
IFPRI *in* ASIA



INTERNATIONAL
FOOD POLICY
RESEARCH
INSTITUTE







VISION

A world free of hunger and malnutrition

MISSION

To provide research-based policy solutions that sustainably reduce poverty and end hunger and malnutrition

IFPRI IN ASIA

For over 40 years, IFPRI has worked with partners in Asia to provide cutting-edge, policy-relevant research on food and nutrition security for policymakers, development partners, and other stakeholders. Sharing this research and engaging through capacity building and dialogue informs effective policies, programs, and investments to help ensure that all people have access to safe, sufficient, nutritious, and sustainably grown food across the continent.



What We Do

IFPRI's work is built around five key research areas that address Asia's most critical food policy issues. All of IFPRI's research work also integrates gender. IFPRI pursues many of its core research themes with the support of partners and through the CGIAR research programs to contribute evidence for country- and region-led policies and programs.

The following is a selection of our current work and highlights of recently completed work in Central, East, South, and Southeast Asia, covering the five research areas and gender.

1 FOSTERING A CLIMATE-RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD SUPPLY

Strengthening smallholder cereal systems · The Cereal Systems Initiative for South Asia (CSISA) promotes evidence-based policy reforms to facilitate adoption of sustainable intensification technologies and practices at scale in the most risk-prone geographies of Bangladesh, India, and Nepal. IFPRI-led policy research under CSISA includes work on strengthening seed systems, reforming fertilizer policy, making soil health cards more accessible to farmers, and exploring the impacts of weather index insurance.

Sustainable and resilient farming systems · Focused on the Eastern Indo-Gangetic Plain, a region of high agricultural potential in India, Nepal, and Bangladesh, this project is promoting productivity and resilience through initiatives linking smallholders to markets and support services, which is enabling farmers to prosper in the face of a changing climate and economy.

Scaling up climate-smart agriculture · This project is conducting impact assessments of climate-smart agricultural technologies in Bangladesh, India, and Nepal to inform policymakers. Related capacity-building activities are designed to enable poor male and female farmers to adapt to climate change and extreme weather conditions. In Pakistan, researchers helped design a proposal for implementing climate-resilient agriculture.



Developing local extension capacity · IFPRI is helping to build a regional community of practice to create locally tailored solutions and scale up proven approaches to agricultural extension and advisory services. In Myanmar, IFPRI is supporting reforms to shift toward a bottom-up participatory approach to extension, while in Bangladesh and Nepal, IFPRI is supporting new digital applications to connect farmers to markets, public extension services, and quality input providers. In Pakistan, researchers are evaluating the effectiveness of the country's farm service centers both as an alternative mode of extension service and input delivery and as a platform to help farmers safeguard their rights and interests.

ASTI · Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators collect, analyze, and disseminate data on institutional developments, investments, and human capacity in agricultural research in developing countries. IFPRI is working in partnership with the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI) to institutionalize ASTI in 14 countries of the region. This partnership is building capacity within national agricultural research institutes for policy-relevant analysis of agricultural research systems, and undertaking dissemination activities to ensure uptake of key messages.

Food security and nutrition information system · IFPRI is working with Pakistan to establish a system to provide information for forward planning and timely decision-making on food security and nutrition issues. IFPRI is also leading a team tasked with developing a forecasting tool for food production and consumption in Pakistan.

2 PROMOTING HEALTHY DIETS AND NUTRITION FOR ALL

POSHAN • To support effective decision-making, the Partnerships and Opportunities to Harmonize Actions for Nutrition in India program, now in Phase 2, facilitates access to evidence on maternal and child nutrition in India. POSHAN compiles and shares findings from the latest research and leads studies on issues critical for effective nutrition programs in India. POSHAN data is used by the government think tank, NITI Aayog, and international organizations.

