting IFPRI's permanent presence in South Asia.

Given the lack of studies quantifying the welfare impacts of IFPRI's capacity-strengthening activities, there is no way to know whether IFPRI's investments in capacity strengthening offer similar or higher returns than its research investments. However, as Gardner (2003) concluded after a systemwide review of capacity strengthening by CGIAR, research and capacity strengthening are joint products that enhance returns on each other, an assessment which would seem particularly true for research aimed at influencing government policies.

Box 6: Examples of IFPRI's Country and Regional Capacity-Strengthening Work

China

IFPRI's policy research collaboration with Chinese institutions began in the early 1990s, when key members of the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS) visited the Institute. As one outcome of this visit, the Chinese Center for Agricultural Policy was established and modeled after IFPRI to focus on policy research related to reforms in Chinese agriculture. Beginning in the mid-1990s, IFPRI researchers visiting China provided students with methodological training, and CAAS researchers visited IFPRI for six months to one year. Researchers from Chinese agricultural universities also engaged in collaborative research at IFPRI.

Increased demand for capacity development led to the establishment of the IFPRI country office on CAAS premises, a collaboration which continues today, albeit with limited IFPRI staff presence. Collectively, IFPRI's capacity development efforts provided training in food and agricultural policy analysis to a large group of young doctoral students, who continued to engage in national policy debates and design policy and program interventions for Chinese agriculture.

Eastern, Central, and Southern Africa

The Collaborative Master's in Agricultural and Applied Economics (CMAAE) is a postgraduate program established in 2005 by the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) and the African Agricultural Economics Education Network (AAEEN). It aims to build capacity for agricultural policy research and analysis in eastern, central, and southern Africa. The AERC oversees the program's strategic direction, funding, and quality assurance, while the AAEEN facilitates the network of participating universities and ensures the delivery of the program's core and elective courses. The program currently involves 17 universities across 13 African countries, with eight accredited institutions offering core courses and supervising thesis research. In 2024, the program included 123 students, 53 of whom were women, from 17 African countries.

IFPRI played an important role in establishing CMAAE. Beginning in 2001, preparation for the program involved analyzing the demand for postgraduate programs in agricultural economics. The planning process was guided by a steering committee, which developed a proposal and course curriculum in collaboration with IFPRI. The Rockefeller Foundation provided the initial funding, which enabled the establishment of a planning secretariat and a network of collaborating institutions. Between 2002 and 2004, consultative meetings were held to develop strategic plans, client consultations, governance structures, and operating procedures. The CMAAE was subsequently funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and its administration was transferred to the AERC.

IFPRI’s subsequent involvement with CMAAE included having a staff member serve as an external mentor to guide thesis projects. A faculty member from the Department of Agricultural Economics at the University of Pretoria (UP) also spent a year at IFPRI’s headquarters, during which time IFPRI materials were used to revise the curriculum for selected courses. IFPRI continues to collaborate with UP but became less involved with the master’s program after 2020.

Ethiopia

Building on its past activities in Ethiopia, IFPRI established the Ethiopia Strategy Support Program (ESSP) in 2004 to provide demand-driven research and capacity-strengthening support for the country. In a recent evaluation report, Ahmed (2023) identified several areas in which IFPRI’s capacity-strengthening activities led to favorable outcomes. The first involved the capacity strengthening of individuals in partner institutions, primarily focusing on offering scholarship for master’s and doctoral students, supervising thesis projects, and holding seminars, among other activities. IFPRI also provided training in specialized skills development, particularly in the construction of a social accounting matrix and the use of models such as multimarket and computable general equilibrium models that were successfully and collaboratively used to analyze ex-ante “what if” policy scenarios. IFPRI also provided impactful training on geographic information systems, spatial analysis, and database management. IFPRI prepared training manuals on these topics and facilitated a collaborative arrangement with six regional universities to host the trainings. IFPRI also trained experts from local Bureaus of

Finance and Economic Development (BoFEDs) across all regions of the country, branch offices of the Central Statistical Agency (CSA), and students and faculty from host universities.

Working with the CSA, IFPRI helped create spatial databases and published the Population and Housing Census Atlas and Atlas of Agricultural Statistics. CSA subsequently created databases and independently published The Rural Facilities and Services Atlas, thereby demonstrating the institutionalization of skills learned from IFPRI. Experts from local BoFEDs now use IFPRI's trainings to update databases and use information in budget allocations. There were also positive spillover benefits to other partner institutions, such as improvements in the quality of the Ethiopian Rural Household Survey and other major surveys carried out by the CSA, such as the Household Income, Consumption, and Expenditure survey.

7. IMPACT EVIDENCE FOR INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC GOODS

This section focuses on international public goods that address global issues not generated from multicountry case studies (see Section 3.1). The public goods discussed here include a wide array of conference and advocacy activities; the development of innovative tools, indexes, and datasets that are freely accessible to users around the world; and research on some types of global issues. Assessing the impact of these international public goods is particularly fraught given their long and widely diffused impact pathways. The section focuses on examples that can be supported by credible bibliometric or evaluation evidence.

7.1 Conferences and Advocacy

7.1.1 2020 Vision Initiative

Conferences and advocacy activities represent IFPRI's most visible efforts to achieve global impact on critical food policy issues. IFPRI's 2020 Vision Initiative, the Institute's response to a sharp decline in donor funding for agriculture beginning in the late 1980s, was one of the most longstanding and effective examples of these efforts. The Initiative aimed to refocus the world's attention on current and future challenges in food security and nutrition, agricultural development, rural poverty, and environmental protection; catalyze a new consensus on these issues within the international policy community; and encourage policy leaders—both in the donor community and in LMICs—to commit more energy and resources to resolving food security concerns. A portfolio of research activities over nearly 20 years was complemented by an advocacy campaign involving a series of high-level international conferences, publications, and media events.

At least four independent assessments examined aspects of the Initiative. An early evaluation by Paarlberg (1999) concluded:

> *…the impacts of the 2020 Vision initiative already emerge as substantial. At times these impacts have been significant or even highly significant, and in most other instances they have been at least noticeable. These significant impacts have also been highly cost effective, as indicated by the tiny share of IFPRI's budget outlays (just 5 percent annually) devoted to its 2020 Vision initiative. Within the international donor community, the 2020 Vision initiative has in several instances had a noticeable positive effect on actual resource decision. Governments in the developing world were a secondary focus during much of the first phase of 2020, yet even here significant impacts were felt on the policy debate. The goal of the second phase of the initiative will be to produce significant impacts on policy action inside developing-country governments as well. (v)*

In recognition of IFPRI's achievement of many of its 2020 Initiative goals, the 2001 World Food Prize was awarded to Dr. Pinstrup-Andersen, IFPRI's Director General, who conceived of the project and guided its implementation over the first 10 years.

