



50 YEARS OF  
**IFPRI**  
LOOKING TOWARD 2050

The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) reaches millions of people through its mission 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.

Together with partners, IFPRI generates needed evidence for global, regional, and national policies, investments, programs, and institutions that contribute to poverty reduction and help ensure that all people have access to safe, sufficient, nutritious, and sustainably produced food. IFPRI is a Research Center of CGIAR, the world's largest agricultural innovation network, and is the only CGIAR Center solely dedicated to food policy research.

Through multisectoral research and engagement with stakeholders, IFPRI also informs effective policies, programs, investments, and institutions that contribute to productive livelihoods and sustainable, resilient, and equitable agriculture and food systems.

The pathway from research to impact can be direct or, at times, more difficult to trace. IFPRI commissions independent, peer-reviewed assessments of our work and engages researchers in internally validating our activities. This brochure highlights some of these stories to show how IFPRI's research is making a difference for people and the planet. With this work, we are advancing toward our vision of a sustainable world free from poverty and malnutrition.



## HIGHLIGHTS OF IFPRI'S IMPACT AROUND THE WORLD

In **PAKISTAN**, more than **133 MILLION** people in farming households consume zinc-biofortified wheat foods. HarvestPlus aims to increase access to critical micronutrients for 1 billion people globally by 2030.

In **INDIA**, where IFPRI provided evidence of the high returns to road building, the Prime Minister's Rural Roads Program helped up to **18 MILLION** people climb out of poverty.

**CHINA's** increased investment in agricultural R&D, following IFPRI's recommendation on priority setting, helped nearly **6 MILLION** people move out of poverty.

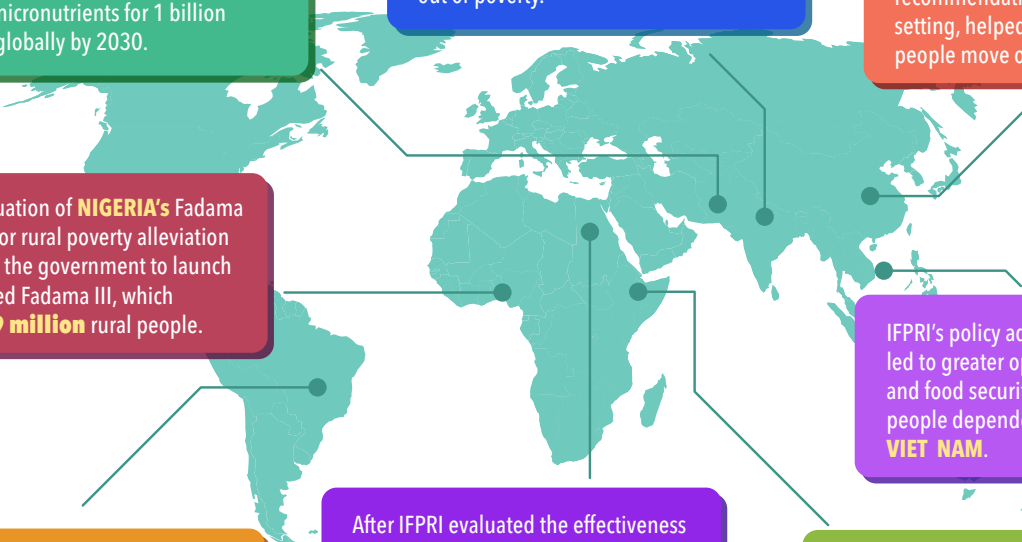
IFPRI's evaluation of **NIGERIA's** Fadama II program for rural poverty alleviation encouraged the government to launch the expanded Fadama III, which reached **5.9 million** rural people.

IFPRI's policy advice on market reforms led to greater opportunities, incomes, and food security for **24 MILLION** people dependent on rice farming in **VIET NAM**.

The design of **BRAZIL's** Bolsa Familia conditional cash transfer program, which has about **55 MILLION** beneficiaries, was informed by IFPRI's evaluation of an earlier program.

After IFPRI evaluated the effectiveness of cash transfers under **EGYPT's** Takaful and Karama program, it was expanded to reach **17 MILLION** beneficiaries.

IFPRI's technical support to **ETHIOPIA's** Agricultural Transformation Agency helped to expand a program that has brought affordable quality seeds to **1.6 MILLION** farmers.





## What is food policy?

Food policy is the collection of decisions made by governments, civil society, businesses, and international organizations that shape our food systems, including production, processing, distribution and marketing, and consumption of food, and the natural resources used by these food systems.

## How we make a difference

IFPRI's work is based on the power of policy to drive transformative change in food systems. A strong evidence base can help inform both gradual policy shifts and rapid response in moments of crisis. At the same time, policy research must be driven by demand from decision-makers themselves. To this end, IFPRI works with policy research and decision-making communities to build trust through high-quality, long-term engagement; introduce and test new ideas in the policy space; and provide effective solutions, including South-South lessons, which are suited for the local context.

IFPRI's research has informed decisions to improve policies, programs, research methods and tools, or research capacity among our partners. These changes often lead to further positive downstream impacts on development, including improved food and nutrition security, better livelihoods, gender equity, environmental sustainability, reduced poverty, and other aspects of well-being around the world.