ARENA II • A multicountry dataset for South Asia developed by the Advancing Research on Nutrition and Agriculture project is being used to explore associations among nutrition outcomes, diets, agricultural production, climate, and infrastructure. Findings have shed light on the relative costs of different diets and the importance of animal-sourced foods in reducing child stunting.

WINGS • The Women Improving Nutrition through Group-based Strategies project mobilizes women's self-help groups in vulnerable excluded communities of India. IFPRI is evaluating the impact of self-help group interventions on the nutritional status of women, how participation affects women's empowerment, and how women's empowerment mediates impacts on women's and children's nutrition.

DataDENT • Data for Decisions to Expand Nutrition is addressing data gaps and promoting stronger systems to transform the availability and use of nutrition data in places with a high burden of undernutrition. DataDENT works across sectors to expand the use of data for nutrition decision-making globally, including in South and Southeast Asia.

TRAIN • The Targeting and Realigning Agriculture for Improved Nutrition project evaluates agricultural interventions designed to improve maternal and child nutrition in Bangladesh. Current work is assessing the impact of incorporating various behavior change communication strategies into a women-focused credit program.

JIBON • The Joint Interventions to Improve Birth Outcomes and Nutrition project evaluates the impact of social protection on birth outcomes in Bangladesh. Researchers are assessing how different packages of food and cash transfers combined with behavior change communication targeting pregnant women affect low birthweight and being born small for gestational age.

School feeding programs • Researchers are measuring the nutritional impacts of Armenia's school feeding program, reintroduced in 2010 for primary school children, and evaluating its cost-effectiveness.

Voices for change partnership • The V4CP initiative empowers civil society organizations to engage with decision-makers by enhancing their capacities in leadership, use of evidence, and organizational sustainability, and by improving access to data and lessons learned. As a partner in this program, IFPRI is helping build capacity of local researchers to promote improvements in nutrition policy in Indonesia.

TARINA • Technical Assistance and Research for Indian Nutrition and Agriculture promotes a more nutrition-sensitive food system in India that enhances the availability and affordability of diverse high-quality and nutrient-rich foods for the rural poor. IFPRI contributes to this consortium-based initiative by generating evidence and building the capacity of partner institutions at both the national and state levels, with a primary focus on the states of Bihar, Odisha, and Uttar Pradesh.

Nutrition projects in China · IFPRI is collaborating with Chinese academic institutions on a comparative evaluation of child nutrition interventions to provide data-driven, policy-relevant evidence for China and other developing countries. Another study is evaluating an ongoing preschool nutrition pilot project in Hunan, which aims to improve children's nutrition and cognitive and socio-emotional conditions. In Gansu, researchers are working on a baseline study to inform the design of a project for growing zinc-enriched potatoes. At the national level, China's new food and nutrition guidelines will adopt policy recommendations proposed in a commissioned study prepared by IFPRI.

HarvestPlus · Biofortification provides a means to breed higher levels of micronutrients essential for human health and development into key staple crops. In Asia, HarvestPlus is working with many public and private partners to develop and deliver iron pearl millet and lentil as well as zinc rice and wheat. By the end of 2018, 48 biofortified varieties of these key staples were released in several countries in Asia, and an estimated 2 million households across Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan were growing and eating these healthier foods.

Gender

WEAI · The Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index—the first comprehensive, standardized tool to directly measure women's empowerment and inclusion in the agricultural sector—was piloted in Bangladesh and used in IFPRI's nationally representative household survey. Findings showed that increases in women's empowerment are positively associated with agricultural diversity, calorie availability, and dietary diversity, and can help households move out of—and stay out of—poverty. A WEAI for value chains (WEAI4VC) was piloted in Bangladesh and the Philippines to measure empowerment across agricultural value chains, including wage work and entrepreneurship.

GCAN · The Gender, Climate Change, and Nutrition Integration Initiative works with USAID and partners to support programming that brings together climate resilience, gender equity, and nutrition goals, including in Bangladesh and Cambodia.