Paarlberg later undertook impact assessments of two of the Initiative's six international conferences (Paarlberg 2012; 2014). He also evaluated the regional network in East Africa, as summarized in Section 6 (Paarlberg 2005). Paarlberg found that the 2020 Conference titled "Leveraging Agriculture for Improving Nutrition and Health," which was held in 2011 in New Delhi, provided an example of the 2020 Initiative's global impact, although direct impact on national governments was modest.

The sixth and final conference under the 2020 Vision Initiative, titled “Building Resilience on Food and Nutrition Security,” was held in Addis Ababa in May 2014. In assessing the impact of this conference, Paarlberg (2014) noted that the topic was more complex and abstract than the one presented in New Delhi. Impacts were varied and immediate, mostly affecting individuals, but he noted that the true long-term impacts would not be known for at least two or three more years: these “…will depend in part on the strength of IFPRI’s own efforts, currently underway, to leverage its short-term 2020 Conference success in Addis into successful collaboration in the design of a distinct and fundable research agenda around the topic of resilience-building for food and nutrition security” (Paarlberg 2014, 42).

7.1.2 Response to World Food Crisis of 2008

IFPRI also organized an influential response to the world food crisis of 2008, which threatened the food security of many LMICs, especially their poor. An impact study by Hovland (2009) documented IFPRI’s communications activities during the crisis and noted that these efforts were unusual for the Institute. The communications campaign included IFPRI’s usual avenues and built on its place in the global food policy system but was unusual for its coordination across all divisions of the Institute, the relatively low number of publications, and the unusually high level of engagement with the media, as well as the large number of in-person presentations and meetings. Hovland shows that IFPRI drew on past work to rapidly develop its policy response to the crisis. This response involved advocating policy actions to eliminate trade barriers, increase investment in rural infrastructure and market institutions in LMICs, increase investment in agricultural science and technology, expand social protection, and include agriculture in the climate change agenda. Two of the resulting policy briefs were particularly influential, *Investing in Agriculture to Overcome the World Food Crisis and Reduce Poverty and Hunger* (Fan and Rosegrant 2008) and *Physical and Virtual Global Food Reserves to Protect the Poor and Prevent Market Failure* (von Braun and Torero 2008).

Using these and other publications, IFPRI drew on its reputation as an international thought leader to engage the World Bank, IMF, WFP, UN, US government, UK Department for International Development, and many others. Hovland explains that IFPRI played a highly significant role in influencing the World Bank during the 2008 food crisis and earlier through the Bank’s 2008 *World Development Report*. Hovland notes that IFPRI was not an isolated actor during the food crisis and cannot claim sole credit for any outcomes. However, IFPRI staff understood their position within the food policy system well enough to position their communications efforts appropriately and to inform and influence other actors, who in turn informed and influenced others. IFPRI contributed to ripple effects, through which its research results and recommendations spread through policy circles. Hovland argues that it is impossible to separate or measure this type of impact but ultimately concludes that IFPRI helped to increase international attention to agriculture, with potential benefit to billions of people.

IFPRI also responded to two later world crises that severely impacted global food security and the welfare of the poor: the COVID-19 pandemic, beginning in 2021, and the Russia-Ukraine war that began in 2022 (see references to impactful publications on both themes in the bibliometric review). However, there are no independent assessments of the influence of these two campaigns.

7.1.3 Global Food Policy Reports

Beginning in 2011, IFPRI launched its annual Global Food Policy Report (GFPR) with the aim of focusing international attention on high-priority food systems issues. The early reports were quite comprehensive in their coverage and reviewed the major food policy issues, developments, and decisions of the year and highlighted challenges and opportunities for the coming year at the global and regional levels but, beginning in 2020, the reports focused more on specific issues, such as transforming food systems after COVID (2021), climate change and food security (2022), and food systems for healthy diets and nutrition (2024). Each report was released at IFPRI headquarters in Washington, DC, and several regional symposiums held around the world.

The GFPRs have not been externally evaluated, but bibliometric data suggests they are influential. On average, they have received about 200 citations on Google Scholar, with a high of 437 for the 2017 report (Table 11). Downloads within the calendar year following the report's release are also reasonably high, ranging from 3,642 to 14,380. The Altmetric scores are low for the early reports, but all the reports published after 2018 received scores greater than 100, indicating that a time lag existed before the reports received significant attention, and attention has increased over time. For example, the 2024 report received as much attention in one year, as measured by its Altmetric score, as the 2019 report received in six years.

Table 11: Bibliometric Data for IFPRI's Global Food Policy Reports

Year	Title	Google Scholar citations	Downloads	Altmetric score
2012	2011 Global Food Policy Report	176	N/A	3
2013	2012 Global Food Policy Report	299	N/A	9
2014	2013 Global Food Policy Report	223	N/A	3
2015	2014–2015 Global Food Policy Report	204	24,061	20
2016	2016 Global Food Policy Report	280	8,700	73
2017	2017 Global Food Policy Report	437	13,190	88
2018	2018 Global Food Policy Report	178	10,389	69
2019	2019 Global Food Policy Report	180	14,380	106
2020	2020 Global Food Policy Report	200	11,970	162
2021	2021 Global Food Policy Report	130	11,250	220
2022	2022 Global Food Policy Report	157	3,642	198
2023	2023 Global Food Policy Report	69	3,700	105
2024	2024 Global Food Policy Report	33	13,585	123

Note: Google Scholar citations and Altmetric scores represent cumulative data to the end of 2024; download data represent the number of downloads from the report's launch to the end of the respective calendar year.

7.2 Statistical Indexes and Datasets

Establishment and support of international networks for sharing databases, modeling techniques, and indicators for tracking and comparing key outcome variables across countries are another type of international public good generated by IFPRI. Achievements noted here include Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators (ASTI), Statistics on Public Expenditures for Economic Development (SPEED), Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI), and development of global models and research methods.

