



INTERNATIONAL FOOD
POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE
sustainable solutions for ending hunger and poverty
Supported by the CGIAR

Updated 2007

IFPRI's STRATEGY

TOWARD FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

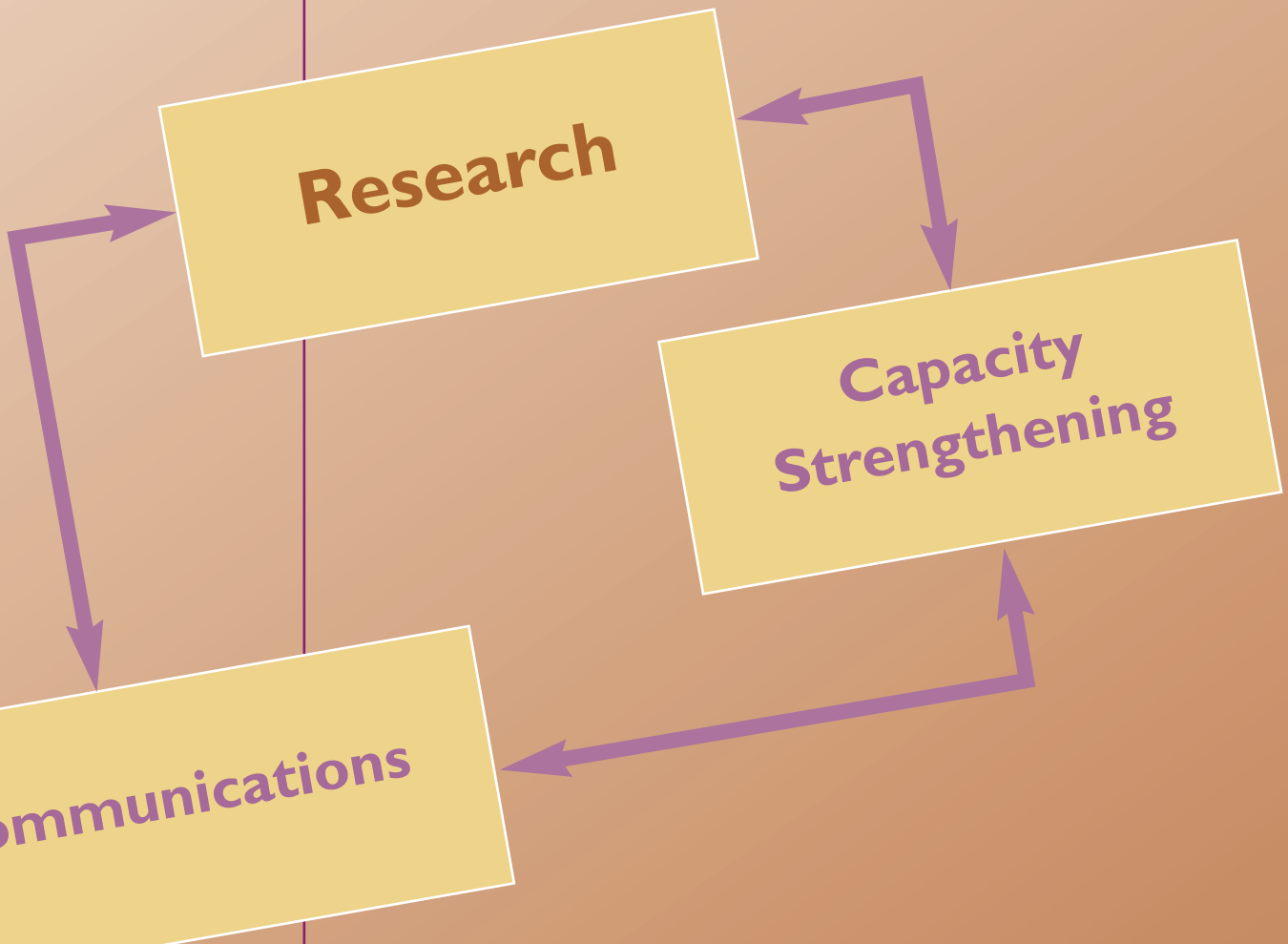
*Food Policy Research, Capacity Strengthening,
and Policy Communications*

July 2007

Research

**Capacity
Strengthening**

Communications



Updated 2007

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INTERNATIONAL FOOD POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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FOREWORD

In 2003, IFPRI prepared a long-term strategy paper entitled *Toward Food and Nutrition Security: Food Policy Research, Capacity Strengthening, and Policy Communications*. That document was prepared in a consultative process engaging IFPRI staff and partners in research, policymaking, civil society, and the private sector. It greatly benefited from reviews and comments on drafts and outlines by peers. The document evolved from various internal workshops; comments by the IFPRI Board of Trustees; members of the IFPRI 2020 Vision Advisory Council; stakeholder consultations; and formal hearings, especially one in December 2002 in which Sartaj Aziz, Norman Borlaug, Raymond Hopkins, Robert Paarlberg, Per Pinstrup-Andersen, and M. S. Swaminathan played key roles. I again wish to thank those individuals for their contributions to the 2003 strategy paper. The IFPRI Board of Trustees adopted the strategy in March 2003 as a “living document” to be revisited periodically.

The strategy was updated in 2005 in light of a 2004–05 External Program and Management Review of IFPRI and a number of significant changes in the context of international food policy issues and within the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) system. Several of these changes had particular relevance for IFPRI’s long-term strategy, such as the increased role of the Millennium Development Goals, the rapidly changing nature of markets and trade of relevance to the poor, and the emergence of new CGIAR systemwide priorities under the leadership of the Science Council. Strategic changes within IFPRI included the expansion of development strategy and governance research, the integration of the International Service for National Agricultural Research (ISNAR) into IFPRI, and further decentralization of IFPRI’s operations.

Following an assessment of more recent global and institutional developments, we have again revisited the strategy. IFPRI staff and some external advisers were involved in the review, and an updated version of the strategy was presented to the Board of Trustees at its 2007 May meeting and adopted following a comprehensive discussion.

I wish to express my appreciation to everyone who contributed to improving IFPRI's strategy, thereby enhancing our ability to achieve our mission to provide policy solutions that reduce poverty and end hunger and malnutrition.

Joachim von Braun
Director General of IFPRI
July 2007

Executive SUMMARY

This document sets out the strategy for the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) for the next decade. The Institute's vision and mission are cornerstones of the strategy:

- IFPRI's Vision is a world free of hunger and malnutrition, and
- IFPRI's Mission is to provide policy solutions that reduce poverty and end hunger and malnutrition.

The strategy addresses issues relevant to its vision and mission, including:

- **poverty, hunger, and malnutrition** in the developing world, which remain **persistently high**;
- **a rapidly changing policy environment**, which makes the decisionmaking process more complex and diffuse, involving many more actors at global and subnational levels and within the private and civil sectors, as well as the public sector;
- **new technologies**, which offer **great promise for advancing food and nutrition security** and for which research is needed to identify policies and institutions to ensure that poor people benefit from these technologies; and
- **global health issues**, which pose **significant threats to food security and nutrition**.

SETTING IFPRI'S PRIORITIES

IFPRI's mandate and strategy are directly relevant to the CGIAR System Priorities. Coherence between IFPRI's program and the CGIAR's priorities is tracked in the context of medium-term plans. To determine its priorities with regard to research, capacity strengthening, and policy communication, IFPRI's work program will

1. conform to IFPRI's mission to provide policy solutions that reduce poverty, hunger, and malnutrition—soon and sustainably—to as many people as possible;
2. be innovative and focused on impact, paying attention to CGIAR priorities and addressing current and emerging issues that affect food security, nutrition, poverty, and gender equity, in consultation with stakeholders and partners; and
3. be based on IFPRI's dynamic comparative advantage to produce results applicable to many countries—that is, international or global public goods.

IFPRI's research and outreach activities must meet all these criteria to be included in IFPRI's agenda. The implementation of the participatory approaches shall be transparent and means tested, including institutionalized feedback mechanisms, such as satisfaction surveys among research partners.

The actual “how to” of priority setting and implementation at IFPRI is driven by the philosophy not only of defining strategic research projects from the “top down,” but also of placing high value on the creative initiatives of its researchers and their collaborators in the broad context of priority areas identified from the “bottom up.” The think tank culture of IFPRI and its broad global network is nurtured for that purpose, encouraging initiatives and risk taking to address new issues within the framework of this strategy.

IFPRI recognizes that the need for policy change and the opportunities for policy reform differ significantly—and increasingly so—by region; thus the set of priorities has different weights by region (for example, Africa, Latin America, Asia), and each region is catered to by IFPRI's decentralized approach.

IFPRI's activities are funded from many sources, and the Institute responds with flexibility to fund its strategic research agenda on a sustained basis. IFPRI operates in a complex international environment of funding for food policy research, which includes both strategic funding of (partly unrestricted) resources for the Institute, as well as a competitive market for research funding. Priority setting at IFPRI, therefore, is not just a budget-allocation process. Rather, it involves constant two-way interactions with stakeholders and donors, whose agendas IFPRI also aims to influence, always driven by its overarching goal of improving policy for enhanced food and nutrition of the poor.