## How does IFPRI's research reach decision-makers?

IFPRI brings research results and policy recommendations to policymakers, practitioners, development partners, and other researchers through:

- Direct dialogue with policymakers in low- and middle-income countries and regional and international development agencies to understand their needs
- In-country research teams: More than half of IFPRI's staff are based in low- and middle-income countries
- Collaborative research and capacity sharing with hundreds of partners
- Conferences, publications, and the media
- Targeted communication of locally relevant research results

## Evaluating IFPRI's impact

The pathway from research to impact can be direct—for example, when policy research helps a government to design an improved social protection program or fertilizer subsidy. More often the link is indirect and much harder to trace, such as when policy research contributes to the investment priorities of multilateral development banks.

Measuring the impact of policy research is challenging, requiring suitable data and methods. The Institute commissions external and independent, peer-reviewed assessments of our work and engages researchers in internally validating our activities. Conservative estimates indicate that just a portion of IFPRI's work has benefited nearly **half a billion people**.





Together with partners, IFPRI generates needed evidence for global, regional, and national policies, investments, programs, and institutions that contribute to poverty reduction and help ensure that all people have access to safe, sufficient, nutritious, and sustainably produced food.

Making a  
Difference





# GLOBAL IMPACT

IFPRI's research positively shapes policies and improves lives and livelihoods across multiple continents. As part of our commitment to producing research as an international public good, many of the Institute's activities yield global solutions that can be tailored to country and subnational contexts. Whether it involves scaling the uptake of improved crop varieties, developing adaptable measurement tools, or facilitating data access, IFPRI's research has direct and indirect impacts that reach across borders.

## Monitoring food crises and vulnerabilities with the Food Security Portal

With the support of the European Union, IFPRI facilitates the Food Security Portal, an open access platform that has monitored trends affecting food security and nutrition around the world since 2010, including food price volatility, major conflicts, the COVID-19 pandemic, and climate change. Through a global portal and an Africa South of the Sahara subportal, IFPRI equips national and regional policymakers with the information to make timely and appropriate decisions. The portal has been visited over **35 million times**.

IFPRI's rapid response to food crises has shaped policy agendas. Its numerous country-level and global analyses led the G20 and World Trade Organization to call for swiftly phasing out food export restrictions imposed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. IFPRI earned the AAEE<sup>1</sup> Quality of Communication Award twice for its timely coverage of the impact of these global shocks using briefs, blogs, policy events, and data from the Food Security Portal. Through its analytical expertise, communications, and

reach, IFPRI has become a key source of crisis insights for governments and partners across the world.

## Developing local extension capacity with Feed the Future

In collaboration with IFPRI and other partners, the US government's Feed the Future program launched the Developing Local Extension Capacity (DLEC) project to improve agricultural extension for farm households in low- and middle-income countries. More than 100 products enabled organizations to explore ways of improving their extension approaches, including implementing video-based extension, forging partnerships through communities of practice, customizing training kits for agents and farmers, and creating content for women farmers. From 2016 to 2021, 77 partners across 17 countries adopted DLEC recommendations, benefiting **1.3 million farming households**.

## HarvestPlus: Advocacy and innovation for biofortified crops

HarvestPlus, an IFPRI program, pioneered the biofortification of staple food crops with higher vitamin A, iron, or

<sup>1</sup> Agricultural & Applied Economics Association.

zinc content in collaboration with multiple CGIAR Centers and more than 3,600 implementing partners. This work has helped increase access to critical micronutrients for more than an estimated **115 million people** on 23 million farms in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

By the end of 2020, 24 countries in the Global South had adopted legislation and/or regulations on biofortification, and biofortified crops had been integrated in COVID-19 response and recovery efforts in several countries. HarvestPlus, in collaboration with CGIAR and national partners, has facilitated the release of more than 455 biofortified varieties of 12 staple food crops in **37 countries** in the Global South.

## ENRICH: Enhancing nutrition through agricultural education

HarvestPlus served as the technical partner for Enhancing Nutrition Services to Improve Maternal and Child Health in Africa (ENRICH), a five-year program that aimed to reduce maternal and child mortality by addressing malnutrition in the first 1,000 days of life. From 2016 to 2021, ENRICH delivered a series of gender-responsive interventions to train smallholder farmers on the cultivation of biofortified staple crops and the health benefits of micronutrients.

ENRICH is estimated to have benefited **2 million people**: it directly improved the diets of more than 1 million people in farming families in Bangladesh, Kenya, and Tanzania, and yielded nutritional benefits for another 1 million people through communitywide sharing of seeds, vines, and agronomic benefits.

## Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI): Measuring inclusion among rural women

The Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) measures the inclusion and agency of women in the agricultural sector using a core set of indicators. Since its 2012 launch, the WEAI has gained widespread recognition and inspired the release of multiple versions. These versions have now been used to measure women's empowerment by **279 individuals and organizations in 69 countries**, with programs that reach **10.5 million people**.

In Bangladesh, after a baseline survey using the WEAI found that 75% of rural women in the US government's Feed the Future Zone of Influence were disempowered, the government collaborated with Feed the Future to strengthen programming that reflected women's needs. A follow-up survey revealed a significant improvement in women's empowerment, and the US government now uses the WEAI across 60 operational units.