Cash transfer and IPV research collaborative · Growing evidence, including IFPRI's work in Bangladesh, demonstrates that cash transfers combined with nutrition behavior change communication can reduce and sustain reductions in intimate partner violence (IPV). A new research collaboration with universities and research organizations aims to advance the evidence linking cash transfers and IPV in low- and middle-income settings in order to leverage social protection programs for IPV prevention among poor and vulnerable women.

Migration and transformation in women's roles · As part of the Food Security Policy project to promote inclusive agrifood systems, better nutritional outcomes, and enhanced livelihood resilience in Myanmar, researchers are looking at the impact of migration on women's roles in agriculture.



3 BUILDING INCLUSIVE AND EFFICIENT MARKETS, TRADE SYSTEMS, AND FOOD INDUSTRIES

Value chains research · IFPRI's value chain research in South and Southeast Asia examines producer-consumer dynamics around different commodities and assesses their inclusiveness, efficiency, and business-friendly nature.

- In Bangladesh, a value chains project is assessing the impact of market interventions related to jute and iron-rich mung beans on smallholders' incomes, children's nutritional status, and women's participation in market systems.
- In Bhutan, IFPRI is helping the government prepare its agriculture vision with guidance on value chains.
- In Nepal, IFPRI is studying food safety issues and compliance with food safety measures for fruit, vegetable, milk, and meat value chains.
- In Pakistan, researchers are conducting value chain assessments to support the provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in drafting its first horticulture policy and establishing an agribusiness authority to help producers meet international export standards.
- In Tajikistan, analysis of household surveys is looking at how agricultural value chains affect household welfare, food security, and nutritional outcomes, and has provided evidence that agricultural practices such as diversifying crops and improving land productivity are linked with improved nutrition.

Food security portal · This web portal presents up-to-date, country-specific information about agriculture, nutrition, and food security. The portal covers developments in Asia's food system, provides a set of analytic tools, and brings together a network of partners via in-person and virtual dialogues.

Bangladesh integrated food policy and research program · Under this joint venture with local and international research organizations, IFPRI is supporting the Ministry of Food in working across the food system to enhance capacity for food policy research, carry out analytical work on emerging issues, and conduct collaborative research.

Testing innovative models of extension · In collaboration with Cambodia's government, researchers are testing two pilot extension projects. Both use digital technologies to assess extension agents' performance and outcomes among farmers, including impacts on rice productivity, farmers' incomes, and adoption of improved agricultural practices.

Innovations in agriculture insurance · IFPRI is testing picture-based insurance, which uses farmers' own smartphone pictures of crops for loss verification, with wheat and tomato farmers in India. This affordable, easy-to-understand crop insurance is accessible to smallholders and shows promise for integration with climate-smart practices and other value-added services. Researchers have also tested other approaches to insurance and risk management, most notably through experiments with weather index insurance in Bangladesh and India.

Agricultural trade · With international trade frictions on the rise, researchers are using an economic model to evaluate the impact of the US-China tensions on China's agriculture sector and other parts of the world. In Central Asia, economic models are helping inform policies, including providing analysis of expected impacts of the accession of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to the Eurasian Economic Union.

4 TRANSFORMING AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL ECONOMIES

Agricultural transformation and market integration in the ASEAN region · To strengthen the institutional capacity of ASEAN member states, in particular Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, the Philippines, and Viet Nam, this program works with ASEAN to develop policies and programs that help the smallholder farm sector adjust to changes in agriculture and food markets; and to promote cooperation in R&D, food safety, quality standards, and development of agriculture-based industries in the region.

Partnership with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research · IFPRI works closely with ICAR to identify ways to improve crop productivity with newly released varieties, including horticultural varieties. Current work is estimating returns on investment in farm science centers (KVKs) and their impacts on farmers' economic welfare.

Nepal policy reform initiative · Researchers are working to strengthen Nepal's seed system, improve efficiency in fertilizer use, identify custom-hiring models for agri-mechanization, assess food safety issues, and analyze trade and investment opportunities that will raise farmers' incomes.