7.2.1 The Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators

IFPRI's Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators (ASTI) program aimed to improve and standardize data on investment in agricultural R&D across countries. IFPRI launched ASTI in 2001 on the basis of early work by ISNAR and the belief in the importance of well-funded and -staffed agricultural research systems, with efficient allocation of research resources, for improving agricultural productivity and meeting other agricultural development goals. With a network of national and regional collaborators, ASTI is now the most comprehensive source of agricultural research statistics for LMICs. ASTI collects, compiles, processes, and publicizes these data. ASTI's outputs, datasets, and information are intended to inform and influence policy decisions about NARS, especially resource levels. The main outputs are country-specific briefs and fact sheets, now covering about 90 LMICs, as well as regional briefs. ASTI researchers themselves conduct few in-depth analyses using the data, but other researchers and organizations such as the World Bank make substantial use of ASTI materials.

Norton (2011) undertook an independent assessment of the influence and impact of ASTI from 2001 to 2009. Using conventional website analysis, publication counts, citation analysis, and stakeholder surveys to gauge ASTI's impact, he drew the following conclusions: ASTI data and publications have helped to raise awareness of declining funding for NARS and helped these systems to identify new sources of funding. The data have been used in publications to make cross-country comparisons, and NARS have used the data to help prepare internal and external funding proposals and projects and to lobby governments and donors. In one country, ASTI data were used to develop an improved NARS policy including R&D priorities. At the regional level, ASTI data have been used in reports on agricultural research for development and to formulate development proposals. Norton argues that ASTI has been a productive program that has created a unique international public good.

Norton gathered sufficient data for a simple cost-benefit analysis of part of ASTI's contribution in Kenya and Tanzania. Officials from Kenyan and Tanzanian NARS, as well as World Bank representatives, claimed that ASTI data influenced their agricultural R&D funding decisions. Norton's analysis showed that if the World Bank's June 2009 decision to fund the East Africa Agricultural Productivity Program in Kenya and Tanzania was only 1 percent influenced by ASTI data, under plausible assumptions, the predicted benefits would more than pay for the entire ASTI program from 2001 to June 2009. Noting that this kind of influence is common, Norton assessed that the ASTI program had a high impact.

An independent assessment by Lowder (Lowder 2018a) provides an update on ASTI's impact. Based on surveys of ASTI's country focal points (national collaborators) and other uses of ASTI outputs (including citations of ASTI outputs in research publications or subscribers to *ASTI News*), Lowder found convincing evidence of ASTI's impact:

Considering the results of the national focal point interviews together with examples provided by survey respondents, we can say that 36 countries have had some type of outcome(s) that resulted from the use of ASTI products. In addition to national-level outcomes associated with the use of ASTI, the ASTI program has impacted the decision-making of international organizations, including the World Bank and the IDB. Its data have also been used by other organizations including the [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development] and RUFORUM. (13)

Moreover, within the 36 countries that reported outcomes, the outcomes in 11 involved one or more of the following: a government establishing a new institute or project related to agricultural research; the strengthening of an existing agricultural research entity through increased funding; or an increase in the number of PhDs working in an agricultural research institute.

7.2.2 Statistics on Public Expenditures for Economic Development

Statistics on Public Expenditures for Economic Development (SPEED) was developed from IFPRI's GRP3 on public expenditure. As reviewed in Section 5.4.1, this program began in 1998 with research in India and China to quantify the marginal returns to different types of public investment in rural areas. It demonstrated relatively high returns from investments in agricultural research and rural roads on increasing agricultural growth and reducing rural poverty. Research efforts were expanded to include select African countries and adopted as part of the country analyses undertaken by some countries as part of their CAADP process.

An independent assessment of GRP3 by Renkow (2010) found plausible evidence of policy influence in the countries where GRP3 had worked: "Research has generated substantial global public goods. These take many forms, including an impressive array of scholarly publications, policy briefs geared more toward informed lay audiences, and multicountry data bases used by a variety of individuals from within the research and practitioner communities. The substantial recognition—and use—of these public goods represent a significant accomplishment of the GRP3 program to date and into the future" (26).

The multicountry database on patterns of public spending was further developed into SPEED: it initially included time series data from 1980 to 2012 for 147 countries, but it was updated in 2019 to include data from 1980 to 2017 for 166 countries. The series cover 10 sectors: agriculture, communication, education, defense, health, mining, social protection, fuel and energy, transport, and transport and communication (with the latter considered as a combined sector, in addition to the individual sectors). Indicators reported include percentage of sector expenditure in total expenditure, percentage of total expenditure to total gross domestic product, and per capita sector and total expenditure in constant prices.

Based on surveys of users who downloaded the data and phone interviews with development practitioners, Lowder (2018b) found numerous examples of SPEED data being used to inform investment decisions by governments and donor and international aid agencies. For example, the World Bank data informed development policy operations in many African countries, including Mali, Malawi, and Zambia, and several Systematic Country Diagnostics. SPEED's impact has not been assessed since the data series was updated in 2019 and additional countries were added.

7.2.3 Gender Research and the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index

Although women constitute about 40 percent of the agricultural workforce in LMICs, their contribution to agricultural development is limited by a gender gap that affects their access to asset ownership, credit, technology, education, and services such as agricultural extension. IFPRI's early work in the 1980s showed that farm commercialization had, at best, a limited impact on the nutrition and health of farm households. This finding highlighted the need to better understand intrahousehold decision-making, leading the Institute to launch a research program on intrahousehold decision-making and gender analysis.

A landmark conference in 1991 and *Intrahousehold Allocation in Developing Countries: Models, Methods, and Policies* (Haddad et al. 1997) helped disprove the unitary model of household decision-making that predominated at the time (Alderman et al. 1995). These efforts prompted a new research program to collect primary data in four high-concentration countries (Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Guatemala, and South Africa), following the multicountry program model of generating global public goods. The book *Household Decisions, Gender, and Development* (Quisumbing 2003), which drew on that research, and the practitioners' guide *Using Gender Research in Development: Food Security in Practice* (Quisumbing and McClafferty 2006) helped establish IFPRI's reputation for gender research in agricultural development.

An independent assessment by Jackson (2005) concluded, "While the program had considerable country-level impact in Bangladesh and particularly Guatemala, overall, the main impact was not at the project or country level but as a body of work that has changed minds and contributed to research as an international public good" (xii).

Building on these achievements, research began to focus on the gap between men's and women's ownership and control of assets, including tangible assets such as land and water, as well as the less tangible human, social, and political capital, and ways to close that gap. Evidence on the importance of assets for women laid the groundwork for the BMGF-funded Gender, Agriculture, and Assets Project, led by IFPRI and ILRI, which not only looked at how differences in men's and women's use, control, and ownership of assets affected their adoption of new agricultural technologies, but also at the impact of agricultural development projects on the gender gap in asset accumulation. Land tenure and property rights were also considered important in the context of gender equality: IFPRI led the formation of CAPRi which, among other activities, promoted research on the role of gender in shaping access to water, forests, and other natural resources.

