



FOOD PRICE CRISIS IFPRI's response and Influence

While they have since gone down slightly, global food prices rose significantly from 2007-08, with some agricultural commodities even doubling in price. The consequences of the sudden rapid rise in food prices have been particularly severe for the food and nutrition situation of poor people. IFPRI, with its depth of expertise in agriculture, nutrition, and food security, was one of the first institutions to warn of and respond to this food price crisis and was well-positioned to respond to stakeholders' requests for information. The Institute produced 30 publications on the topic and disseminated findings through presentations and briefings by senior staff at high-level venues, resulting in more than 700 media releases. These outputs were based on years of sustained research as well as on studies conducted during the crisis on projections work, markets and trade, shocks, country-level strategy work, gender and agriculture, nutrition, and food consumption.

Throughout the crisis, IFPRI used its solid research to answer key questions: What is happening?; Why is it happening?; What are the consequences?; and What can be done to mitigate the effects and ensure that it does not happen again?

IFPRI's contributions to understanding and responding to the food price crisis include

1. Why is it happening:

IFPRI analyzed the multisectoral causes of the food price crisis and the resulting inadequate productivity response (von Braun 2008 <www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/foodpricespolicyaction.pdf>). IFPRI also assessed the causes and impacts of the crisis from a gender perspective (Quisumbing 2008 <www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/bp007.pdf>).

2. Analysis of Consequences:

IFPRI's country-level research suggested that the crisis has caused decreased consumption and calorie intake in Ethiopia (Ulimwengu et al. 2009 <www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/ifpridp00846.pdf>).

<www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/ifpridp00842.pdf>). In Mozambique, world price increases represented a substantial negative shock to the terms of trade (Arndt et al. 2008 <www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/ifpridp00836.pdf>).

3. Recommendations for Impact Mitigation and Prevention of Future Crises:
Responding to the urgent need to assist people and countries, IFPRI proposed an emergency package containing two sets of policy actions: one that could yield immediate impacts and another comprising medium- and long-term actions (von Braun et al 2008, <www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/foodpricespolicyaction.pdf>)
4. Proposal for a Virtual Reserve:
IFPRI proposed and laid out a detailed implementation plan for an innovative virtual reserve to help prevent market price spikes and keep prices closer to levels suggested by long-run market fundamentals (Torero and von Braun, 2008 <www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/bp004.pdf>; Torero and von Braun, 2009 <www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/bp010.pdf>). IFPRI also detailed global policy actions and institutional arrangements needed to implement the reserve (Lin, Torero, and von Braun, 2009 <www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/reservenote2009302.pdf>).
5. Development of Framework to Monitor the Crisis:
IFPRI identified indicators, datasets, and analytical methods to assess the impact of the crisis (Benson et al ; 2008 <www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/ib55.pdf>).

Outcomes

1. The UN's Comprehensive Framework for Action, published by the High Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis (July 2008), uses

IFPRI data and cites two IFPRI policy briefs. Seven of IFPRI's eight proposed urgent actions released in May 2008 appear in the document as policy recommendations. www.ifad.org/operations/food/documents/cfa/cfa_draft.pdf

2. A joint UN-FAO High Level Meeting on Food Security for All (Madrid, January 2009) cited IFPRI's work on the food price crisis in two roundtable background papers. < www.ransa2009.org/html/docs/rt3_linking_research%20_ransa2009.pdf>; < www.ransa2009.org/html/docs/rt4_increasing_engagement_ransa2009.pdf>
3. In his testimony on the crisis to the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee in March 2008, Peter McPherson, president of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC), noted that IFPRI is providing excellent analysis and policy advice on the food price crisis. < foreign.senate.gov/testimony/2008/McPhersonTestimony080514a.pdf>
4. The Philippine Agriculture Secretary, Arthur Yap, praised IFPRI's proposal for establishing emergency food reserves to help stabilize prices of agricultural commodities. < www.gmanews.tv/print/141130>
5. The G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit (July 2008) issued the report "Double Jeopardy: Responding to High Food and Fuel Prices," which refers to IFPRI's research in its justification for revising biofuel policies. < web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:21827681~pagePK:64257043~piPK:437376~theSitePK:4607,00.html>
6. IFPRI's June 2008 proposal to create a virtual reserve was discussed in the G8 Leaders' Statement on Global Food Security, which indicates that the G8 will consider creating such a reserve. The Chatham House Report, "The Feeding of the Nine Billion: Global Food Security for the 21st Century," also highlights IFPRI's virtual reserve proposal as a way to guarantee food security. < www.chathamhouse.org.uk/files/13179_r0109food.pdf>
7. *Agricultural Economics*, the journal of the International Association of Agricultural Economists, encouraged prospective authors to refer to IFPRI's work before submitting papers for their issue on the world food crisis in August 2008. < www.agecon.purdue.edu/ae/AE_CallForPapers.pdf>
8. IFPRI received the 2008 COM+ Communications Award in recognition of its response to the food

crisis in real time. <

www.complusalliance.org/Modules/ENews/ENewsDetails.asp?id=MTQ0Mg&MenuId=1&BackLink=/Templates/COMPLUS/COMPLUS5/layout.asp%3FMenuID%3D1>

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