ReSAKSS-Asia · The Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System for Asia is an initiative to create and strengthen a network of food policy researchers, analysts, and development practitioners. ReSAKSS-Asia works through joint research projects that build analytical capacity for food and nutrition security and knowledge management, and brings together regional partners to promote policy dialogue and share lessons and experience.

Papua New Guinea household survey · An IFPRI project to collect data on food security and nutrition in Papua New Guinea for the first time has surveyed over 1,000 rural households in four provinces. Findings will help guide assistance programs in the country, where diets are deficient in calories and protein and climate variations lead to serious shortfalls in consumption.

Collaborative research in Central Asia · Through a partnership with the Eurasian Center for Food Security, IFPRI is working to improve household welfare and food and nutrition security. Recent research in Kyrgyzstan has found that raising married women's aspirations leads to more egalitarian attitudes and increases women's involvement in household decision-making.

China-Africa cooperation · As China's role in international development assistance has grown, its investment in agricultural modernization in Africa has expanded. To ensure the best outcomes for the China-Africa partnership, IFPRI researchers are working with the Center for International Agricultural Research of the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences and the African Union. The collaborative project is building international partnerships to help improve African smallholders' food security, nutrition, and livelihoods.

Country Strategy Programs

Working closely with local partners and policymakers, as well as other CGIAR centers and donors, IFPRI's Country Strategy Support Programs build evidence to support agricultural transformation at the country and regional levels by conducting "on-the-ground" research, strengthening capacity, and fostering policy dialogue. Long-term programs in Bangladesh, China, and Pakistan, and a new program in Myanmar provide country-specific support on a broad range of policy issues that shape food security, nutrition, and poverty outcomes.

- The Bangladesh Policy Research and Strategy Support Program is working to enhance the efficiency of food production and marketing, accelerate income growth of the poor, and improve nutrition for vulnerable groups. It provides demand-driven food- and agricultural-policy research focused on agricultural growth and climate change, fishery development and livestock sectors, gender, governance, marketing and trade, nutrition, and social safety nets. Among the program's key accomplishments, researchers designed and conducted the most comprehensive nationally representative rural household survey in the country in 2012, with subsequent rounds in 2015 and 2019. The Bangladesh Integrated Household Survey has provided critical data for food security and nutrition programs and is a global public good used around the world.
- The China Strategy Support Program supports joint research, mutual learning, and capacity strengthening with Chinese institutions as well as policy dialogues and communication to improve evidence-based policymaking processes. A longstanding partnership with the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS), dating to 1996, includes a research center, influential research projects, events, and scholar exchanges. CAAS's annual *China Agricultural Sector Development Report* reflects on the topics explored in IFPRI's flagship *Global Food Policy Report* as they relate to China. An annual international conference led jointly with the China Agricultural Economic Review invites renowned scholars to explore insights and policy recommendations for agricultural and rural development. Other partnerships include work with China's National Natural Science Foundation and joint centers established with Zhejiang University and Huazhong Agricultural University to work on policy issues in agricultural and rural development, economic transformation, nutrition and poverty reduction, and resource and environmental policies.
- The Myanmar Strategy Support Program is working to improve the governance of the agricultural sector by increasing the capacity of the national government and other institutions to conduct policy formulation, analysis, and implementation, and by promoting broad stakeholder engagement in the policy process. The program supports work on policy issues in improving agricultural productivity, value chains and private sector engagement, nutrition, and women's empowerment.
- The Pakistan Strategy Support Program is a country-led and country-wide policy analysis and capacity strengthening program, providing analytical support on a range of policies affecting agricultural growth and food security. Current work of the Pakistan Strategy Support Program is carried out in close collaboration with the provincial governments and ranges from agricultural input use and output policy support to improving water governance to post-devolution institutional capacity enhancement for improved policy analysis and forecasting for sustained food availability.