The thematic priorities set under IFPRI's strategy have very different weights at any point in time; thus, the actual set of priorities is narrower than the number of themes. At any one time, IFPRI has a portfolio of projects in support of its mission and in pursuit of this strategy. Projects at IFPRI move through a natural cycle: some activities are at an early stage of conceptualization and exploratory program development, while others are at the stage of data collection and analyses, others are at a mature stage of synthesis, and still others have moved into the post-research stage, involving capacity strengthening, training, and impact-assessment activities.

THE RESEARCH THEMES

The cornerstones of IFPRI's work are research, policy communications, and capacity strengthening for policy and research. Based on the priority-setting criteria mentioned above, IFPRI groups nine research themes under three overarching focus areas. In doing so, IFPRI takes a systems perspective regarding the policies affecting food and agriculture.

IFPRI's priority research themes are interlinked. As such, they are pursued not in isolation but as components of an integrated research program. Policy-communications and capacity-strengthening activities are crosscutting; they are therefore linked to and embedded in the research agenda in addition to being key elements of achieving impact in the follow up to the research.

Focus Area A. Efficient and Fair Functioning of Global and National Food and Agriculture Systems

This area focuses on policies that address constraints to achieving food and nutrition security and that support more efficient functioning of the global and national food, nutrition, and agriculture systems, including policies that promote the inclusion of low-income countries, improve the food and nutrition security of poor people, enhance the pro-poor functioning of supply chains from producers to consumers, and support the sustainable management of natural resources:

- 1. Outlooks and global change**

Global food and agriculture outlooks and options for policies, including climate change and technology scenarios

- 2. Globalization, trade, and markets**

Guidance on globalization processes and on trade and domestic market policies for inclusive growth

3. Natural resource policies

Sustainable and efficient natural resource management (water, land use, soils, biodiversity, and energy)

4. Risks and emergencies

Identifying risks to people's food security, and improving policies on emergencies and postcrisis development

Focus Area B. Effective Strategies and Governance at the Global, Regional, and National Levels

This area focuses on policies that improve global, national, and local governance, and enhance political participation in, and institutions for, the development of pro-poor food, nutrition, and agricultural policies and related services:

5. Governance and policy processes

Improving governance and policy processes in food, nutrition, and agriculture

6. Development strategies

Strategies for development focusing on pro-poor growth, the role of agriculture, the transformation of smallholder farming, enhanced urban–rural linkages, and nonfarm rural employment

7. Poverty, nutrition, and social protection

Policies and interventions for poverty reduction, social protection, and nutrition improvement, including a focus on smallholders

Focus Area C. Enhancing Pro-poor Food and Agriculture System Innovations

This area focuses on policies that foster scientific and institutional innovation and technology use of benefit to poor people in developing countries. The themes are as follows:

8. Diet, health, and food safety

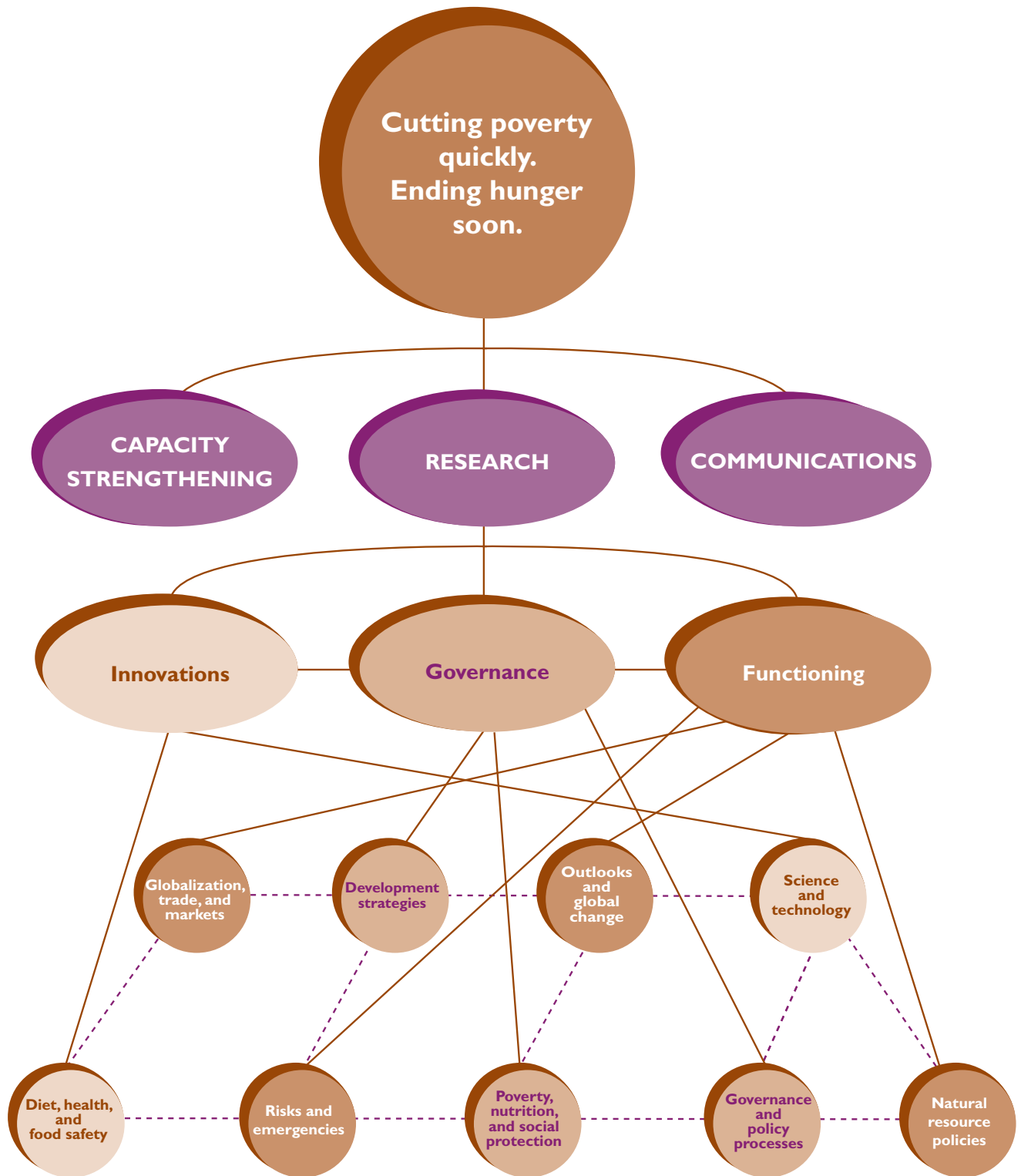
Policies to enhance food and diet quality, health, and food and water safety in developing countries

9. Science and technology

Food- and nutrition-related science and technology policy and innovations serving poor people

As indicated in a stylized way in Figure 1, not only are the three overarching focus areas linked, but the nine research themes are also partly interrelated.

Figure 1
Overview of IFPRI's Goals and Agenda



POLICY COMMUNICATIONS

Research results can only achieve impact for the malnourished and poor when they are relevant and when they are known by and available to those who can use them. This involves two-way communication with key stakeholder groups in developing and developed countries and the provision of factual, timely, and competent information on all questions related to food and nutrition security and natural resource management.

CAPACITY STRENGTHENING FOR POLICY AND RESEARCH

To reduce poverty and end hunger, it is also vitally important, through the provision of research-based knowledge, to develop the capacity of researchers, policymakers, trainers, practitioners, administrators, extension workers, students, community leaders, and others. IFPRI's focus in capacity strengthening is on research, analysis, communications, policy formulation, institutional change, and organizational management.

KEY FEATURES OF IFPRI

IFPRI aspires to be a trusted global research center that provides the knowledge needed for food and nutrition policy serving poor people; to boldly and independently communicate findings based on sound analysis, even when they are controversial; to be a source of in-depth understanding of the linkages between research and policy change; to respond quickly to changing conditions and opportunities for designing improved food policy serving low-income countries; and to be a valued strategic partner within the CGIAR system and within an enlarged community of partners and stakeholders, with a strong presence in developing countries through partnerships, networks, and decentralized operations. The Institute's main outcome is policy information that leads to changes in food policy that improve the lives of poor people and promote sustainable food production.

VISION AND MISSION

IFPRI's Vision: A World Free of Hunger and Malnutrition

This vision is based on the human right to adequate food and freedom from hunger, and the recognition of the dignity inherent in all human beings. It is a vision of a world where every person has secure access to sufficient and safe food to sustain a healthy and productive life and where food-related policy decisions are made transparently and include the participation of consumers and producers.

IFPRI's Mission: To Provide Policy Solutions That Reduce Poverty and End Hunger and Malnutrition

This mission flows from the mission of the CGIAR:

“To achieve sustainable food security and reduce poverty in developing countries through scientific research and research-related activities in the fields of agriculture, livestock, forestry, fisheries, policy, and natural resources management.”

Two key premises underlie IFPRI's mission:

1. Sound and appropriate local, national, and international public policies are essential to achieving sustainable food security and nutritional improvement.
2. Research and the dissemination of its results are critical inputs into the process of raising the quality of food policy debate and formulating sound and appropriate policies.