As a result of mounting evidence on the importance of women's empowerment as a determinant of development success, USAID approached IFPRI and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative in 2011 to develop the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI). WEAI serves to measure the inclusion of women in agriculture as part of the US government's Feed the Future Initiative. An evaluation by Moore and colleagues (2023) for USAID found:

> *Since its launch in 2012, the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) has been widely used in USAID projects to prioritize and target activities that aim to promote women's empowerment. It has been implemented by about 60 different USAID operating units, offering valuable insights into the gender dynamics of agricultural production and identifying opportunities to enhance gender equality and women's empowerment. By providing a more nuanced understanding of the challenges that women encounter in the agricultural sector, WEAI has played a crucial role in enhancing the ability of USAID programming to improve the lives of women and their families. The*

research findings reveal that WEAI has not only been widely utilized but has also played a crucial role in enhancing the ability of USAID programming to improve the lives of women and their families by providing a more nuanced understanding of the challenges encountered by women in the agricultural sector. (1)

Although developed initially for USAID, WEAI has also been adopted by researchers and development practitioners more widely to design surveys and/or to monitor and evaluate their programs. Gender, Agriculture, and Assets Project, Phase 2, a subsequent project funded by BMGF and USAID and co-funded by A4NH and PIM, led to the development of the project-level WEAI (pro-WEAI). Pro-WEAI was co-developed by agricultural development projects to assess the impact of their projects on women's empowerment and gender equality. As of May 2025, WEAI tools have been used in at least 69 countries by more than 280 partners.

7.3 Modeling Tools for Policy Analysis

7.3.1 Social Accounting Matrixes and Computable General Equilibrium Models for Policy Analysis

IFPRI has been building country-level social accounting matrixes (SAMs) and economywide computable general equilibrium (CGE) models for analyzing policy decisions at country levels since the early 1990s. By working collaboratively with national counterparts, IFPRI has also helped strengthen local capacity for modeling analyses. This work expanded considerably with rapid advances in computing power, software, and access to digitized databases, leading to a significant international public good in the form of a downloadable online library of country SAMs and models.

An independent assessment of the research program undertaken by Anderson (2003) concluded that IFPRI generated an unusually large number of economywide modeling outputs, given the size of the research team, and many of them were widely cited and downloaded. A survey of diverse model users and stakeholders found that most respondents felt that economywide modeling made an extremely valuable contribution to food policy analysis despite its complexity and difficulties in communicating results. IFPRI and non-IFPRI economywide model publications were seen as equally valuable. Respondents also thought economywide modeling applications had been either very or somewhat influential in influencing policy reforms for some countries, giving detailed examples of policy influence in several African countries.

A subsequent assessment of IFPRI's economywide modeling work over the 2011–2014 period in Africa and the MENA region (CGIAR-IEA 2015) confirmed the high quality of IFPRI's economywide modeling work. It found that IFPRI successfully responded to numerous requests from governments and international organizations to undertake country-level policy applications. The report also highlighted IFPRI's contributions to strengthening national capacities for economywide modeling as part of its analytical support to the CAADP process.

More recently, Somwaru (2021) assessed IFPRI's SAM and CGE modeling work from 2012 to 2019. Through analysis of publication citations and use, downloads of publications and SAMs, and online surveys of modeling experts and users, Somwaru provides further evidence of the worldwide usage of IFPRI's SAM databases and CGE models. Not only have IFPRI's own researchers responded to many requests from governments and international organizations for CGE analyses, but other expert users have also been meeting similar needs using IFPRI-generated SAMs and models. Somwaru provides

several country examples, including China, Ghana, Rwanda, and Egypt and other MENA countries, where the outputs of IFPRI's CGE models were used to underpin government policy decisions and IFPRI's team helped build national capacity to use such models. IFPRI also continues to provide support to the country analyses for CAADP.

7.3.2 Foresight Modeling

Since its inception in 1975, IFPRI has been engaged in food demand-and-supply projections and has gradually developed global modeling tools for this purpose. One of the Institute's most established outputs is the International Model for Policy Analysis of Agricultural Commodities and Trade (IMPACT), a global partial equilibrium model developed in the early 1990s by IFPRI researchers and colleagues from Japan. The model examines alternative future scenarios for global food supply, demand, trade, prices, and food security, and it now covers 159 countries, 320 food production units, and 44 agricultural commodities. The model has been widely used by IFPRI to create forward-looking scenarios of the world food situation under different policy scenarios, and it played a particularly important role in the policy analyses underpinning IFPRI's 2020 Vision Initiative.

The model and its uses were assessed by Ryan (2003) after a decade of development. Drawing on a literature review and a survey of users of IMPACT-generated outputs, Ryan concluded:

> *…the IMPACT framework represents a valuable international public good, which has been and continues to be refined and expanded to address emergent food policy issues. The number of alternative frameworks to IMPACT has declined in recent years and now numbers only three. IMPACT has unique features that are acknowledged by peers. If it is made more accessible and continues to be refined and relevant, it should remain a wise investment for IFPRI and the international community. (37)*

After this assessment, the IMPACT model was further refined to enable projections to be made for different scenarios about climate change, water scarcities, land degradation, and other topics by linking economic, water, and crop models, among other important refinements. This approach now provides most of the foresight analysis for all of CGIAR.

A more recent assessment by Lowder and Regmi (2019) found many users of foresight modeling products, with the vast majority engaged in research in academic institutions (37 percent), other CGIAR Centers (30 percent), or research institutions and think tanks (16 percent). Only 10 percent were associated with international organizations or governments. The most frequent use of foresight products was for own research, but 33 percent of respondents reported they had used products to inform decision-making. Interviews with key stakeholders revealed many examples of the model being used to inform decisions by multilateral and donor agencies (including ADB, BMGF, FAO, IFAD, IDB, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], the United Nations Development Programme, and World Bank), several LMICs, and many CGIAR Centers.

7.3.3 Causal Impact Evaluations

Since the late 1990s, IFPRI has been an active user of causal impact evaluation (CIE) methods involving rigorous counterfactuals, especially randomized controlled trials. These were initially used to evaluate social protection and nutrition projects, such as the PROGRESA conditional cash transfer program in Mexico, but they quickly expanded to include many other types of research for which IFPRI aimed to evaluate innovative technological, institutional, or policy interventions. Many of these impact

evaluations are conducted in partnership with donors and implementing organizations interested in the effectiveness of their programs and interventions and who may, if the trial is successful, scale up the intervention.