5 STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONS AND GOVERNANCE

Welfare of forcibly displaced people · Research on the influx of Rohingya people forcibly displaced from Myanmar looks at the impacts of camps in Cox's Bazar District, Bangladesh, on the local economy and assesses food consumption, health, and nutrition for this population.

Collective governance of resources · IFPRI works with the Foundation for Ecological Security (FES) in India to help strengthen poor communities' rights and governance of collective natural resources such as water, forests, and rangelands. Behavioral games have been adapted as a means of strengthening collective action for groundwater governance. Ongoing research is looking at the use of games to improve forest governance.

Migration and gender dynamics in irrigation governance · Research in Nepal will provide critical evidence on institutional innovations in irrigation that may ensure women participate in and benefit from irrigation schemes, and will improve understanding of how the country's irrigation systems are governed.

Program for biosafety systems · This program is providing evidence to inform biosafety regulation in the Philippines and support for biosafety training to the Philippine Department of Health.

Institutional development support · Following devolution of authority in Pakistan, IFPRI is supporting institutional development at the provincial level, including developing an agricultural delivery unit in Sindh and a comprehensive ICT-based monitoring and evaluation framework for the Agriculture Department of Punjab.

Strengthening institutions for policy analysis · To support investment analysis for Afghanistan's food security strategy, researchers have conducted workshops to build capacity for analytical methods and policy process analysis for analysts from several ministries. In Myanmar, IFPRI helped to establish an Agricultural Policy Support Unit and has supported activities such as a multisectoral food system development exercise to analyze the investment needed to achieve the country's nutrition goals.

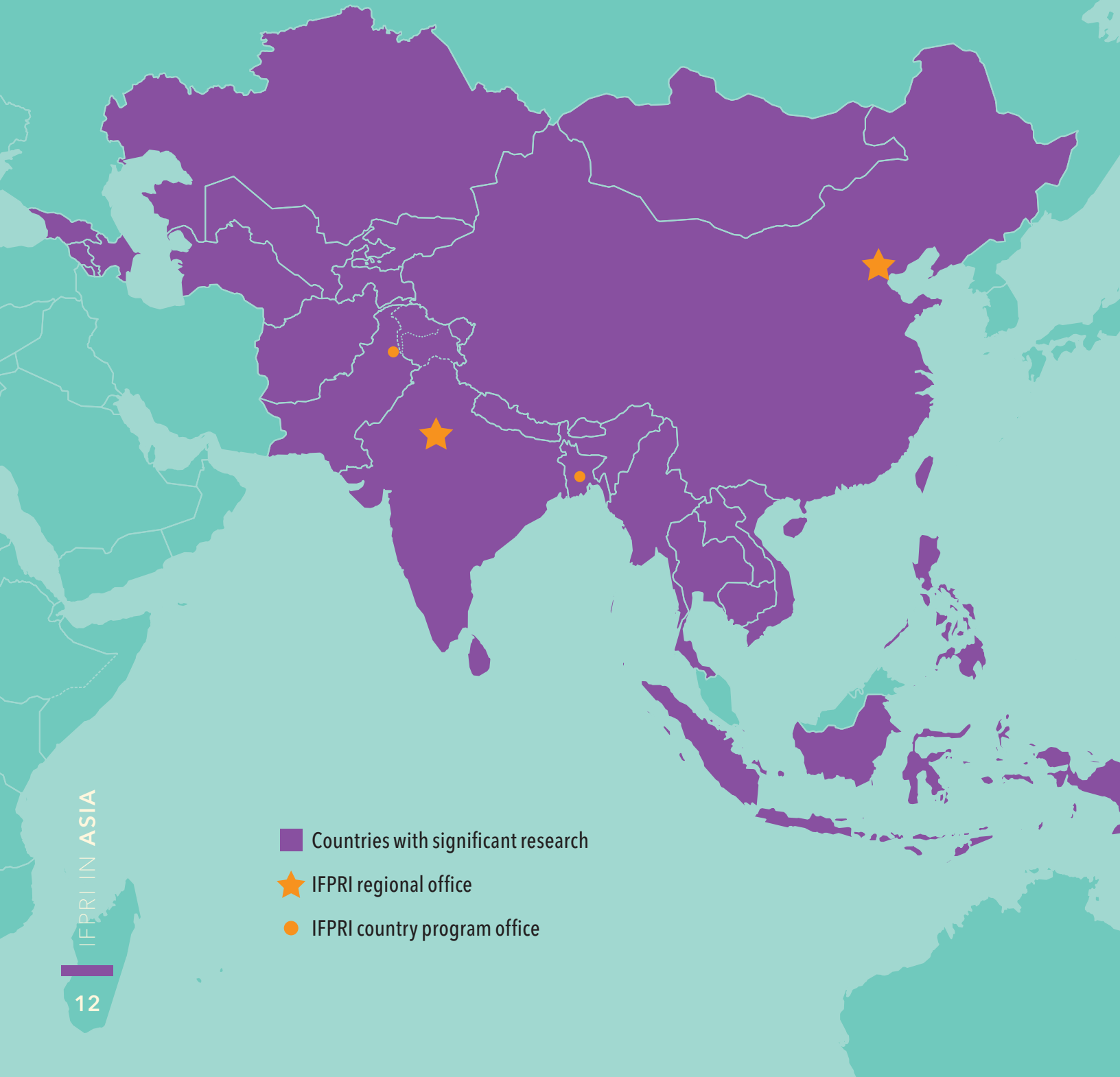
Capacity strengthening in Central Asia · IFPRI's Central Asia Program prioritizes strengthening capacity of researchers to analyze food policy. Initiatives include applied econometrics training, joint research with local collaborators, events organized with local universities, and conferences and workshops to disseminate policy-relevant research to a wide audience.