IFPRI's mission focuses on

- identifying and analyzing alternative international, national, and local policies in support of improved food security and nutrition, emphasizing low-income countries and poor people and the sound management of the natural resource base that supports agriculture;
- contributing to capacity strengthening of people and institutions in developing countries that conduct research on food, agriculture, and nutrition policies; and

- actively engaging in policy communications, making research results available to all those in a position to apply or use them, and carrying out dialogues with those users to link research and policy action.

IFPRI places priority on activities that benefit the greatest number of poor people in greatest need in the developing world. In carrying out its activities, IFPRI seeks to focus on vulnerable groups, as influenced by class, religion, ethnicity, agroecological location, and gender.

IFPRI is committed to providing global food policy knowledge as an international public good; that is, it provides knowledge relevant to decisionmakers both inside and outside the countries in which it undertakes research. New knowledge on how to improve the food security of low-income people in developing countries is expected to result in large social benefits, but in most instances the private sector is unlikely to carry out research to generate such knowledge. IFPRI views both public organizations and the private sector in food systems as objects of study and as partners.

Given the large body of national and international food policy research, IFPRI's added-value derives from its own cutting-edge research linked with academic excellence in other institutions, such as other CGIAR centers, universities, and other research institutes in the South and the North, and from its application of this knowledge to national and international food policy problems.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A framework for understanding the process of policymaking must incorporate the reality that politicians and civil servants engage in complicated political bargaining and act under the influence of their own perceptions, ideology, predilections, and professional biases, as well as in response to interest groups. Key points in the policymaking process include getting an issue on the table, identifying objectives, laying out options to achieve objectives, evaluating options, advancing recommendations, building consensus, legislating, implementing policies, evaluating policies, and assessing impact. This is a convoluted, iterative process with feedback loops connecting each of the discrete phases to the others. This desirable process is often disrupted by the realities of bad governance, failed consensus building, and flawed implementation, and therefore these are food policy research issues in themselves. IFPRI research is particularly useful in getting issues on the table, evaluating the options (*ex ante*), and assessing the policy impact (*ex post*) for learning.

IFPRI and its collaborators can exert influence primarily by providing information to politicians and other actors who call for policy change and who design and implement policy. IFPRI is aware that policy is often formulated with a short-term perspective, but short-term policy impact that may not be sustainable does not drive IFPRI's agenda.

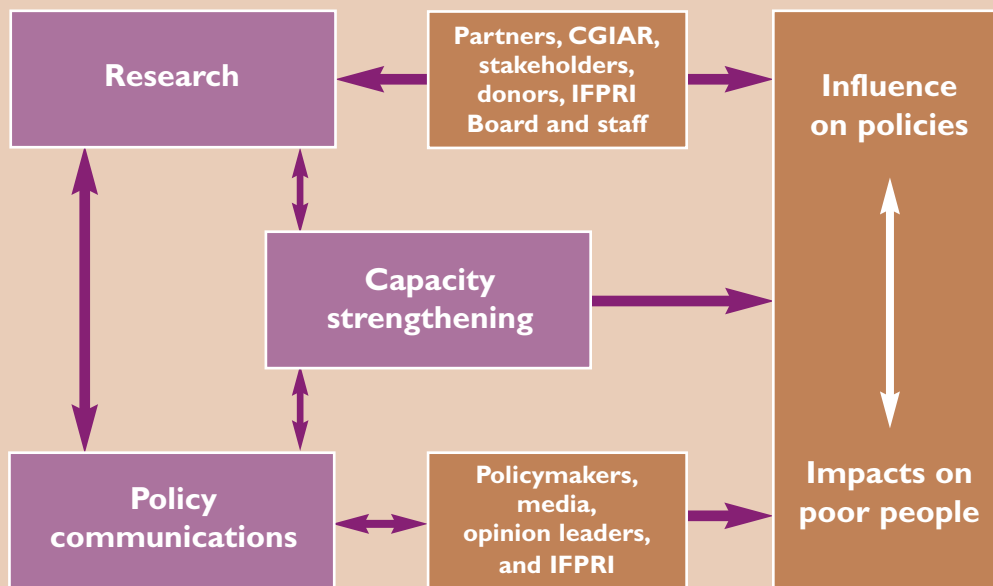
Often, there are substantial gaps between stated policy (such as a commitment to increase government spending on agriculture and rural development) and the actual implementation. This problem is an area for IFPRI research and one that IFPRI's policy communications must address.

Informing the general public is critical, as civil society frequently influences food policy by pressing for change. Anticipating key policy issues and knowledge gaps is essential for good food policy research. Achieving influence, not to mention impact, takes a great deal of time and active engagement in policy communications and public awareness building. IFPRI regards this activity as an important investment.

IFPRI and similar research organizations can bolster their influence by making research results available to policymakers and their advisers in readily accessible, nontechnical formats and by strengthening collaborators' capacity to carry out food policy research and communication. Part of the capacity-strengthening effort involves helping partners recognize knowledge gaps related to policymaking. These are windows of opportunity to influence decisions, though the decisions may not be taken immediately, and the research results are usually among a host of factors that affect ultimate food policy and food security outcomes. Research is also important to help set priorities for international partners, including donor agencies, by improving understanding of food policy. To achieve this influence, IFPRI researchers and their collaborators must recognize that research results will be used in the political process described above. IFPRI's strategic framework aims for impacts on the poor through influence on policy. That influence is driven through partnerships and dialogue and is ultimately based on research in combination with policy communication and capacity strengthening (see Figure 2). They must identify the key players inside and outside the government who have the ability to alter policy outcomes.

IFPRI researchers devise effective communications strategies, which may involve working with the key players, the media, advocacy nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and the private sector. Understanding who makes policy, and how, does not have to come at the expense of research quality or objectivity. Indeed, while influencing winning coalitions in policymaking debates may frequently be necessary to achieve impact, IFPRI's reputation as a source of objective information based on solid research has contributed greatly to its policy influence.

Figure 2
IFPRI's Strategic Framework



This figure provides a conceptual framework for understanding how food policy research can influence policy and, through policy change, help achieve sustainable food security.

IFPRI communicates relevant results in a timely and understandable manner, collaborating closely with partners and engaging in capacity strengthening as an integral part of the process. Indirect communication via the media, civil society, or opinion leaders is often as important as direct communication with policymakers and their advisers. The selection of the most appropriate channels to communicate research findings is itself an important aspect of food policy research. IFPRI and its partners can best achieve impact and advance food security through close integration of research, capacity strengthening, and policy communications.

A partnership and team approach employing a variety of skills is required if research is to influence policy. In addition to researchers with an understanding of key issues related to food, nutrition, agriculture, and natural resource management, the

team needs to include people with expertise in communications, capacity strengthening, and the policymaking process; often it must include policymakers themselves.

In order to carry out influential policy research over the next decade in the changing multi-actor policy environment, IFPRI will need to gain new insights regarding how knowledge is translated into policy action, how action needs are translated into a research agenda, and how a policy research institute should fit into the process. This topic will be integrated into relevant food policy research topics and country food and agricultural policy strategies.

PRIORITY-SETTING CRITERIA

In view of the diverse causes and consequences of food insecurity and malnutrition, IFPRI must have a broadly defined agenda in order to be relevant. At the same time, resource constraints require clear priority setting and focus. To determine its priorities with regard to research, capacity strengthening, and policy communications, IFPRI's work program will

1. conform to IFPRI's mission to provide policy solutions that reduce poverty, hunger, and malnutrition—soon and sustainably—to as many people as possible;
2. be innovative and focused on impact, paying attention to CGIAR priorities and addressing current and emerging issues that affect food security, nutrition, poverty, and gender equity, in consultation with stakeholders and partners; and
3. be based on IFPRI's dynamic comparative advantage to produce results applicable to many countries—that is, international or global public goods.

IFPRI's research and outreach activities must meet all these criteria to be included in IFPRI's agenda. The implementation of the participatory approaches shall be transparent and means tested, including institutionalized feedback mechanisms, such as satisfaction surveys among research partners.

Setting strategic priorities at IFPRI does not occur in a vacuum. The actual “how to” of priority setting and implementation at IFPRI is driven by the philosophy of not only defining strategic research projects from the “top down,” but also of placing high value on the creative initiatives of its researchers and their collaborators in the broad context of priority areas identified from the “bottom up.” The think-tank culture of IFPRI and its broad global network is nurtured for that purpose, encouraging initiatives and risk taking to address new issues within the framework of this strategy. IFPRI recognizes that the need for policy change and the opportunities for policy reform differ significantly—and

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IFPRI's activities are funded from many sources, and the Institute responds with flexibility to fund its strategic research agenda on a sustained basis in dialogue with its donors. IFPRI operates in a complex international environment of funding for food policy research that includes both strategic funding of (partly unrestricted) resources for the Institute, as well as a competitive market for research funding. Priority setting at IFPRI is therefore not just a budget-allocation process. Rather it involves constant two-way interactions with stakeholders and donors, whose agendas IFPRI also aims to influence, always driven by its overarching goal of improved policy for enhanced food and nutrition of the poor.