## Alive & Thrive: A stronger start for maternal and child nutrition

IFPRI collaborated with Alive & Thrive, a global initiative working to raise rates of breastfeeding and improve young children's meals, to evaluate its impact in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, and Viet Nam and identify where interventions could be strengthened. From 2009 to 2014, Alive & Thrive reached about **16 million mothers** of children under two years of age through large-scale interventions including interpersonal counseling, mass media campaigns, community mobilization, and policy advocacy efforts to improve infant and young child feeding.

IFPRI's evaluation showed that from 2015 to 2021, nutrition interventions reached more than **4.2 million people**—including pregnant women, parents, mothers-in-law, and primary school children—in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, and India during antenatal care and at urban health facilities, primary schools, and community-based activities. This research helped Alive & Thrive support the design and scale-up of maternal and child nutrition behavior change interventions at the national level, reaching millions more in the same countries. It also produced key lessons on successful nutrition programming and informed global actions to close the gender nutrition gap.

## Creating Homestead Agriculture for Gender Equity (CHANGE)

IFPRI helped to design programs that educate women about nutrition issues and promote food gardens and other approaches to diversify diets. A 10-year collaboration between IFPRI and Helen Keller International improved the programming and evaluation design for the Creating Homestead Agriculture for Gender Equity (CHANGE) program, part of Helen Keller's broader work on homestead food production. By 2017, Helen Keller's Enhanced Homestead Food Production programs had reached nearly **1.5 million families** in Africa and the Asia Pacific region.

## Refining measures of food loss and waste

In 2017, IFPRI designed a set of surveys to measure losses in quantity and quality across food value chains, which it tested on a range of commodities in China, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, and Peru. The surveys allow researchers to pinpoint the source of food losses and their economic value, improving on previous methods that did not take these issues into consideration. The G20 Technical Platform on the Measurement and Reduction of Food Loss and Waste, led by the FAO and IFPRI, has since promoted this innovative methodology.



## MAKING A DIFFERENCE ACROSS AFRICA

IFPRI has a decades-long history of supporting food systems transformation in Africa. Through high-quality research-based evidence, partnerships with African institutions, capacity building, and technical assistance, IFPRI has helped African governments improve public programs, prioritize policies and investments, and facilitate agriculture-led growth, food and nutrition security, and resilience in alignment with the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). IFPRI's country strategy programs and outposted staff have supported more than 30 African countries, and an evaluation study found evidence that the benefits of IFPRI's country postings far outweighed the costs.



### Collaborating to support food fortification and biofortification in Africa

In 2014, HarvestPlus collaborated with partners to provide evidence that was pivotal to the African Union's (AU) adoption of a continentwide policy declaration on food fortification and biofortification. The declaration called upon member states to create national policies that enable the development and uptake of biofortified foods through measures such as incorporating biofortified seeds into farmer input support programs.

These efforts led to a framework on biofortification that was adopted by all **55 AU Member States** in 2022. The CAADP 2024 Biannual Review also introduced the Africa Biofortification Progress Index to monitor progress, and in 2025, biofortification was included in the AU CAADP Kampala Declaration. As a long-time technical partner, HarvestPlus plays a critical role in scaling up biofortification interventions to make these AU commitments a reality.

### AKADEMIYA2063: African leadership for sustained impact

To provide data and policy analysis and facilitate mutual learning in support of CAADP's agricultural transformation goals, IFPRI and its partners launched the Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (founded in 2006), the African Growth and Development Policy Modeling Consortium (2010), and the Malabo Montpellier Panel (2017). In 2020, IFPRI transferred the ownership of these three programs to AKADEMIYA2063, a pan-African research organization created by African researchers who previously led the programs at IFPRI.

AKADEMIYA2063 now houses more than 50 staff from **16 countries** deployed across eight strategic departments. The organization also launched a fourth program, Africa Agriculture Watch, which uses machine learning and remotely sensed data to predict production for 10 key crops and contributes to tracking greenhouse gas emissions across Africa. While IFPRI remains a strategic partner of

AKADEMIYA2063, the transition to African leadership represents a case of successful localization for sustained impact among African countries.

## Supporting agricultural development in Africa

CAADP is a continental initiative that aims to help African countries eliminate hunger, reduce poverty, and improve livelihoods by transforming agrifood systems. Since 2005, IFPRI has been providing technical support to CAADP at the continental, regional, and country levels, including helping many countries develop their National Agricultural Investment Plans (NAIPs) and track performance in achieving the goals and objectives of CAADP.

Comparative analysis shows that countries implementing NAIPs, especially the second-generation plans starting in 2016, have substantially increased their agricultural labor productivity compared to those with only the first-generation plan or no NAIP. Countries that implemented both generations of NAIPs also exhibit the highest and most consistent growth in government spending on agriculture, with country expenditures rising on average from US\$115.9 million in 1995 to **US\$308.1 million** in 2022.

## Supporting small-scale farmers in Ghana

In Ghana, urbanization has reduced the amount of labor available for small-scale farming. In response, the government established Agricultural Mechanization Service Enterprise Centers (AMSECs) as private enterprises that own tractors to provide mechanization services to farmers. The program began in 2007 with 12 AMSECs and seven tractors each, then another 77 AMSECs in 2009–2010. When IFPRI conducted surveys with AMSECs and farmers that hired their services, about one-third reported the program improved the availability of mechanization services and one-fourth reported increased yields. However, many AMSEC owners were unable to pay back their government loans, even with subsidized tractor prices.