Agricultural R&D system in China · IFPRI is working with partners in China on a scoping study of the country's agricultural R&D systems to better inform donor and agricultural development partner strategies.



Where We Work

To respond to demand for food policy research and deliver holistic support for regional- and country-led development, IFPRI maintains a strong regional and country presence.



A stylized map of Asia is visible in the background, rendered in a light teal color. The map shows the outlines of the Asian continent, including the Indian subcontinent, Southeast Asia, and East Asia. The title 'Regional Offices' is prominently displayed in a large, purple, serif font.

Regional Offices

South Asia · IFPRI's South Asia Office, based in New Delhi, leads policy research and capacity-building activities in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Research focuses on agricultural diversification, climate change, markets and trade, nutrition and health, science and technology, and governance, contributing directly to IFPRI's five strategic research areas. The office supports national partner organizations by providing research training throughout South Asia. The office also works to deliver policy communications to stakeholders in the region through a variety of channels.

East and Central Asia · IFPRI's East and Central Asia Office, based in Beijing, works to expand evidence-based policy research and promote capacity building and policy communication in China, Southeast Asia, and Central Asia. Focused on research on agriculture and rural development, improving food security and nutrition, designing public policies for poverty reduction, modeling agricultural markets, irrigation development and energy use, and South-South cooperation for agriculture, the office works closely with local research and academic institutions, and supports policy dialogues, conferences, and events to facilitate capacity building in the whole region.

IFPRI Makes a Difference



Empowering Women · The Agriculture, Nutrition and Gender Linkages (ANGeL) project in Bangladesh showed that training farm households—women and men, together—on agriculture, nutrition, and gender sensitization improved agricultural production knowledge and practices, improved nutrition knowledge and practices, and empowered women. The Ministry of Agriculture is using ANGeL's evidence to scale up the most effective interventions.