The thematic priorities set under IFPRI's strategy have very different weights at any point in time; thus, the actual set of priorities is narrower than the number of themes. At any one time, IFPRI has a portfolio of projects in support of its mission and in pursuit of this strategy. Projects at IFPRI move through a natural cycle: some activities are at an early stage of conceptualization and exploratory program development, while others are at the stage of data collection and analyses, others are at a mature stage of synthesis, and still others are in the post-research stage, involving capacity strengthening, communications, and impact-assessment activities. These different phases of progression apply not only to projects, but to the list of thematic priorities below.

Application of the criteria means that IFPRI enters the international development and poverty-reduction agenda through the door of economic change, food, nutrition, agriculture, governance, and natural resource management.

In order to assure that its activities **conform to its mission**, IFPRI seeks to

- identify the most important policy issues (that is, the most severe or widely experienced issues) likely to face the developing world with respect to poverty, food, nutrition, agriculture, and natural resource management, and organize its work program around major themes within these broad areas;
- concentrate on research designed to accelerate sustained economic growth, enhance productivity of food and agricultural systems in developing countries, increase access to food and improve nutrition among rural and urban poor people, and achieve these goals while reducing pressure on fragile natural resources;

- choose countries where it will carry out its work based on the likelihood of generating results that will benefit the greatest number of poor people in the developing world;
- create international public goods by producing results that can be generalized across many countries;
- carry out research in areas where lack of new knowledge is the main constraint to better policymaking and institutional innovation and where both national and international audiences will seek out research with a high likelihood of generating new knowledge that will inform and influence policy debates and decisions in several countries; and
- maintain a suitable balance among its research, capacity building, and policy communications activities.

The environment in which IFPRI and other institutions conduct applied food policy research activities is changing at an accelerating pace. To ensure that research continues to be timely and relevant for policymakers, research and policy-communications priorities will have to be based, insofar as possible, on foresight about future information needs. At the same time, IFPRI assesses the extent to which **current and emerging issues** can be shaped by food policy research (and how), as well as which forces are outside the domain of food policy research.

IFPRI's **dynamic comparative advantage** draws from its previous work but is constantly changing. Many years of experience in conducting household, farm-level, community, and trader surveys contributes to this comparative advantage, and the resulting datasets form the basis of IFPRI's widely shared international public goods. Influential past IFPRI research in such areas as evaluation of social safety-net programs and analysis of public investment priorities has generated demand for additional work on these topics in other countries. Comparative advantage is **dynamic**, however, and IFPRI expands and reshapes its resource mix and research capacity to meet changing demands and needs for food policy research.

IFPRI's comparative advantage also lies in its internationally recruited research staff, its extensive network of collaborative partnerships in the developing world and with advanced research institutions worldwide, its internationally recruited Board of Trustees, and long-term relationships with donors and policymakers in the South and North alike. IFPRI will build on these assets in the next 5 to 10 years, while engaging new partners and

enlisting new skills alongside those already deployed. In so doing, IFPRI will give priority to activities that

- make use of and support its role as an international agricultural research center supported by the CGIAR, including providing opportunities for enhancing the overall impact of the work of the CGIAR and related research institutions; and
- support the development at IFPRI of new concepts, methodologies, and expertise in applied food policy research to meet future challenges.

IFPRI consults with its **stakeholders and partners** when setting its priorities. Those consulted include developing- and developed-country policymakers, implementers, and advisers; donor organizations; researchers and analysts at academic institutions, international agricultural research centers of the CGIAR system and independent institutes, regional networks, and national agricultural research institutes; business and industry organizations; and civil-society organizations. IFPRI consults with them through its day-to-day collaborative research and outreach activities and through formal processes initiated to garner stakeholder input. IFPRI fosters dialogue with policymakers, the relevant world food organizations (including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations [FAO], the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and the World Food Programme), and other UN agencies (including the World Health Organization [WHO], UNICEF, the United Nations Environment Programme [UNEP], and the United Nations Development Programme [UNDP]), the World Bank and regional development banks, bilateral agencies, civil society, and the private sector on how to integrate into the policymaking process new knowledge generated by food policy research.

IFPRI priorities cannot be set in a vacuum of self-governed resource allocation. As limited funding is available to carry out international food policy research, donor interests and the availability of resources to conduct research will bear on IFPRI's priorities, especially at a country level. A broad base of diverse donors facilitates complementary funding for a coherent global research program.

While IFPRI pursues some key themes on a global level, a large part of its work entails research implementation at a country level. IFPRI uses the following criteria to determine the effects, relevance, and feasibility of conducting research, capacity strengthening, and policy communications in a given country:

- Potential benefits to poor and malnourished people in the country and the presence of large concentrations of poor people;

- Participation of relevant geographic regions to allow generalization across countries and, where appropriate, regions;
- Interest among researchers and policymakers in the country;
- Availability of national collaborators able to contribute to the completion of the research and opportunities to help strengthen national institutions through the research collaboration;
- Importance of the country or region to the CGIAR system and opportunities for collaboration with other international agricultural research centers; and
- Acceptable logistical and security conditions.

It is important to note that as part of its priority setting, IFPRI often brings major activities to a close after five to eight years. Long-term research on microfinance, gender and intrahousehold aspects of food policy, productivity of marginal lands, and urban food security has come to an end over the past few years.

II.

Current and Emerging Strategic ISSUES

While a number of recent global developments have been encouraging—for example, the growth of agricultural output in several African countries—hunger and poverty have remained persistent in many parts of the developing world, and the disparities in income and opportunities continue to be significant. Global changes underline the need for a development framework so that the poor can also benefit from the opportunities that these changes offer. Special attention will need to be given to understanding the elements of success in those countries where positive developments have taken place.

In 2000, the member states of the United Nations agreed to work toward eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)—specific, measurable targets to be met by 2015 that will make definite improvements in the lives of the world’s poor and hungry people. The MDGs represent a significant change in development thinking and have become an important focal point for food security and development policy. The MDG of cutting hunger in half by 2015 is especially challenging and cannot be achieved through “business as usual” practices. Research is needed to examine the barriers that are preventing the acceleration of progress toward eliminating hunger in a food-rich world. In this section, current and emerging food policy issues are described to provide context for IFPRI’s own priorities and to stimulate research by the larger food policy research community on these topics.

FUTURE FOOD SYSTEM RISKS AND CHALLENGES

Accelerated economic growth coupled with continued population growth in the developing world increases the demand for food, including high-value agricultural products. Demand for energy production (biofuels), which is partly policy induced, also contributes to scarcity. The resulting higher food prices provide incentives and income opportunities but also create risks for the landless and urban poor.

Compared with a decade or two ago, information about the prevalence and nature of food insecurity—especially as provided by FAO and WHO—has improved. This information facilitates more focused policy action and research. Food insecurity and poverty are strongly correlated, as is shown in Figure 3. Poverty is the main cause of food insecurity, and hunger is also a significant cause

Figure 3
Undernourishment and Poverty



Source: FAO (2002).

of poverty: food insecurity and malnutrition impair people’s ability to develop skills and reduce their productivity. Food policy research should therefore focus on the long-run causes and dynamics of poverty, as well as policies that effectively reduce poverty, not simply the narrower issues of undernourishment or food production.

Policy research should address emerging risks and opportunities early on. Smooth development of food, nutrition, and agricultural systems—even at slow rates—is unlikely. In large developing-country regions, man-made and natural disasters have historically led to severe disruptions. And while the economic and technical resilience and adaptation of food systems may improve, the costs of adaptation typically hit the poorest people the hardest, as is known in the context of famine.

POLITICAL CHANGE AND GOVERNANCE PROBLEMS

Rapid changes are taking place in the structure and authority of governments, the global economy, the structure of the farming sector, and global and local food industries and retail businesses. The fundamental roles of governments are changing. In the “layered

societies” of the past, maintaining a good working relationship with key central government ministries was often considered sufficient to facilitate the translation of food policy research into improved policies. In today’s “network societies,” government authority is more diffuse, and other actors are involved, including local governments, business and industry, NGOs, and other parts of civil society. In numerous instances, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, states have failed, and protracted civil wars have proliferated. In many countries, NGOs have rapidly expanded their role in debate and action surrounding food security and natural resource management.

Political systems have a profound impact on people’s participation and power, which in turn influence access to basic public goods and services related to food, agriculture, nutrition, and health. Further, political change greatly affects the functioning of food systems and their market and non-market components. As political systems have changed with increasing rapidity in the past decade, the scope of food policy and related research is changing in many countries and even globally. Policy research must address changes in political systems along with the greater diversity of actors, the more complex context in which food systems and food policy operate, and the capacity of local organizations to take up new roles. Such research must engage stakeholders as active participants and not simply objects of study.

GLOBALIZATION

Globalization involves a complex set of developments that includes trade liberalization, the opening up of economies in both developed and developing countries, more integrated international capital markets, international migration, a freer flow of information and technology, and even the spread of cultural trends. It is likely to continue over the next decade and beyond, even though the global economic slowdown of recent years has caused some deceleration. Research is needed to examine how to enhance the effects of globalization for poverty reduction, food security of low-income people, and sustainable natural resource use in developing countries. Research can help in the design of new global institutions to manage globalization in pro-poor directions. It may be that globalization can best be managed by and for poor people at the local and national levels. However, research is also needed on the evolution and change of global institutions and their effects on food security.