From 2016 to 2023, the government launched a second phase of AMSECs with an improved design—such as making the number of purchased tractors flexible—which attracted more private enterprises to invest in the program. As a result, **114 more AMSECs** were established, with another **882 tractors purchased**. IFPRI's work on AMSECs in Ghana helped to provide better services to farmers while making the centers a viable business. This has informed how other African governments can improve public-sector support for farmers.

## Prioritizing public investment in Rwanda

The government of Rwanda began designing its Strategic Plans for the Transformation of Agriculture (PSTA) in the early 2000s with the aim of achieving agricultural and economy-wide development goals through public investments. IFPRI worked with government ministries to design the Rwanda Social Accounting Matrix (SAM), which provides the core data for the Rural Investment and Policy Analysis (RIAPA) model designed with IFAD<sup>2</sup> in 2016.

Using a Rwanda-specific RIAPA model and SAM, IFPRI's assessment of PSTA 4 (2018–2024) found that the current allocation of public expenditures may have generated a US\$2.05 gain in GDP for every dollar spent. It also estimated that the accumulated reduction in poverty from total PSTA agricultural investment could be as high as **1.1 million people** over a period of 10 to 15 years. These findings informed the design of the next phase of the plan, PSTA 5 (2024–2029), highlighting how economywide policy models can help ensure that public spending efficiently meets its goals for economic growth, food and nutrition security, and poverty reduction.

## Ethiopia's Seqota Declaration: Preventing child stunting

In 2015, the government of Ethiopia launched the Seqota Declaration to commit to ending child stunting by 2030. IFPRI led a study using the Lives Saved Tool—which estimates the impact of scaling up a health or nutrition intervention—and found that the first phase of Seqota programming averted 60,000 cases of child stunting and 2,900 child deaths. The study also estimated that a 10% scale-up could prevent nearly 700,000 cases of stunting and 9,000 child deaths. The Ministry of Health cited IFPRI's study in its call to expand programming from 240 woredas, or districts, to 700, and the government of Ethiopia subsequently allocated 700 million Ethiopian birrs, equivalent to **US\$12.6 million**, to expand the program.

## Providing evidence to reform Malawi's fertilizer subsidy program

IFPRI launched the Malawi Strategy Support Program in 2008 to conduct evidence-based research and advise on policy decisions for agricultural development and economic growth. As part of a working group to support fertilizer subsidy reform, IFPRI conducted historical and empirical analyses, finding that while an earlier subsidy program had boosted total maize output, current conditions made the expanded subsidy program unprofitable. After the working group presented the results to the minister of agriculture, the

<sup>2</sup> International Fund for Agricultural Development.

government pared down the fertilizer subsidy program from 50% of the agricultural budget in 2020/21 to **35%** in 2024/25 and attempted to target the most productive farmers.

## Using childcare centers to improve nutrition in Malawi

With 12,000 community-based childcare centers across Malawi, Save the Children tested their use as a hub for providing farming and nutrition training, microlending services, and seeds to rural families through the Nutrition Embedded Evaluation Program (NEEP). IFPRI and partners evaluated the program, revealing that childcare centers supported by NEEP were 11% more likely to provide meals to preschoolers. The trial also observed increased production diversity in intervention households, better diets in preschoolers and their siblings, and 17% less stunting among preschoolers' siblings compared to children in centers that did not receive NEEP programming. In 2018, the government decided to invest US\$60 million to scale up the intervention, which now reaches nearly **750,000 beneficiaries** across Malawi.

## Creating synergies across sectors in the Niger River Basin

The Niger Basin Authority (NBA) coordinates development projects across the nine West African countries sharing the Niger River Basin, which suffers from extreme water insecurity and civil strife. The NBA needed a systematic water-energy-food-environment nexus methodology to assess potential trade-offs and synergies among the 350 projects in its Operational Plan. In 2022, IFPRI collaborated with the University of Ottawa and GIZ<sup>3</sup> under the CGIAR Research Initiative on NEXUS Gains to create tools and guidelines for analysis, resulting in the Nexus Guidance Document. The NBA's Ministerial Council adopted a finalized nexus guidance policy that same year. In 2024, the NBA started developing its Operational Plan for 2025–2033 using the nexus guidance as a key tool. Capturing synergies and trade-offs is expected to benefit the **160 million people** who depend on the river basin.

## Ethiopia's Agricultural Transformation Agency

IFPRI's technical support to Ethiopia's Agricultural Transformation Agency (ATA) has led to tangible policy outcomes in several areas: input markets, technology adoption, commodity value chains, gender, and macro-economic policy. For instance, IFPRI helped test a new seed marketing model, based on public- and private-sector competition, to improve farmers' access to affordable high-quality seeds of improved varieties.

Based on the positive results, the ATA refined and launched its Direct Seed Marketing program at scale. By 2019, the program operated in 290 woredas and involved more than 1,400 marketing agents and 50 seed producers. More than 47 million kilograms of seed were sold in 2019 to an estimated **1.6 million farmers**.