Lowder (2025) recently evaluated IFPRI's research involving CIEs and, after assessing the results of 27 cases, concluded, "Although this study was unable to identify or validate outcomes of all CIEs undertaken between 2012 and 2022, it found that the majority of those evaluations have informed important decisions and other outcomes." Moreover, typical "mature" outcomes that could be traced included "national governments or donors scaling up programs, funding a next phase of a program, or redesigning an intervention or program" (30).

These cases were funded by a variety of international development agencies, governments, NGOs, and research organizations, but regardless of their origin, "factors that help ensure that the outcome results from CIE include: its rigor and timing; how convincing the results are; its publication in a high-profile journal and the timing of that publication; and purposeful dissemination of results at the right venue." Lowder concludes, "IFPRI's body of CIE work has been highly influential. As such, strong support exists for maintaining the importance IFPRI places on CIEs as one of its four core impact pathways" (30).

7.4 Research on Global Issues

In its early years, IFPRI's main outputs were international public goods derived from research that did not involve sets of country case studies, such as its work on forward-looking projections about the world food situation and the role of world food stocks and international price stabilization schemes (for example, see Pinstrup-Andersen 2000 and Valdés 1981). Select research undertaken within the framework of the 2020 Vision Initiative also falls into this category, such as well-cited work on livestock projections (*Livestock to 2020: The Next Food Revolution* [Delgado et al. 1999] and *Fish to 2020: Supply and Demand in Changing Global Markets* [Delgado et al. 2003]). These international public goods remain important to IFPRI's research and outreach agenda.

One of IFPRI's most influential lines of global research focuses on international trade policy. Early work focused on assessing levels of agricultural protection in OECD countries and its costs to less-developed countries, leading to the well-cited publication *Agricultural Protection in OECD Countries: Its Costs to Less-Developed Countries* (Valdés and Zietz 1980). IFPRI later collaborated with the World Bank on a major study of LMIC trade policies and their extreme bias against farmers. This research led to several highly influential publications, including *Agricultural Incentives in Developing Countries: Measuring the Effect of Sectoral and Economy-wide Policies* (Krueger et al. 1988); *The Political Economy of Agricultural Pricing Policy, Volume 1: Latin America, Volume 2: Asia,* and *Volume 3: Africa and the Mediterranean* (Krueger et al. 1991c; 1991b; 1991a); and *The Bias Against Agriculture: Trade and Macroeconomic Policies in Developing Countries* (Bautista and Valdés 1993). Although IFPRI's early trade work was not externally evaluated, both Farrar (2000, 24–27) and Pinstrup-Andersen (2000, 41–43) stress its importance and influence in their reviews of the first 10 and 25 years of IFPRI's existence, respectively. IFPRI's trade research activity also received high praise in the first external CGIAR review of the Institute in 1985 (Pinstrup-Andersen 2000, 41).

More recently, IFPRI used its economywide modeling expertise to undertake influential analyses to support the WTO Doha trade negotiations from 1999 to 2008. In addition to using its own country and regional CGE models, IFPRI collaborated with French researchers to use their Mirage model (a more

refined international trade model) and adopted the MAcMaps database (an international database on country tariffs) in its analyses.

In an independent assessment of this work, Hewitt (2008) used stakeholder interviews to find that IFPRI's work was "positively regarded across most groups with particularly high rankings on criteria of usefulness and quality from respondents in think tanks, advocacy groups and academic researchers" (x). However, the work was less well regarded by government officials and those from international organizations who were more familiar with related analyses from the World Bank. Hewitt also found "attributes appreciated by those who knew IFPRI's work included its objectivity and clear focus on development impacts" (x). The assessment concludes that despite a decline in IFPRI's trade work since 2005, it has "done much to recover and build on its earlier standing as a credible and influential research provider in the field of international agricultural trade reform. It is now well focused on its core mandate through its attention to the impacts of liberalization on developing countries, especially the poorest, and its work has been increasingly targeted to relevant issues in the negotiations" (xi).

8. CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Convincing evidence demonstrates that IFPRI has been successful as a research institution through its publications and international recognition. Over the past 50 years, the Institute published a total of 4,088 articles in ISI-tracked journals; of these, about two-thirds were produced in the last decade. In the past decade, IFPRI also produced about 1,000 publications of various other types each year. IFPRI's publications are generally well cited and/or downloaded, and the 10 most cited ISI-tracked journal articles each year attract significant international attention, as measured by their citation and Altmetric scores.

IFPRI is committed to open access and makes most of its publications freely available online, along with many of the datasets acquired through its research. These datasets, which include many household surveys, have been downloaded more than 2.2 million times in the past decade. In addition to making all these resources freely and widely available, IFPRI actively disseminates them through newsletters, briefs, blogs, seminars, and conferences, among other platforms, to a broad audience that includes academics, policymakers, influencers, and the media. Since 2002, three IFPRI staff members have been recognized by the World Food Prize for their work on the 2020 Vision Initiative, biofortification, and maternal and child undernutrition. In 2020, the Global Go To Think Tank Index ranked IFPRI 19th among the world's international development think tanks; RePEc rated IFPRI number one among all agricultural economics departments and in the field of agricultural economics, and fifth in the field of development. IFPRI has also been successful in attracting and collaborating with a large array of partners at all stages of its impact pathways, including research collaborators from top universities and research centers around the world.

The main objective of this report is to assess whether IFPRI's impressive record as an international research institution has facilitated contributions to better policy and investment decisions by governments, development agencies, NGOs, the private sector, and others involved in the economic and social development of LMICs. For this purpose, the report relies on available ex post impact evaluations of IFPRI's work, a task that has been helped by the impressive number of available evaluations. As detailed in the annex, about 40 evaluations are available, commissioned either by IFPRI, PIM, A4NH, or project donors. Additionally, several evaluations were commissioned by agencies responsible for specific country and regional policies that IFPRI helped to influence. This wealth of independent assessments is rare for a policy research institution. Moreover, by commissioning or co-commissioning 36 of these impact assessments over 25 years, IFPRI demonstrates a serious commitment to an impact assessment culture and a willingness to learn from its experiences.