EVOLUTION OF CONSUMER- AND INDUSTRY-DRIVEN FOOD SYSTEMS

According to UN projections, the world's population will reach 7.5 billion in 2020, with virtually all the growth occurring in developing countries, mainly in urban areas. This figure is a revision downward from previous estimates, but it poses a real challenge for the global food system. Research must provide policy options that can address rapid demographic shifts and ensure sustainable livelihoods for poor people in urban and rural areas alike as urban–rural linkages change.

An emerging issue in this context is the rapid and fundamental movement of world food systems toward industrialized food processing, long-distance marketing, and retail business dominance. Research is needed on policies to ensure that all links in the global supply chains serve poor consumers' diet quantity and quality needs, as well as poor farmers' market needs, and that they facilitate efficient operation of the food industry.

At the same time, the nature of farming is changing in many developing countries because of the aging of the farm population, changing roles of men and women in agriculture, rural-to-urban migration, the urbanization of rural areas, and the decreasing cost of capital relative to labor. Research is needed on the policies and institutions—including cooperatives and farmers' associations—that will assure poor farmers access to resources such as land, water, and extension services. Appropriate institutional developments, supported by research, are also needed to provide rural poor people—including small-scale traders, nonfarm rural entrepreneurs, and farmers—with access to credit, savings, and insurance institutions. As the result of increased urbanization and economic change and urban poverty, research will also be needed to better understand the food-supply chains.

ENERGY, CLIMATE CHANGE, AND THE USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Demand for biofuels changes the economic valuation of crops, forests, land, and water. Climate change and energy scarcity are increasingly impacting agriculture and the natural resource base. Natural resource degradation is rampant in many less-favored areas of developing countries, which are home to millions of poor people. Degradation and lack of access to high-quality land frequently push poor people into clearing additional land, which in turn contributes to further degradation, productivity losses, reduced biodiversity, and, in areas with poor food markets, decreased diet diversity. To avoid achieving food security at the expense of the environment, farmers must intensify sustainable agricultural production—that is, they must achieve greater yields per unit of land and water

over time, with the assistance of concomitant improvements in institutional support, incentives, infrastructure, and inputs. Secure property rights and other policies offering poor farmers incentives for conservation, as well as access to yield-increasing technologies, are critical. The productivity and sustainability of alternative farming practices, including organic agriculture, are related research issues. Research is needed in the following areas:

- the role of agriculture in climate change;
- the role of technology, trade, and formal and informal insurance in helping to facilitate global and local adaptation to climate change;
- policies for landscapes and land use that protect the world's soil fertility, promote integrated nutrient management, ensure that poor farmers have information about plant-nutrient use in various production systems, and foster efficient and effective plant-nutrient markets;
- institutional and policy changes that will improve water-use efficiency and allocation among competing uses; and
- the conservation and sustainable management of plant genetic resources.

EMERGING FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGIES

Extraordinary new technologies—in areas such as molecular biology (including genetic engineering, tissue culture, and marker-assisted breeding), information, communications, energy, and nanotechnology—are revolutionizing global productivity. Many of these technologies have a bearing on food and nutrition systems. To help provide benefits to poor people, research is needed to identify appropriate policies, through stakeholder consultations and other means, in areas such as intellectual property rights, biosafety and food safety regulations, competitive markets for improved seed, facilitation of access to new technologies, and the allocation of public and private research funds. It is necessary for researchers to engage with the private sector to ensure access to proprietary products and processes that can address the problems and opportunities facing poor farmers and consumers. Research should also include participatory assessments of new technologies and their effects on low-income farmers and consumers, as well as identify the policies and institutions that can ensure that these technologies lead to improved nutrition and food security.

GENDER INEQUALITY AND OTHER DISCRIMINATION

Policies and cultural practices that marginalize people on the basis of gender, age, class, caste, religion, ethnicity, race, agroecological location, and physical ability contribute to food insecurity. In many parts of the developing world, gender discrimination negatively affects production, household income, asset accumulation, food security, and nutrition. Yet women play an enormous role in crop and livestock production throughout the developing world. IFPRI research has found that giving women the same access to physical and human resources as men increases agricultural productivity dramatically. Compared with men, women tend to devote a greater share of the resources they receive to household food security and child nutrition. Improvements in female education and women's overall social status relative to that of men help to reduce child malnutrition significantly. Translating these research findings into policy action remains a challenge. New issues in research on gender require attention, such as developing a more comprehensive understanding of women's empowerment and the role of women's access to assets, including social and network capital and technology in addition to land and finance.

HEALTH CRISES AND DIET CHANGE

Broader nutrition-related health problems remain insufficiently addressed. HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, micronutrient deficiencies, and chronic diseases are all compromising food and nutrition security in many developing countries. Inadequate dietary intake and disease leads to malnutrition, which is often called “hidden hunger,” afflicting more than 2 billion people with a devastating impact on health services. Changing lifestyles in developing countries are also creating new health problems, including the appearance of hunger and obesity in the same communities and even the same households, a phenomenon that greatly increases the prevalence of noncommunicable chronic diseases in segments of the population. Research needs to explain how food policy interacts with these health crises and why the diet transition from hunger to health has failed. Food- and water-safety issues affecting the poor need a lot more attention by research as food-supply chains become more extended and as access to safe drinking water remains a main public health issue for the poor.

III.

Programmatic and Operational DIRECTIONS

IFPRI CAN BUILD ON PAST WORK

IFPRI is part of a large global food policy research system. In order to be effective, IFPRI sets priorities and works in partnership with many other centers of excellence in related fields. As part of the CGIAR system, IFPRI is particularly well positioned to conduct international public goods research, cutting across production, technology, natural resource management, nutrition, and governance issues related to poor people. IFPRI's long-term strategy will build on its accumulated knowledge, experience, and collaborative relationships.

Since its inception in 1975, IFPRI has been an innovator in the field, as well as an adapter and promoter of the insights of other leading thinkers in food and development policy. Partly as a result of the cumulative research experience of the past 30 years, a number of significant paradigm shifts have taken place in food policy:

- Focus has shifted from farms and smallholders to poor consumers and food security.
- Attention has also shifted from agricultural production to a broader notion of food systems, including distribution and processing services.
- Researchers and policymakers have given increased attention to the need for sustainable management of the natural resource base upon which food and agriculture depend.
- Policymakers have moved from making general statements about food policy to defining specific targets for reducing the number of undernourished people, notably in the MDGs.

IFPRI's key research themes have evolved in response to stakeholder demand, donor concerns, and the changing food policy environment.

RESEARCH AND OUTREACH

Most research at IFPRI is undertaken through programs with a life of five to eight years. When IFPRI extends the life of existing programs, it gives them the same careful consideration, based on its priority-setting criteria, as it does when initiating

new programs. All new programs undergo a careful ex ante impact assessment on food security and poverty reduction. Exploratory research activities may be smaller in scale than established research programs. IFPRI has brought a number of research projects to conclusion and will continually evaluate and build on its research findings to initiate several new programs in line with this strategy paper.

Nine partly interlinked, strategic themes for the next decade are outlined below and are grouped into three overarching focus areas. Theme weights differ in the overall IFPRI portfolio, and the direction of the level of effort also differs among themes. Some are scaled up, some continue at current levels, and some are scheduled to decline (see Table 1).

Table 1. IFPRI's themes with weights and directions of level of effort

Focus area	Research theme	Weight and direction of level of effort
A. Efficient and fair <i>functioning</i> of global and national food and agriculture systems	1. Outlooks and global change	
	2. Globalization, trade, and markets	
	3. Natural resource policies	
	4. Risks and emergencies	
B. Effective strategies and <i>governance</i> at the global, regional, and national levels	5. Governance and policy processes	
	6. Development strategies	
	7. Poverty, nutrition, and social protection	
C. Enhancing pro-poor food and agriculture system <i>innovations</i>	8. Diet, health, and food safety	
	9. Science and technology	
Policy communications		
Capacity strengthening		

Notes: indicates low budget allocation indicates moderate budget allocation indicates high budget allocation. Arrow directions indicate the following: indicates maintenance of current level of effort indicates an increase in current level of effort.

RESEARCH

Focus Area A. Efficient and Fair Functioning of Global and National Food and Agriculture Systems

This area focuses on policies that address constraints to achieving food and nutrition security and that support more efficient functioning of global and national food, nutrition, and agriculture systems, including policies that promote the inclusion of low-income countries, improve the food and nutrition security situation of poor people, enhance the pro-poor functioning of supply chains from producers to consumers, and support the sustainable management of natural resources:

1. Outlooks and global change. *Global food and agriculture outlooks and options for policies, including climate change and technology scenarios*

IFPRI will continue to issue periodic reports on the global and regional food situation and outlook, and to monitor progress on internationally agreed-upon food-security targets, based on projections using IFPRI's International Model for Policy Analysis of Agricultural Commodities and Trade (IMPACT). In addition, IFPRI will also undertake longer-term scenario assessments of food and natural resource security, including energy. The ongoing integrated global water and food modeling is being extended to land and soil resources. This theme will assess long-term scenarios for agricultural and natural resource adaptation strategies related to changes in global climate, energy, and water cycles, including examining policies, investments, adaptation, and mitigation to maintain environmentally sustainable pro-poor growth.