## Strengthening Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Program

IFPRI played the principal role in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP), contributing to improved performance and redesign of the project's multiple subprograms. By supplying credible data on the impact of the PSNP, IFPRI helped maintain interest, secure continued support, and increase coordination among donors. IFPRI's research also encouraged the government to strengthen the program's nutrition objectives, including temporary direct support payments for pregnant women. The PSNP had **8 million beneficiaries** as of 2024, making it one of the largest safety net programs in Africa south of the Sahara.

## Evaluating Nigeria's Fadama program

In 2008, IFPRI led an evaluation of Nigeria's Fadama II program for rural poverty alleviation. The results encouraged the government to expand the program to Fadama III to target the poor and vulnerable, with technical support from IFPRI. The Institute evaluated Fadama III (2008–2019), showing that the program created more than 400,000 jobs and increased incomes among the 1.19 million recipient households, or **5.9 million rural people**, by 28%.

Due to the strong institutional capacity the program has built since first starting in 1992, the government also used Fadama to provide humanitarian assistance and resilience-building to conflict-affected areas in northeast Nigeria. IFPRI found that beneficiaries of this intervention experienced better nutritional outcomes, crop yields, and access to markets—affirming the importance of multipronged and evidence-based approaches to support resilient rural livelihoods.

<sup>3</sup> Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German International Cooperation Society).



## IMPACTS IN ASIA

IFPRI's earliest country-based research can be traced to Asia. The Institute provided policy support on agricultural transformation, market liberalization, and public investment policies that helped millions of people move out of poverty by the early 2000s. Today, its work on food systems transformation, poverty, food and nutrition security, and natural resource management in the region remains critical for sustainable development amid rapid economic growth and an increasing population. IFPRI's policy research, strong national and regional partnerships, and institutional capacity building activities have supported advancements in agricultural diversification, R&D, nutrition, women's empowerment, and resource governance across 16 countries in Asia.



### Informing rice policy through new nutrition evidence

Miniket, a parboiled rice, is popular with consumers in Bangladesh due to its polished white appearance, but IFPRI studies revealed that its extensive processing caused losses in nutrition. Miniket rice has up to 70% less zinc than less-processed varieties, and the milling process wastes 5% of edible rice—findings that were presented to the Bangladesh government. The government implemented a ban on the production, storage, transport, supply, distribution, and marketing of miniket rice in 2023, a move that could save more than **5 million tons** of rice lost due to over-milling.

### Comprehensive data collection to inform policy in Bangladesh

IFPRI collaborated with the US government-funded Policy Research and Strategy Support Program to create the

Bangladesh Integrated Household Survey (BIHS), the country's most comprehensive nationally representative survey of rural households. It is the country's only survey that collects data on women's empowerment, plot-level agricultural production and practices, height and weight measurements, and intrahousehold diets.

BIHS is IFPRI's most popular dataset, with more than **662,000 downloads**. The dataset was used by the World Bank to approve a US\$500 million loan to improve Bangladesh's safety net system, and it also informed the country's 7th Five Year Plan (2016-2020) and the interim government's 2024 white paper, a key policy document.

### Experiential learning for natural resource management

IFPRI partnered with the Foundation for Ecological Security and ICRISAT<sup>4</sup> to develop experimental games that foster behavioral and institutional change in how dwindling

<sup>4</sup>International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics.

groundwater supplies are managed in India. Participating communities were more likely to make changes to water use decisions and water infrastructure maintenance, leading the intervention to be scaled up to **6,500 rural communities** in six Indian states by 2023.

As of that year, the government-run groundwater management program Atal Bhujal Yojana, which covers seven Indian states, had built the capacity of more than 500 project staff to implement the games approach. The Odisha Livelihoods Mission, in partnership with the Odisha State Department of Agriculture, adopted the games in their sustainable agriculture program across more than 2,000 villages.

## Scaling up zinc wheat in Pakistan

Among its many global biofortification efforts, HarvestPlus developed five zinc-enriched varieties of wheat, a staple crop consumed by 90% of Pakistan's population. HarvestPlus worked with public- and private-sector stakeholders to increase seed production from 2,500 metric tons (MT) in 2016, the launch year, to 187,000 MT in 2024, raising the production of zinc wheat grain from 56,000 MT to 15 million MT in 2024—nearly half of the country's annual wheat production.

In 2024, an estimated 4 million households grew zinc-enriched wheat seeds distributed by more than 130 seed companies, increasing from the initial 39,000 households participating in 2016. Through the partnership, an estimated **133 million people** are consuming zinc-enriched wheat foods, helping to address zinc deficiency among the most malnourished populations in Pakistan.

## Researching returns to public expenditures in China

In China, IFPRI's research provided evidence about the returns on different types of public expenditures, showing that investments in rural roads, agricultural research, and rural education have a relatively large impact on reducing poverty and spurring rural economic growth. These modeling studies, completed in 2002-2004, influenced public discourse, and national partners became important advocates for adjusting priorities. Changes in government spending priorities several years later—particularly the expansion of rural investment—reflected IFPRI's findings. China's increased investment in agricultural R&D alone helped nearly **6 million people** rise out of poverty by 2007.