Improving Infant and Child Nutrition · Analysis provided by IFPRI under the Alive & Thrive program has helped improve breastfeeding and complementary feeding practices for children under 2 by reaching 8.5 million mothers in Bangladesh and 2.3 million mothers in Viet Nam.



Investing in Social Protection · The Transfer Modality Research Initiative in Bangladesh showed that a social safety net combining cash transfers with nutrition behavior change communication decreased child stunting at almost three times the national average. Motivated by these results, the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs integrated nutrition education into the largest social safety net program for poor rural women, which directly reaches 750,000 women and indirectly reaches 3.75 million beneficiaries through their households.



Increasing Sustainability · Recent research on energy use and low-carbon development strategies in the Philippines led to a call by a Philippine parliamentarian for a carbon tax.



Supporting Agricultural Transformation · Following the successful launch of the Punjab Agricultural Policy developed by IFPRI with local partners, IFPRI has received similar requests from other provincial governments for drafting evidence-based policies.



Reforming Markets · When India experienced a national shortage of pulses, a key staple food for the poor, in 2014–2016, the government enacted a new policy— informed by IFPRI's ongoing research—reversing some counterproductive measures. When Pakistan recognized that imperfections in its market for seeds and traits were preventing farmers from accessing the latest varieties and technologies, the government advanced several new policies and regulations to remove bottlenecks in these markets, similarly informed by IFPRI's ongoing research.



Scaling Up Pro-Poor Public Investment · In China and India, IFPRI's research provided evidence that investment in rural roads, agricultural research, and education in rural areas has high returns. China's increased investment in agricultural R&D, following IFPRI's recommendations, helped nearly 6 million people rise out of poverty. India's major investment in rural roads helped up to 18 million people move out of poverty.



Building Enabling Environments · IFPRI's policy advice on market reforms for Viet Nam's rice markets in the 1990s contributed to greater opportunities, incomes, and food security for 24 million people dependent on rice farming.

CGIAR Research Programs

Two IFPRI-led CGIAR Research Programs promote collaboration and synergies across the CGIAR network and with many partner organizations on critical cross-cutting issues in Asia. Gender and equity are considered across the work of PIM and A4NH.

Policies, Institutions, and Markets (PIM)

PIM works in 16 countries across Asia, providing support to decision-makers in the public and private sectors by informing policy debates and decisions in areas such as agricultural growth and rural transformation, adaptation to climate change, youth employment, social protection, improved access to markets, land governance, collective management of the commons, and women's empowerment. Recent examples include:

- Enhancing the performance of safety-net programs to improve women's and children's nutritional outcomes in Bangladesh.
- Guiding policies and investments to promote agricultural growth, food security, and adaptation to climate change in the Philippines.
- Analyzing the effectiveness of China's public expenditures in the agricultural sector and providing recommendations that informed the country's Rural Revitalization Strategy.
- Contributing to the development of two key policies in Pakistan—the National Food Security Policy and the Punjab Agricultural Policy.
- Working with the private sector to roll out innovative picture-based crop insurance in India.

Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH)

A4NH seeks to realize the enormous potential of agricultural development to make significant contributions to improving nutrition and health. Asia is central to the A4NH research agenda, and Viet Nam, Bangladesh, and India are focus countries. A4NH researchers support better health and nutrition by:

- Facilitating research on food system transformation, which can drive growth, jobs, and healthy and sustainable diets across Asia. Working with national partners, A4NH is generating data and knowledge on national food system transformation; safety of perishable foods; the impacts and dynamics of longer value chains; antimicrobial resistance; and the potential of biofortification in ending hidden hunger.
- Interacting with policymakers to provide them with the data and resources needed to guide appropriate policy development. Work with public sector stakeholders includes national-level partnerships, such as collaborations with the National Institute of Nutrition in Viet Nam and the Ministry of Agriculture in Bangladesh; continent-wide engagement, particularly related to food safety, gender and equity, and the multiple burdens of malnutrition; and support for the CGIAR Antimicrobial Resistance Hub.





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