Although the available evaluations cover much of IFPRI's past work, there are important gaps that prevent this report from providing full coverage of IFPRI's influence and impact over 50 years. Nevertheless, the available evaluations provide ample evidence that IFPRI has influenced and contributed to policy choices by many governments, donors, and implementing partners. There are also enough estimates of quantitative evidence to show that substantial economic and welfare gains can result from IFPRI's contributions to improved policies. Impact assessments of IFPRI's work on rice market reforms in Viet Nam, PROGRESA in Mexico, the PSNP in Ethiopia, and ASTI all demonstrated, under plausible assumptions, that IFPRI's own investments generated very favorable cost-benefit ratios. In other assessments, the impacts of policy changes were successfully quantified and found to be substantial, but no attempt was made to attribute those gains to IFPRI (such as its contributions to the ATA, CAFTA-DR, biofortification, and several safety net and nutrition programs). Several evaluations also show that IFPRI has made important contributions to strengthening research capacity

in countries where it has worked, particularly within the context of country and regional programs. While some evaluations show less favorable outcomes on policy influence, these cases are relatively few. Overall, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that IFPRI has been a successful catalyst for change, and the economic returns to its investments are likely large.

8.1 Lessons for Achieving Greater Impact

Several factors have been identified in the evaluation studies as having contributed to IFPRI's success in influencing policies. Foremost among these is the Institute's decentralization. Beginning in 2003, this strategy has involved placing senior researchers in country and regional offices, often in small teams. As of January 2025, about one-third of IFPRI's senior research staff were posted in 14 country and three regional offices. At the same time that it began to decentralize, IFPRI also implemented country programs in select countries. This involved a shift from an older organizational model that often focused in-country work on thematic issues prioritized by the Washington, DC-based research agenda to a newer approach that structures activities in more locally, demand-driven ways to provide broader and more cohesive support to the country's economic development strategy. Many of the evaluations cited in this report note the value of country programs with resident staff, with several emphasizing that IFPRI has more influence on policy outcomes when there are embedded staff and close working relationships with local researchers and government departments and policymakers. Where these are absent or abandoned (such as IFPRI's relations with the governments of Ethiopia and Honduras on its less-favored lands work), the Institute's influence weakens or wanes (English and Renkow 2007). As Kydd (2015) observes, in-country staff also provide a framework for IFPRI to shift policy by maintaining a consistent focus on important topics for long enough to engage policy advisors and policymakers. IFPRI's decentralized approach has been successful in part because country-based teams are supported by researchers based in the Washington, DC, and regional offices, who provide specialized skills as needed.

Another important lesson emerging from the evaluation studies is the need to articulate a deliberate strategy of influence from the beginning of a research project. This can help to ensure demand for the research within the country and a sense of research project "ownership" within the policy circles that the research is designed to influence (Bennet 2013). The clearest way for IFPRI's research to influence decisions is through involvement in an impact pathway or decision-making framework that is externally created, at least in part. The priority-setting process involved within a country program can make this process easier, but the development of in-country research partnerships is also important, including with local researchers who can act as "champions" within local policy circles. Where government agencies have a research function, Bennet (2013) recommends integrating them into the partnerships, and Kydd (2015) recommends seeking as many national and local contributions as possible in the early-stage design of research projects, including in the design of project objectives, methods, and communications. Kydd also recommends that research be given a high profile, from inception to the final publication of findings, to ensure that relevant government departments, NGOs, and international and local researchers remain interested and connected while the work is ongoing. Lynam (2016) argues that advancing from research to actual policy change requires either developing more finely targeted and actionable research along the impact pathway or relying on other applied policy research institutes, often with closer relationships with policymakers, to undertake such research.

Outreach and communication strategies are also seen as critical for success and should be articulated early in a research project. English and Renkow (2007) note that several different audiences exist for

IFPRI's research, including the broader research and donor communities, in-country policy communities, and field practitioners. Information demands differ among these groups, and in some cases, there may be little overlap. Catering to these different needs requires strategies that go beyond publishing research findings or holding workshops. To achieve project impacts beyond a specific case study context, a targeted and coordinated publication strategy should be developed, which, in addition to publishing research outputs, could involve creating project webpages on IFPRI's website with readily downloadable reports during the project's implementation phase.

Hazell, Place, and Tollens (2018) drew similar conclusions from their study of 18 stories of successful policy influence identified by IFPRI's country program leaders. Although variations existed in the types of research, outreach, and capacity strengthening activities, all cases demonstrated the importance of having IFPRI's researchers effectively embedded in the local policy ecosystem, establishing relationships of trust and credibility with key policymakers, having adequate financial resources and flexibility for responding to emerging and longer-term policy issues, and effectively communicating results to decision-makers. A political economy analysis of these success stories highlighted how the existence of a relevant problem, propitious timing, or a focusing event (such as a food crisis) can create an opportunity for policy change. It also demonstrated the importance of credible research (often involving primary data collection) that yields unique quantitative results about the consequences of policy choices (or cost-benefit analysis). However, if a basic country program model is not already in place, then success is less likely, even when these conditions are present.

Decentralization has also facilitated IFPRI's capacity-strengthening work. In his evaluation of this work from 1985 to 2010, Kuyvenhoven (2014) found that collaborative research was very effective for training individual researchers, as were IFPRI's contributions to building and supporting national capacities for organizing data systems, survey work, and related data processing and analysis activities. As a cross-cutting finding, he found that these activities were more effective when undertaken within the context of country programs with resident IFPRI staff.

Given IFPRI's increased emphasis on demand-driven country and regional work, maintaining its ability to produce significant international public goods presents a challenge for current and future efforts, though this issue is not new. As Lynam (2016) observes, all CGIAR Centers struggle to bridge the goal of producing these goods and achieving impact under conditions where adaptation to local context is crucial. IFPRI's earlier strategy of linking country case studies to multicountry research programs was a successful model for generating international public goods, but that focus may have been lost amid the recent shift toward more diverse and less interconnected research areas (see Table 2). The extent to which international public goods are expected to emerge from this arrangement is not entirely clear, though some such goods are successfully emerging from IFPRI's higher-level publications, including the annual Global Food Policy Reports. CGIAR's science leadership can also play an important role in integrating IFPRI's policy work with other Centers' technology work through its own thematic and regional programs.