## Analyzing Viet Nam's rice policy

Between 1996 and 1998, IFPRI examined Viet Nam's rice policies. IFPRI's analysis contributed to the government's decision to relax rice export quotas and internal restrictions

on rice trade. The market-oriented policy changes generated substantial economic benefits for Viet Nam, including greater opportunities, incomes, and food security for **24 million people** dependent on rice farming.

## Enhancing diets and nutrition for mothers and children in Bangladesh

Nutrition-sensitive safety net programs help to diversify and improve diets. Research conducted by IFPRI and the WFP's<sup>5</sup> Transfer Modality Research Initiative found that providing cash transfers and behavior change communication to mothers with young children can substantially reduce stunting. Motivated by this evidence, Bangladesh launched the Mother and Child Benefit Program, which reached **1.25 million beneficiaries** in 2022/2023.

## Pro-poor public investment program in India

IFPRI's research in India on the impact of public investments played a key role in the development of the Prime Minister's Rural Roads Program, which supported substantial spending on the construction of roads to connect isolated villages. This investment is estimated to have helped **between 6.5 and 18 million people** move out of poverty between 2004 and 2009 and substantially added to agricultural GDP.

## Ensuring stable rice prices after flooding in Bangladesh

A severe flood in Bangladesh in 1998 caused a drastic reduction in rice production. IFPRI researchers helped the government decide to allow the private sector to import rice, thus avoiding a price spike. About half the population, or about **65 million people** who were living below the national poverty line at the time, likely benefited from more stable rice prices.

## Strengthening policy measures through research on India's pulses sector

From 2014 to 2016, India experienced a national shortage of pulses, a key staple food for the poor, which led to widespread demonstrations. The government urgently needed to act, as around **89% of Indians** eat pulses at least once a week. Informed by IFPRI's ongoing research on the country's pulses sector, the government expanded the area under cultivation and increased imports, reversing some counterproductive measures and improving the availability of pulses at more affordable prices.

<sup>5</sup> World Food Programme.



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Making a  
Difference





## MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) is the largest net food-exporting region and largest provider of ecosystem services in the world. Since the 1980s, IFPRI has contributed to landmark research on social protection and nutrition programs and macroeconomic and trade policies in the region. IFPRI's LAC Program now conducts policy research centered around four thematic areas: nutrition, climate change, innovation, and trade. IFPRI also leads AVANZAR2030, a regionwide initiative to advance policy innovation and cooperation for sustainable food systems transformation.

### Guiding public expenditures in Honduras

In 2018, IFPRI developed a methodology and framework to track food security and nutrition funding in Honduras, in addition to preparing a strategy for rural and agricultural development. The financial tracking tool helped the government to assess the amount of public expenditures allocated to different components of the food security and nutrition plan.

IFPRI's methodology and framework also informed the Financial Flows to Food Systems (3FS) Tool, which the Financial Group of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub is using to collect data on financial flows from international development agencies and the public sector for food systems transformation. The strategy for rural and agricultural development contributed to the Política de Estado del Sector Agroalimentario (PESAH) 2023-2043, which

the government launched in May 2024 to transform the Honduran agricultural sector.

### Harnessing partnerships for better nutrition across LAC

Working jointly with the FAO,<sup>6</sup> IFPRI implemented a program to combat the triple burden of malnutrition in LAC from 2018 to 2020. The program helped establish a network of officials, academics, nutritionists, and civil society representatives, as well as policy dialogues and research on how food systems impact overweight and obesity. Together, these activities contributed to a comprehensive food policy agenda to address overweight and obesity across LAC countries.

### Social protection by design in Nicaragua

To tackle high rates of stunting, the government of Nicaragua designed a social protection program called Red de

<sup>6</sup>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Protección Social (RPS) in 2000. When IFPRI conducted an impact evaluation of RPS in 2002, it found that the program helped beneficiaries purchase more diverse foods and reduced the prevalence of stunting by **6%**. IFPRI's research helped convince the government that RPS achieved its objectives, leading to an extension and expansion of the program in 2003.

## Information technologies to reduce malnutrition in Guatemala

In Guatemala, IFPRI's research supporting a national program to prevent chronic malnutrition led to the adoption of new information technologies. Local authorities, including the National Statistical Institute, began using electronic tablets to collect data for household surveys. Similarly, IFPRI implemented several pilot programs with local institutions to test the viability of using text messaging to monitor health and nutrition interventions and of collecting meal pictures to assess diets remotely. Dedicated interactive platforms have also been developed to help prioritize donor investments at the subnational level around the country based on need and potential for development.

## Designing flexible agricultural insurance in Uruguay

From 2013 to 2016, IFPRI designed and piloted a flexible index-based weather insurance program in Uruguay. Conducted with the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture, and Fisheries and a public insurance company, the program covered horticultural farmers facing varying types and levels of risk against excess rainfall around the time of harvest. The results of the pilot encouraged the government to adopt the insurance scheme and expand coverage to other regions in the country. As of 2021, the insurance program was still operating with many of the key design features introduced by IFPRI.