2. Globalization, trade, and markets. *Guidance on globalization processes and on trade and domestic market policies for inclusive growth*

IFPRI will continue to study the policies and institutions needed to manage the globalization of the food and agriculture system in a pro-poor fashion. This work will emphasize global agricultural trade negotiations, linkages between domestic policies and globalization, the impact of developed-country policies on developing-country food security, and pro-poor policies along the entire food chain, given the growing importance of consumers and the processing and retail industries as food-system drivers. Economywide trade and investment analysis will be combined with trade policy research focused on developing countries' strategic decision problems, including the links between food and energy markets. The analysis of food supply

chains will help to better understand how producers can benefit more from increased production and delivery.

3. Natural resource policies. *Sustainable and efficient natural resource management (water, land use, soils, biodiversity, and energy)*

IFPRI will continue current work on policies to sustainably manage natural resources for food security, focusing on land, water, and gender issues. IFPRI will continue to carry out water policy research, emphasizing water rights, economic incentives, and institutional change. New research will look at policy issues related to the climate change–food security–water security nexus. IFPRI will continue to focus on the role of property rights and collective action in the management of natural resources for food and agriculture, in close collaboration with its CGIAR sister centers, especially under the Systemwide Program on Collective Action and Property Rights (CAPRI).

4. Risks and emergencies. *Identifying risks for people’s food security and improving policies on emergencies and postcrisis development*

New and ongoing research, drawing on past IFPRI work on famine, will focus on disaster prevention, mitigation, and response, including conflict, HIV/AIDS, other health problems, and weather-related shocks. The work will emphasize rebuilding postcrisis food, agriculture, and nutrition systems at national levels, as well as exploring the roles of local institutions in preventing crises through sustainable natural resource management related to food, with a major focus on women and children. Research will also examine how to improve early warning systems and international crisis response, including food aid.

Focus Area B. Effective Strategies and Governance at the Global, Regional, and National Levels

This area focuses on policies that improve global, regional, and national (including local) governance and enhance political participation in, and institutions for, pro-poor food, nutrition, and agricultural policies and related services:

5. Governance and policy processes. *Improving governance and policy processes in food, nutrition, and agriculture*

It will be essential for research to focus on the constraints and weaknesses of institutions and to examine the complementary roles of different actors (the state, the private

sector, and civil society) in food policy, along with their attendant responsibilities. This includes (a) determining the means for the effective political enfranchisement of food-insecure people; (b) examining how policy that enhances food and nutrition security is made, including how research influences policymaking, and how policy is implemented; (c) targeting the appropriate (decentralized) levels and government structures for making food security-related policies and providing nutrition-related public goods; and (d) promoting principles of good governance, such as accountability, rights, and transparency in the food system. Linking gender research more closely with political systems and governance research is also likely to lead to new insights.

6. Development strategies. *Strategies for development focusing on pro-poor growth, the role of agriculture, the transformation of smallholder farming, enhanced urban–rural linkages, and nonfarm rural employment*

IFPRI will provide research that supports the formulation of comprehensive strategies for food, nutrition, agriculture, and rural development in a broader development policy framework. Key research issues are complementarities and competition for public resources, and the scheduling of reforms. Programs to enhance capacity to devise strategies on the basis of this research will be an integral part of the work. Research on individual countries is identified in a carefully defined international context, limited to regional and comparative studies to facilitate international public goods knowledge.

Ongoing research will examine policies and institutions affecting smallholder farming, such as those related to market development; yield-increasing research and technology; and access to land, credit, extension services, crop insurance, and other resources. Research will study opportunities to participate in high-value crop and livestock production, including the role of farmer associations, cooperatives, and contract farming, as well as the implications of a reduced state role in the agricultural economy. Women play a key role in the small-farm sector, and the research will pay attention to factors that contribute to the productivity and well-being of women.

With urbanization and rural change, new research will address urban–rural linkages, including consumption linkages, resource flows, communications, and labor migration and gender roles, as well as policy linkages. Research will look at public goods provision in urban and rural areas and will revisit infrastructure—broadly defined—based on its potentially undervalued role for rural development,

agricultural growth, and sustainable livelihoods in both urban and rural areas. Research is also needed on how to create jobs through human resource development, rural industries, and related organizational innovation, given that such jobs have stimulated increases in the participation of women in the labor force in many countries. IFPRI will focus its research in this broad area on policies for food- and agriculture-related urban–rural linkages.

7. Poverty, nutrition, and social protection. *Policies and interventions for poverty reduction, social protection, and nutrition improvement, including a focus on smallholders*

It is critical to identify policies and interventions that have led to sustainable reductions in poverty and hunger. New IFPRI research will build on past studies (such as earlier work on commercialization, infrastructure, famine prevention, vulnerability, and shocks) to understand what policies, interventions, and circumstances have been conducive to reducing poverty and undernourishment, especially for preschool children, and what the long-term effects of such policies are likely to be. The role of gender inequities in perpetuating undernutrition will remain high on IFPRI's agenda. IFPRI will continue to participate in designing and evaluating innovative poverty alleviation programs that simultaneously improve child nutrition and other dimensions of human development, such as health and education.

Focus Area C. Enhancing Pro-poor Food and Agriculture System Innovations

This area focuses on policies that foster scientific and institutional innovation and technology use for the benefit of poor people in developing countries and related comprehensive food, nutrition, agriculture, and development strategies:

8. Diet, health, and food safety. *Policies to enhance food and diet quality, health, and food and water safety in developing countries*

The increasingly complex food system, involving extended food chains and processing systems, has heightened public interest in food safety. As safe drinking water is itself a food, food and water safety are inseparable. Food and water safety are increasingly issues in international trade. New IFPRI research is needed on how safety is addressed along the food chain (including internationally), drawing on data from cross-national experiences, including those of industrialized countries.

IFPRI will devote increasing attention to micronutrient deficiencies, especially in its role as coleader (along with the International Center for Tropical Agriculture) of

HarvestPlus, the CGIAR Biofortification Challenge Program that breeds micronutrient-dense staple crops and promotes their consumption by poor people. As retail food businesses increasingly reach out to poor people, new research will also examine food quality for poor people in different environments and at different stages in the life cycle. Additional new research will address the dietary changes that accompany economic growth, globalization, and urbanization. As incomes and food availability increase, diets are not necessarily improving in quality. New diets increasingly include energy-dense (and micronutrient-poor) foods, which lead to obesity even among resource-constrained households, with adverse chronic health outcomes, an issue that IFPRI has started to address in its research.

9. Science and technology. *Food- and nutrition-related science and technology policy and innovations serving poor people*

In close collaboration with other CGIAR centers, IFPRI will increasingly provide ex ante and ex post technology policy research. This will focus on how to make technological developments relevant and accessible to poor people, with particular emphasis on intellectual property rights issues and the potential of public–private partnership arrangements. The opportunities and risks of biotechnology, including genetic engineering, for smallholder farming systems, poor consumers, and trade will remain high on the research agenda, along with biosafety policy issues. Research will also examine the closely related issues of the conservation and sustainable management of genetic resources for food and agriculture and the preservation of biodiversity. The impact of information and communications technologies on the connectedness of rural areas and on food, nutrition, and targeted poverty reduction will be a new cross-cutting research theme related to food markets and rural services. IFPRI will continue to analyze data on investments in and national policies regarding agricultural R&D and to examine the factors that inhibit or enhance the performance, effectiveness, and efficiency of agricultural science, technology, and innovation.

IFPRI will seek to foster policy, institutional, and organizational change in order to enhance the impact of agricultural research and innovation on food security, poverty reduction, economic growth, and sustainable development. Research and related outreach activities in this area are geared to bring about change in agricultural innovation systems so as to increase the contribution of research to agricultural development for poor people. This work will be carried out in close

consultation with the affected stakeholders, including national agricultural research systems (NARSs) in developing countries and new partners in the private sector and civil society.

POLICY COMMUNICATIONS

IFPRI has impact when hungry and poor people in developing countries benefit from its research findings; when it engages in dialogue with all those who can use IFPRI research results and foster public awareness about food and nutrition security; and when key stakeholder groups in developing and developed countries turn to IFPRI as a prime contact for relevant, factual, timely, and competent information on all questions related to food and nutrition security, poverty eradication, and natural resource management.

IFPRI's approach to food policy communications includes reaching key stakeholders as well as listening to them. IFPRI undertakes its strategic communications activities through a Communications Division that works closely with the research and outreach divisions and IFPRI's 2020 Vision Initiative. State-of-the-art research needs state-of-the-art communications to achieve maximum impact.

The thematic content of IFPRI's communications activities is determined by the research and outreach themes of IFPRI's strategy. The Communications Division supports researchers in the development of project-specific communications platforms, helps them define audiences for their various research products, and assists them in disseminating their findings worldwide by creating appropriate communications tools.

The Institute wants to communicate with key stakeholders. The composition of key stakeholder groups and the priority with which IFPRI addresses these groups will differ based on the

- type of communications activity (institutewide, divisional, or project specific);
- area of research;
- phase of the project; and
- area of desired impact (national, regional, or global).