8.2 Possibilities for Future Impact Assessments

As noted previously, IFPRI has commissioned or co-commissioned 36 impact evaluations to date. Some of these evaluated specific research projects, but many reviewed entire research programs, including most of the multicountry programs listed in Table 1. However, gaps exist on large parts of the early work on food security; input and output market reforms (MPs 1 and 2); tropical forest margins (MP8); and development of the rural nonfarm economy. All of these generated well-cited outputs but

are now too old to be usefully evaluated. More promising targets for future impact evaluations include new research themes started during the past decade, such as building resilience to climate change, the development of sustainable agricultural value chains, and governance and empowerment issues. IFPRI's work on spatial analysis also has yet to be fully evaluated, despite many high-profile outputs.

IFPRI now produces many briefs and blogs about impact stories, which are short narratives describing select outcomes associated with a project, such as a study that contributed to the design or modification of an investment project undertaken by a government or aid agency, or a safety net program. Many such outcomes are drafted for CGIAR reporting purposes if there is evidence that the outcome occurred and IFPRI contributed to it. These short impact stories are a response to the relatively short reporting frameworks (three to five years) now required for most CGIAR and bilateral funding. However, for projects involving new fieldwork, such as household surveys or randomized trials, more time is needed for policy influence to mature into economic and social impacts along the projected impact pathways. Impact stories are valuable to IFPRI's donors, can help researchers focus on policy changes throughout their research, and can provide useful evidence for subsequent impact assessments. However, they are not independently verified, do not assess research impacts beyond possible policy influence, and do not provide much basis for deeper learning about the strengths and weaknesses of a research program.

As another reason to continue with impact assessments, several major donor agencies now place greater emphasis on how their investments in institutions such as IFPRI can benefit their own countries, not just LMICs. One IFPRI study showed that CGIAR research on the development of improved wheat and rice varieties for LMICs generated spillover benefits for the United States through genetic improvements to its own crops, the value of which more than exceeded the country's financial contributions to CGIAR (Pardey et al. 1996), but there have been few such studies of spillover benefits. While the desired metrics for contemporary relevance are still fluid, IFPRI may need to demonstrate that its projects help reduce international migration, grow foreign markets for high-income-country exports, help expand markets for genome-edited crops by strengthening biosafety systems, and contain contagious diseases of plants, animals, and people, among other effects. Assessing such impacts would require more thorough analysis of outcomes and impacts along IFPRI's impact pathways than can be provided by simple narratives of success.

ANNEX

The core evidence used in this report was taken from 34 evaluation reports commissioned by IFPRI and/or PIM or A4NH from 1997 to 2024. Except for three of these evaluations (numbers 4, 9, and 31 in Table A1), all were conducted by external experts, and two (4 and 9) were conducted jointly by external experts and IFPRI-affiliated authors. Beginning in 2007, all the reports were formally peer reviewed with internal and external reviewers through a process managed by a coordinator for impact assessment. Prior to that time, the review process was less formal but only one of the evaluations conducted from 1999 to 2006 involved an IFPRI staff member (31), and that report was scrutinized and included in a review of CGIAR's policy-oriented research by its Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (Renkow and Byerlee 2010). All reports are publicly available, and hyperlinks are provided in Table A1.

Table A1: Evaluation studies commissioned by IFPRI and/or with either PIM or A4NH

	Title of study	Authors	Year	Any estimates of economic impact?	Hyperlink
1	**External Assessment of the Impact of IFPRI's Causal Impact Evaluation Research 2012–2022**	Lowder, S.	2025		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/176067
2	**Assessment of the Use of Outputs from PIM-supported Work on National SAMs and CGE Models[1]**	Somwaru, A.	2021		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/143962
3	**Review of the Contributions of PIM-funded Research on Resource Tenure and Governance to Policy and Program Decision-making[1]**	Anderson, K., and R. Emmelhainz	2021		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/143964
4	**Review and Synthesis of IFPRI's PIM funded Program of Work on Agricultural Insurance, 2012–2020[2]**	Hazell, P., and A.G. Timu	2021		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/143381
5	**Assessment of Outcomes Based on the Use of PIM-supported Foresight Modeling Work; 2012–2018[1]**	Lowder, S., and A. Regmi.	2019		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/146154
6	**Evaluation Study of the IFPRI/A4NH Research Program on Diet Quality and Health of the Poor[3]**	Behrman, J.R., and S. Ghosh	2019		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/140774
7	**Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators (ASTI): Evaluation of Outcomes based on the Use of ASTI, 2008–2018[1]**	Lowder, S.	2018		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/147375
8	**Statistics on Public Expenditure for Economic Development (SPEED): Evaluation of Outcomes Based on the Use of the SPEED data base, 2008–2018[1]**	Lowder, S.	2018		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/145779
9	**Taking Stock of IFPRI's Experience with Country Programs**	Hazell, P.B.R., F.M. Place, and E. Tollens	2018		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/145837
10	**Balancing International Public Goods and Accountability: Exploring the Impact of IFPRI's Policy Research on Science, Technology and Innovation[2]**	Lynam, J.	2016	Case study	https://hdl.handle.net/10568/146379

	Title of study	Authors	Year	Any estimates of economic impact?	Hyperlink
11	**Ex-post Evaluation Study of IFPRI's Research on High-Value Agriculture, 1994–2010.**	Kydd, J.	2015		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/151477
12	**Ex-Post Impact Assessment Review of IFPRI's Research Program on Social Protection, 2000–2012[2]**	Nelson, S., T. Frankenberger, V. Brown, C. Presnall, and J. Downen	2015		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/151479
13	**Impact Assessment: IFPRI 2020 Conference on Building Resilience for Food and Nutrition Security, May 15–17, 2014, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**	Paarlberg, R.	2014		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/149554
14	**Impact Assessment of IFPRI's Capacity-Strengthening Work, 1985–2010**	Kuyvenhoven, A.	2014		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/149552
15	**An Ex-Post Impact Assessment of IFPRI's GRP22 Program, Water Resource Allocation: Productivity and Environmental Impacts**	Bennet, J.W.	2013		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/153479
16	**An Assessment of IFPRI'S Work in Ethiopia 1995–2010: Ideology, Influence, and Idiosyncrasy**	Renkow, M., and R. Slade	2013	Yes	https://hdl.handle.net/10568/153566
17	**Impact Assessment: IFPRI 2020 Conference on "Leveraging Agriculture for Improving Nutrition and Health," Delhi, India, February 10–12, 2011**	Paarlberg, R.	2012		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/154115
18	**Ex Post Impact Assessment Review of the Regional Network on AIDS, Livelihoods and Food Security (RENEWAL)**	Frankenburger, T., and S. Nelson	2011		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/154375
19	**Impact Assessment of the IFPRI Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators (ASTI) Project**	Norton, G.	2010	Yes	https://hdl.handle.net/10568/154518
20	**Impact of IFPRI's "Priorities for Pro-Poor Public Investment" Global Research Program**	Renkow, M.	2010	Yes	https://hdl.handle.net/10568/154530
21	**The Food Crisis of 2008: Impact Assessment of IFPRI's Communications Strategy**	Hovland, I.	2009		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/161982
22	**Impact Evaluation of Research by the International Food Policy Research Institute on Agricultural Liberalization, Developing Countries, and the WTO's Doha Negotiations**	Hewitt, J.	2008		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/161026
23	**Policy-oriented Research Impact Assessment (PORIA) Case Study on the IFPRI and the Mexican PROGRESA Anti-Poverty and Human Resource Investment Conditional Cash Transfer Program**	Behrman, J.	2007	Yes	https://hdl.handle.net/10568/160184
24	**The Impacts of IFPRI's Global Research Program on the Sustainable Development Of Less-Favored Areas**	English, J., and M. Renkow	2007		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/160183