## Informing commitments to national emissions reduction

When Colombia began preparing its national emissions reduction plan, its Ministry of the Environment asked IFPRI to evaluate the potential contribution of the agriculture, forestry, and other land uses sector. Using its International Model for Policy Analysis of Agricultural Commodities and Trade (IMPACT), paired with land and crop models, IFPRI collaborated with researchers from other institutions to identify a level of emission reductions that would be economically feasible for the country. The Ministry of the Environment included these results in Colombia's official

Intended Nationally Determined Contributions, which were presented and ratified at COP21<sup>7</sup> in 2015.

## Tool kit for prioritizing investments in Peru

In partnership with Peru's Ministry of Economy and Finance, IFPRI developed a tool kit and typology to help the government rank development projects based on their risks, potential impacts on poverty, and costs by region. During the 2015/16 budget planning process, the Ministry integrated IFPRI's tool kit into the National Public Investment System and used it to target approximately **US\$1 billion** of public expenditure in rural development projects.

## Providing evidence to support the first 1,000 days

One of IFPRI's earliest nutrition projects in LAC examined food-assisted maternal and child health and nutrition programs in Haiti. Traditionally, these programs provided interventions to underweight children under five years of age—the recuperative approach. From 2002 to 2006, IFPRI collaborated with Cornell University, the US government, and World Vision-Haiti through the FANTA Project<sup>8</sup> to compare this traditional approach with a preventive one, which addressed pregnant women, lactating women in their first six months, and children from six to 23 months of age to prevent—rather than cure—undernutrition.

The researchers found that children who received the preventive intervention experienced less stunting and wasting than those who received the recuperative intervention, providing the first experimental evidence that targeting children during their first 1,000 days of life was more effective in reducing undernutrition than treating already malnourished children. These findings led key development organizations and agencies to adopt this preventive approach and focus nutrition interventions during the critical 1,000-day window from pregnancy to a child's 24th month.

## Demonstrating the payoff of early childhood nutrition investments

From 2002 to 2004, IFPRI, Emory University, Cornell University, University of California, Davis, and INCAP<sup>9</sup> assessed the long-term impacts of an early childhood nutrition intervention conducted in Guatemala in the 1970s by using data from a follow-up study of these same children over 20 years later. Analysis of the follow-up study provided direct evidence that investments in preschool nutrition yield high returns in adulthood. Children who participated before the age of three experienced improved welfare as adults:

<sup>7</sup> United Nations Climate Change Conference.

<sup>8</sup> Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance Project, managed by FHI 360.

<sup>9</sup> Instituto de Nutrición de Centro-América y Panamá.

men had **46% higher wages** and women completed one or two more educational levels. This was one of the first longitudinal studies to demonstrate that investing in early child nutrition could help shape critical future human capital outcomes, including education, employment, and wages in adulthood.

## Technical assistance for nutrition policy in Guatemala

In 2010, the government of Guatemala launched the Zero Hunger Pact (Pacto Hambre Cero) to significantly reduce chronic malnutrition in children under five years of age by 2015. IFPRI worked with Guatemala's Secretaría de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional, Instituto Nacional de Estadística, and Ministerio de Finanzas Públicas to evaluate the program, present recommendations, and provide technical assistance and trainings on research methods and policy analysis.

By 2014, the government and its partners reduced chronic malnutrition in children under five by **2%**. With the support of the US government, IFPRI continued to provide technical assistance to Guatemala for another decade, including monitoring and evaluating key government health and nutrition programs and implementing multiple capacity building activities.

## Anticipating emigration with the Migration Propensity Index

In collaboration with the US government, IFPRI created the Migration Propensity Index (MPI) to provide donors, policy-makers, and program implementors with a tool to measure and track the likelihood of emigration. First designed and tested in 2020 for Guatemala, the MPI relies on indirect household-level indicators to anticipate cross-border migration decisions without having to ask respondents sensitive questions.

Its success in Guatemala inspired the design of a cross-border MPI for the context of Honduras in 2022. The following year, the MPI was adapted to anticipate domestic relocation within a country's borders for Guatemala and Honduras. This set of tools has been adopted by US government-funded programs in both countries.

## Promoting investment in agricultural research in Honduras

Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators (ASTI), first housed by IFPRI, provides open-source data on agricultural research systems across low- and middle-income countries. In 2009, ASTI's reports for Honduras contributed to the Ministry of Finance's review of public investment programs, which found that agricultural R&D investment in the country was very low. With ASTI data as a guide, the

Honduras Agriculture Sector Country Investment Plan for 2011–2014 highlighted an increase in funding for agricultural R&D. ASTI data have had an impact in many other countries, for example, informing significant increases in the national budget for agricultural R&D in Nepal, and contributing to the consolidation of four research organizations into a single, more efficient institute in Kenya.

## Learning from Bolsa Alimentação in Brazil

In Brazil, IFPRI evaluated the country's Bolsa Alimentação conditional cash transfer program to help inform its successor program, Bolsa Família. The evaluation led to changes in Bolsa Família's targeting approach and the inclusion of a monitoring and evaluation system. As of 2024, Bolsa Família had about **55 million beneficiaries**.

## Providing an outlook for climate change action in Brazil, Mexico, and Peru

In 2009, IFPRI led a partnership with the CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS) to evaluate the impact of climate change on agricultural production in Brazil, Mexico, and Peru. Using IFPRI's IMPACT model and crop models, the study projected that declines in agricultural yields due to climate change would have the most severe effects on the poor, who rely on these crops. In 2013, IFPRI's research informed discussions at the Mexican National Congress, which subsequently pledged a strong commitment to climate change adaptation and mitigation.



## IMPACTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Starting with its research on food subsidies in the 1980s, IFPRI has contributed substantial expertise to social protection and economic inclusion in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). In recent years, the number of people facing acute food insecurity has risen sharply due to protracted conflict, increasing water stress, and global price shocks. In turn, IFPRI's research in MENA now also addresses food security in these fragile and conflict-affected settings, including effective humanitarian response, innovative monitoring tools, and programs for long-term recovery and resilience.

### Providing vital data amid conflict in Sudan

IFPRI launched its Sudan Strategy Support Program in 2022 in partnership with the program's host institution, the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development. The program has remained a vital research and policy hub in Sudan despite the humanitarian crisis that arose in 2023. Through remote sensing, economywide modeling, microlevel surveys, and key informant interviews, IFPRI's Sudan team has monitored the impact of the war on households, farmers, and small- and medium-sized enterprises, while also tracking the availability of essential commodities.

These real-time insights have quantified the economic toll of conflict and outlined recovery pathways, including a study showing that restoring agricultural productivity to pre-conflict levels by 2026 could help **1.9 million people** climb out of poverty by 2028. IFPRI also launched an online platform to

enhance access to national survey data. By delivering timely, data-driven evidence, IFPRI's Sudan team is shaping food security and resilience strategies implemented by the WFP, UNDP,<sup>10</sup> and the World Bank.

### Assessing the Takaful and Karama program in Egypt

In 2018, IFPRI evaluated the effectiveness of cash transfers under Egypt's Takaful and Karama program. IFPRI found the program had positive impacts on household consumption, especially by improving diets and investing in education. These findings helped make the case for expanding the program to more households, reaching about **17 million beneficiaries** in 2022.

The program also deployed 15,000 community health workers, a step that aligns with IFPRI's recommendations

<sup>10</sup> United Nations Development Programme.

on improving communication about nutrition and program requirements.

## Anticipating the benefits of Morocco's trade integration

Entered into force in 2019, the African Continental Free Trade Area marked a significant advancement in the continent's economic integration, with the potential to enhance competitiveness, support economic transformation, and widely reduce poverty. Morocco was one of the first countries to sign the free trade agreement and wanted to determine the countrywide economic impacts of joining.

With technical support from IFPRI, the Directorate of Studies and Financial Forecasts of the Kingdom of Morocco and the French Development Agency carried out a study using **MIRAGRODEP**, a general equilibrium model developed by IFPRI and AGRODEP<sup>11</sup> that can undertake trade and agricultural policy analysis. The policy scenarios provided by the 2021 study have informed debate and decisions by economic actors and policymakers about Morocco's African integration policies, such as increasing the involvement of the private sector, strengthening the development of road infrastructure between countries to facilitate intra-African trade, and improving the quality of distribution networks.

## Evaluating Cash for Nutrition in Yemen

Cash transfers are increasingly being used as a humanitarian response to support immediate needs and postconflict recovery amid protracted crisis. Through the World Bank's Yemen Emergency Response Program, IFPRI used a randomized controlled trial to assess the impact of Cash for Nutrition, which provides cash transfers and nutritional training to conflict-affected households with young children in Yemen.

The research showed that the program helped households to purchase more nonstaple foods, which boosted child dietary diversity and reduced stunting. In 2020, IFPRI's work persuaded the World Bank to expand funding for Cash for Nutrition, which has reached more than **1.4 million women and children**.

## Testing school feeding in conflict settings

As protracted conflict has driven half of Yemen's population into food insecurity, school feeding has become crucial to providing nutritious meals to almost 2 million children. School meals provide students in Yemen with an average of

18% of their daily energy and 66% of their daily micronutrient requirements. IFPRI used qualitative methods to assess the feasibility of different school feeding modalities.

Supplying fortified snacks, like date bars, was the most cost-efficient approach, but students and caregivers preferred fresh foods such as the sandwiches piloted in the healthy kitchen model. By procuring fresh produce locally, the healthy kitchen approach also supported Yemeni agriculture. Given these findings, IFPRI recommended hybrid feeding models that combine fortified snacks with fresh foods. The study demonstrated the immense potential of school feeding to help achieve healthier outcomes and encourage school attendance even in conflict-affected settings.

## Improving fertilizer subsidies in Egypt

To ensure national self-sufficiency for strategic crops, the government of Egypt distributes subsidized nitrogen fertilizers directly to smallholder farmers. In 2018, an IFPRI survey revealed the policy was associated with significant overapplication of subsidized fertilizer, up to twice the recommended rate. As part of its cost-cutting measures, Egypt's government reduced fertilizer subsidies during the country's 2023-2024 fiscal crisis.



<sup>11</sup> African Growth and Development Policy Modeling Consortium.



IFPRI's work is based on the power of policy to drive transformative change in food systems. With this, we are advancing toward our vision of a sustainable world free from poverty and malnutrition.

Making a  
Difference





## Resources

For more information about these contributions and other ways that IFPRI makes a difference, visit:

[IFPRI's Impact](#)

[IFPRI's Making a Difference Blog Series](#)

[IFPRI's 50th Anniversary](#)



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