Key stakeholder groups may also differ in what they know about the issues and the Institute, its strategic themes, and specific projects. It is therefore important that research and communications staff differentiate these groups and continuously update their composition in in-house databases in line with the envisaged communications activities.

IFPRI distinguishes four stakeholder groups, in broad terms, according to their prime interests:

- *The experts:* mainly an academic and expert audience that specializes in the research topic at hand, the research approach, the scientific methodology used, the results, and the detailed documentation of how the results were obtained.
- *The insiders:* a group that has a professional interest in the research results and how they could best be translated into solutions for specific problems. This group includes, for example, national policy advisers who give their recommendations to policymakers, experts in the donor community, and other individuals who have a general academic interest in the research.
- *The interested:* a group of stakeholders that generally wants to form an opinion on key development issues based on sound research. Policymakers, students, and politically interested people fall into this segment.
- *The general public:* nonspecialists who are not familiar with the research subject and are without professional or obvious interest in the subject matter. For this stakeholder segment, the original research results must be presented in a highly condensed and simplified form, sometimes even at the level of sound bites. This group is reached primarily through the media.

Whereas the global language for the “experts” and “insiders” is English, communicating with the “interested” and the “general public” requires translations and local language skills.

Based on research content judged from a communications perspective, IFPRI makes an informed decision on the most appropriate channel for communicating with key stakeholders. The optimal communications channel will vary from project to project, from region to region, and from phase to phase for a given activity. The suggested mix of channels—such as newsletters, conferences, workshops, formal receptions, list-serve announcements, research reports, the website, regional seminars, and high-level discussions—will vary from project to project and is outlined in the communications plans of the Institute, the divisions, and the individual projects. Increasingly, IFPRI will focus on two-way communication through such vehicles as multistakeholder dialogues. To help researchers communicate directly with stakeholders, training, advice, and other relevant support are provided on various presentational skills.

A major goal of IFPRI's communications work is to gain a thorough understanding of the various policy processes in major regions in order to better understand when and where (that is, in which fora and whether at the national or international level) IFPRI wants to communicate.

Decentralization of operations offers IFPRI important new opportunities to reach policymakers and other stakeholders in developing countries and to engage in two-way communication. The establishment of links between policy and research communities, the undertaking of collaboration between IFPRI and other organizations, and the opening of offices in developing countries allow IFPRI to gain better insight into the political context of each country, to get even closer to important national stakeholders and events, and to identify when and where research findings are the most likely to be adopted or to change behaviors and thinking.

Policy communication can have impact only if it is pursued as a continuous activity between key stakeholder groups and researchers. This ongoing dialogue provides a reality check, ensuring that IFPRI's research and outreach programs focus on the needs of poor and hungry people in developing countries so that research findings advance the Institute's mission to provide policy solutions that reduce poverty, hunger, and malnutrition.

IFPRI does not conduct its research in a vacuum. Two-way communication through vehicles such as multistakeholder dialogues and closer interaction with policymakers and stakeholders in developing countries through IFPRI offices in Addis Ababa and New Delhi keeps IFPRI research relevant and facilitates buy-in of IFPRI research outcomes by policymakers and stakeholders.

CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

Capacity development has been a strong contributing factor to agricultural growth, poverty alleviation, and economic development. IFPRI, as a global leader in food policy research, can play a key role in strengthening capacity for policy research and analysis through the development of a broad strategy for capacity strengthening.

To be more effective in promoting learning to achieve its mission, IFPRI has consolidated its capacity-strengthening programs. It comprises the following components: (a) capacity strengthening of NARSs in developing countries, with special emphasis on Africa; (b) cooperation with all IFPRI research and outreach divisions and the 2020 Vision Initiative to provide an institutional focal point for learning, training, and capacity-strengthening activities; (c) capacity-strengthening research; (d) linkages to other CGIAR centers' capacity-strengthening activities; and (e) support for university cooperation in capacity strengthening.

The aim is to develop the capacity of researchers, policymakers, trainers, practitioners, administrators, extension workers, students, community leaders, and others to address food policy issues through research, analysis, communications, policy formulation, institutional change, and organizational management, including the strengthening of effective networks.

Collaboration

Capacity strengthening takes place in collaboration with IFPRI's research and outreach divisions and external organizations. Learning subjects are identified together with partners and through the research findings of IFPRI's five research divisions and the relevant CGIAR programs. Capacity strengthening also works within IFPRI projects to jointly deliver activities with local partners to NARSs; the private sector; networks; and international, regional, and national organizations. IFPRI will expand its activities to collaborate more with the other 14 CGIAR centers in delivering capacity-strengthening activities and to learn from their experiences in capacity strengthening. In general, IFPRI's actions should not only strengthen the capacity of its local partners, but also strengthen IFPRI's capacity to meet the needs of its partners.

IFPRI implements its activities through networks at the international, regional, and national levels. Since men and women may articulate different needs and priorities, IFPRI strives for a balanced gender composition among these networks. One of the goals of the capacity-strengthening strategy is to deliver most learning programs and material through partner organizations. IFPRI researchers' primary role is to guide or conduct train-the-trainer programs, develop distance-learning modules, and facilitate relationships among relevant capacity-strengthening institutions. With the other CGIAR centers, IFPRI will also disseminate material through the Global Open Food and Agriculture University. This supportive institution, which is in the process of being created, will use Internet and other distance-education technologies to strengthen the traditional and open academic programs of other international, regional, and national universities and distance-education institutions in the developing world.

Thematic Areas

In terms of thematic areas for capacity strengthening, IFPRI will develop material on policy research and analysis skills related to agriculture, food security, nutrition, governance, trade, organization and management of institutions, science and technology policy, institutional innovations, marketing, and natural resource management

informed by a gender perspective. IFPRI's capacity-strengthening unit emphasizes NARs in particular and especially African NARs. In keeping with IFPRI's long-standing emphasis on the integration of research and outreach, IFPRI will also carry out research on capacity strengthening. This research will focus on capacity strengthening in such areas as agricultural biotechnology, biosafety, and biodiversity; gender; diversification into high-value agriculture; water and land management; governance, rural development strategy, and community participation; institutional innovation; organizational and program management; trade policy reform; and privatization.

Monitoring and Evaluation

An institutewide process for monitoring and evaluating IFPRI's capacity-strengthening activities addresses weaknesses and facilitates learning. Evaluation is not simply a post-activity exercise; rather, through monitoring, it is an ongoing activity that enables adaptive management and maintenance of a learning program's quality. Evaluation addresses both the quality of programs and their impact on research, policymaking, communications, and organizational management.

KEY FEATURES OF IFPRI'S OPERATIONS

Flexibility and Focus

In the coming years, IFPRI will retain its ability to be nimble. The food security situation and the environment that shapes it continue to change rapidly. Conducting food policy research in such circumstances requires not only the foresight to anticipate emerging trends and issues, but also the ability to initiate or terminate programs in light of changing circumstances. This flexibility presupposes continued responsiveness to the articulated needs of poor and food-insecure people themselves, programmatic partners, and donors, as well as maintenance of cutting-edge expertise on food security issues, research methodologies, knowledge management, communications, and capacity building. It also requires efficient management to carry out programs effectively and the ability to continue mobilizing sufficient unrestricted funding so that IFPRI can undertake changes in programs as appropriate and necessary.

IFPRI will focus its research, policy-communications, and capacity-strengthening activities in two ways: first, in terms of **geographic emphasis** and, second, in terms of **core competencies**.

Geographic Emphasis

IFPRI presently invests approximately 50 percent of its regionally focused programmatic budget in work on Sub-Saharan Africa, 32 percent on Asia, 12 percent on Latin America and the Caribbean, and 6 percent on West Asia and North Africa. The main focus in the coming years will remain on Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, where food insecurity and undernutrition are broadest and deepest. Outside of Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, IFPRI will emphasize work in the most food-insecure areas. In Asia, IFPRI will expand research cooperation in China. With other CGIAR centers, IFPRI will further develop networking capacities in these countries and regions, as well as in Southeast Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Core Competencies

IFPRI will continue to emphasize work in its areas of comparative advantage and on major issues related to food security. IFPRI will maintain and strengthen its core competence in agricultural and development economics and will continue to add selectively to its existing capacity in nutrition, sociology, anthropology, political science, gender analysis, geography and geographic information systems, and information management. There is a recognized need for collaborators and consultants in these fields, as well as in epidemiology, public health, natural resource management, political economy, law, and biology. IFPRI can obtain the expertise needed in all these areas by hiring staff and developing collaborative relationships.

Organizational Structure

IFPRI is organized into seven divisions:

- Environment and Production Technology
- Markets, Trade, and Institutions
- Food Consumption and Nutrition
- Development Strategy and Governance
- International Service for National Agricultural Research
- Communications
- Finance and Administration

The programmatic IFPRI office in New Delhi is headed by IFPRI's Director in Asia and is developing a research program on key food policy issues of relevance with partners in the region and with IFPRI research divisions.

IFPRI's Africa Coordinator facilitates coordination of IFPRI research across divisions, enhances strategic initiatives, and gives support to African organizations to advance policy dialogue, advocacy, and technical advice on strategic choices and options.

IFPRI's 2020 Vision Initiative for Food, Agriculture, and the Environment facilitates future-oriented high-level policy dialogues and new research initiatives on emerging food policy issues in cooperation with all divisions.