	Title of study	Authors	Year	Any estimates of economic impact?	Hyperlink
25	**Strengthening Food Policy through Gender and Intrahousehold Analysis: Impact Assessment of IFPRI Multi-country Research**	Jackson, C.	2005		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/160720
26	**Regional Policy Networks: IFPRI's Experience with Decentralization**	Paarlberg, R.	2005		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/160670
27	**Impacts of IFPRI/ICARDA Policy and Property Rights Research on the Mashreq and Maghreb Project**	Sanders, J., and H. Serghini.	2003		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/156853
28	**Evaluating the Impact of Agricultural Projection Modeling Using the "Impact" Framework**	Ryan, J.	2003		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/156975
29	**Impact of IFPRI's Research and Related Activities Based on Economywide Modeling**	Anderson, K.	2003		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/157394
30	**Impact of IFPRI's Research Program on Rural Finance Policies for Food Security for the Poor.**	Alwang, J., and V. Puhazhendhi	2002		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/156613
31	**Impact of IFPRI's Policy Research on Resource Allocation and Food Security in Bangladesh**	Babu, S.	2000	Two case studies	https://hdl.handle.net/10568/156034
32	**Assessing the Impact of Policy Research and Capacity Building by IFPRI in Malawi**	Ryan, J.	1999		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/161278
33	**External Impact Assessment of IFPRI's 2020 Vision for Food, Agriculture, and the Environment Initiative**	Paarlberg, R.	1999		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/161302
34	**Assessing the Impact of Rice Policy Changes in Viet Nam and the Contribution of Policy Research**	Ryan, J.	1999	Yes	https://hdl.handle.net/10568/161279

Notes: 1=PIM only; 2=Joint IFPRI and PIM; 3=Joint IFPRI and A4NH; all others are IFPRI only.

Two early evaluation reports commissioned by IFPRI were not used in this report, but they were included as part of the evidence evaluated in IFPRI's 40th anniversary report by Hazell and Slade (2015).

Table A2: Evaluation studies commissioned by IFPRI but not used in this report

Title	Authors	Year	Hyperlink
The Contribution of IFPRI Research and the Impact of the Food for Education Program in Bangladesh on School Outcomes and Earnings	Ryan, J., and X. Meng	2004	https://hdl.handle.net/10568/157086
IFPRI and the Abolition of the Wheat Flour Ration Shops in Pakistan: A Case Study on Policymaking and the Use and Impact of Research	Islam, Y., and J. Garrett	1997	https://hdl.handle.net/10568/161164

This report also draws on donor-commissioned evaluations of IFPRI's work.

Table A3: Evaluation studies commissioned by donors

Title	Author	Year	Sponsor	Hyperlink
Performance Evaluation of the Program for Biosafety Systems	Potter Consulting	2014	USAID	No longer on USAID website
Report of the First External Review of the Systemwide Programme on Collective Action and Property Rights (CAPRi)	Bruce, J., C. Valdivia, and U. Tan-Kim-Yong	2002	Science Council of the CGIAR	https://hdl.handle.net/10947/1064
Uncovering More Than a Decade of Use of WEAI in USAID Projects. WEAI Applications and Insights	Moore, L., M. Dissanayake, H. Malapit, and A. Go	2023	USAID	https://hdl.handle.net/10568/175991

Additionally, the report draws on some evaluations commissioned by other agencies of specific country and regional policies that IFPRI helped influence. These do not seek to assess IFPRI's role but do provide useful evidence about the impact of the policies involved.

Table A4: Evaluation studies commissioned by agencies that do not focus on IFPRI

Title	Author	Year	Sponsor	Any estimates of economic impact?	Hyperlink
Advancing Use of Nutrition Knowledge to Improve Practice by Policy and Program Communities in India During a Political Transition, Current Developments	Frongillo, E., and J. Escobar-Alegria	2021	BMGF		https://doi.org/10.1093/cdn/nzab120
Ten Years of the Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Agency. An FAO Evaluation of the Agency's Impact on Agricultural Growth and Poverty Reduction	FAO	2020	FAO	Yes	https://doi.org/10.4060/cb2422en
The CAADP in Practice: Highlighting the Successes	ODI	2010	NEPAD's Planning and Coordination Agency (NPCA)		https://www.nepad.org/caadp/publication/caadp-highlighng-successes
Final Performance Evaluation Report of the Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (ReSAKSS)	Tisch, S., D. Marotta, J. Mandolini-Trummel, K. Jones-Casey, and Social Impact, Inc.	2015	USAID		https://hdl.handle.net/10568/149382
Maximizing Gains from Regional Trade Agreements in Central America	Lee, W., and B. Cunha	2024	World Bank	Yes	http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/099052924224037489

There is a possible risk of selection bias in the choice of evaluations that were commissioned by IFPRI, PIM, and their donors. However, any such bias is likely small for the following reasons:

- Until about 2014, IFPRI's research projects were grouped into multicountry programs or global research programs (see Section 2.2). Many of the evaluations were commissioned at these levels and hence provide comprehensive coverage of many related projects.
- Some assessments of individual projects or country programs were also undertaken, but generally at the request of donors, PIM, or A4NH rather than as the result of IFPRI's own selection criteria.
- For evaluations commissioned by or with PIM, the focus was on international public goods research areas such as ASTI, Foresight, SPEED, and the CGE model, rather than on country-based work where biases might more easily arise.
- All available evaluations have been used except the two mentioned in Table A2.

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