Staff Diversity

IFPRI will continue to fill positions with the best-qualified candidates but will aggressively seek to include more female and developing-country researchers in the applicant pool so as to further enhance the diversity of its internationally recruited staff.

Partnerships

IFPRI will nurture and extend its existing network of stakeholders, composed primarily of developing-country government agencies and academic research institutions, advanced research institutions in industrialized countries, and other CGIAR centers. Regional networks of policy analysts, policy advisers, and policymakers will play an increasingly important role in IFPRI partnerships.

At the same time, IFPRI will expand collaboration with new partners. These include parliaments (particularly committees and members responsible for food, nutrition, agriculture, and rural development), developing-country and international NGOs, operational development organizations, private-sector institutions, and small-farmer and community-based organizations in developing countries. IFPRI will also expand its collaboration to include organizations and scholars that are working to ensure gender equity as it relates to food security and rural development.

Research Excellence

IFPRI ensures the quality of its research inputs and outputs through appropriate self-managed ex ante and ex post reviews and evaluations, particularly proposal reviews and peer review of IFPRI-published research reports and books. IFPRI researchers will continue to publish findings in external peer-reviewed journals as well, thus exposing the Institute to mainstream academic quality checks in the various disciplines. As it has in the

past, IFPRI will hold internal program reviews and commission periodic external reviews. IFPRI will also conduct surveys of users of IFPRI research outputs and produce citation indexes showing the extent of the use of IFPRI research.

Impact Assessment

Impact evaluation is a growing imperative in publicly funded institutions such as IFPRI, to improve both accountability and effectiveness. IFPRI follows international best practice in improving accountability to partners and stakeholders. If it is internalized as part of dynamic and forward-looking self-evaluation processes and does not stifle creativity, impact evaluation can prove extremely useful to an organization. As IFPRI initiates new research, capacity-strengthening, and policy-communications activities, these will increasingly include ex ante impact assessments and plans for ex post assessment as part of program design. This practice will help to institutionalize impact assessment in IFPRI's organizational culture. Other indicators of influence include reprint requests, Internet downloads, invitations to deliver papers, citation indexes, and quotes in the media. IFPRI will further invest in methodology development for appropriate impact assessment of and feedback on program design. IFPRI underscores the importance of impact assessment and will expand its efforts in this area.

Regional Decentralization

IFPRI views itself as a global research organization, and therefore its staff members should be located where they are most needed and most effective. IFPRI recognizes the benefits of regional decentralization for its work, and plans to have a larger proportion of its staff in Africa and Asia in particular. In addition, IFPRI is increasingly engaged with regional policy and research networks in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, the main focal regions of its work (see box on pages 32–34). African governments are seeking support for developing national poverty reduction strategies and agricultural sector investment plans. In Asia, food policy research capacity is growing. In Latin America, IFPRI can play an important catalytic and supportive role vis-à-vis national and regional researchers. Integration of IFPRI staff into regional networks would enhance IFPRI's ability to play these roles in relation to regional partners and would also enhance capacity strengthening and dissemination of IFPRI materials. The strategy calls for further regional decentralization of IFPRI in a network context.

IFPRI will only establish field offices based on programmatic needs. The resources required to carry out decentralization would follow from program-driven decisions. IFPRI will carefully consider the relative merits of a strong set of research teams at headquarters versus increased distribution in developing-country regions.

Size and Funding

Programmatic priorities are closely related to IFPRI's size and budget. Form will follow function: decisions about *what* will drive those about *how, where, and how much*. IFPRI recognizes that year-to-year funding realities have to be assessed. Operating at low fixed costs, IFPRI would still be an effective institute at a smaller size, but some of the research, capacity-strengthening, and policy-communications priorities described here would remain unaddressed. Official development assistance will remain the primary source of funds, but IFPRI will intensify its efforts to diversify revenue sources. IFPRI recognizes that restricted funds will continue to account for the bulk of resources and that nominally unrestricted funding will increasingly have "targets" attached. The Institute will continue to seek adequate unrestricted funds from a diverse set of donors to maintain its freedom to operate in a flexible manner and address food security issues that would otherwise not be addressed. The aim of IFPRI's fundraising activities is to continue providing the knowledge needed for food and nutrition policies that serve poor people.

IFPRI'S STRATEGY IN AFRICA, SOUTH ASIA, AND LATIN AMERICA

Africa

Significant institutional and strategic developments have marked Africa's agricultural and food policy environment in recent years. In the past three years, three of the main regional economic communities—the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC)—have all adopted new common agricultural growth and food and nutrition security strategies. During the same period, the two subregional research organizations—the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) and *Conseil Ouest et Centre Africain pour la Recherche et le Développement Agricole*/West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF/WECARD)—have also adopted new regional strategies for agricultural research. At the continental level, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), under the auspices of the African Union, launched the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) in 2005. Within the CGIAR, efforts are underway to implement regional medium-term plans to improve coordination and strengthen partnerships with the research community across Africa and raise impact.

In order to adjust to these new developments and ensure greater impact in the future, IFPRI has responded through the elaboration of a new strategy for research, capacity building, and communications in Africa and the establishment of targeted collaboration around key strategic partnerships. The Institute's approach links interdivisional networking within IFPRI with targeted partnerships around the regional and continental programs and agendas mentioned above.

IFPRI's focus in the *research area* in Africa is to facilitate more strategic use of existing research results and expertise within the Institute by the larger community of policy researchers and practitioners across Africa, and initiate new research activities across divisions to guide and inform the design and implementation of policies and strategies under the emerging agendas at continental and regional levels.

In the areas of policy communications and capacity building, the strategy emphasizes engagement with the leading institutions shaping the agricultural and food policy agenda in order to more effectively support and inform ongoing policy debate, dialogue, and advocacy in the sector.

In terms of strategic partnerships, the Institute's approach in Africa is three-pronged. First, research activities are aligned with systemwide priorities on the emerging agricultural and food policy agendas across Africa, while still emphasizing the international public goods aspects of IFPRI's work. Second, the Institute's research methodologies are being adjusted to better understand and more effectively support the positive changes behind Africa's recent agricultural growth and economic recovery. Finally, its strategic partnerships are being broadened and deepened beyond the traditional research sphere to reach out to other key actors shaping the design and implementation of agricultural and food policies.

Through its partnerships, IFPRI targets a limited set of critical institutions at continental and regional levels, which in turn allows for more effective dissemination and use of its research results in support of policymaking processes at the country level. In addition, the partnerships allow IFPRI to align its research agenda more effectively with priority issues and concerns facing African policymakers and anticipate emerging ones. They will also facilitate the exposure of the Institute's staff to successes on the ground, as well as increase the understanding of the factors behind those successes.

As part of the above partnerships, IFPRI has collaborative agreements with two major regional economic communities (ECOWAS and COMESA) and the two subregional research organizations (ASARECA and CORAF) following the cooperation with the NEPAD Secretariat starting in late 2003. The Institute also has agreements with three of the Africa-based CGIAR centers to strengthen collaboration in policy and strategy-analysis research. These partnerships are not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, the usual collaborative activities of individual researchers, which remain an important part of their research work.

The following priority themes have been identified in the Africa strategy under each of the key focus areas:

Focus Area A. Efficient and Fair Functioning of Global and National Food and Agriculture Systems

1. Operation and efficiency of domestic and regional markets, particularly agribusiness and export supply-chain development and market access for smallholders
2. Global trade research other than that already carried out at the subregional and country level as part of work under the preceding theme, and, on occasion, analyzing long-term changes of immediate relevance to African countries

Focus Area B. Effective Strategies and Governance at the Global, Regional, and National Levels

1. Growth and poverty-reduction strategies, particularly to improve agriculture-related governance, public-expenditure management, infrastructure development, and service delivery in the context of emerging decentralization and political pluralism
2. Institutions and policies for the sustainable management and productivity of natural resources
3. Hunger-related safety nets for disaster and postconflict situations, nutrition policies, and employment creation for vulnerable populations
4. Food- and water-safety and health policies linked to agriculture

Focus Area C. Enhancing Pro-poor Food and Agriculture System Innovations

1. Strategies and policies to improve institutional performance and build capacity in new and emerging areas of science and technology
2. Climate change and its impact on food and poverty

South Asia

IFPRI launched its South Asia Initiative (SAI) in 2002 to improve the understanding of and analyze the emerging challenges to agriculture in the region and the implications for food security and poverty alleviation. SAI is a multidivisional effort. To advance its long-term commitment to the region, IFPRI opened a new office in New Delhi in 2006 to significantly scale up its research, policy analysis, and capacity-strengthening activities.

SAI addresses the emerging challenges in the region through a three-pronged strategy:

- IFPRI established the *Policy Analysis and Advisory Network for South Asia (PAANSA)*, a network of agricultural policymakers, advisers, and analysts in South Asia, to create more effective dialogue on policies in such areas as food security and poverty alleviation.
- Key experts from each member country are undertaking high-quality collaborative research on critical policy issues in the region related to food, agriculture, and natural resources. IFPRI is carrying out applied research studies with collaborating institutions based on the priorities identified. Research consists of collection and analysis of data, development of new methodologies, and training and exchange programs.
- In order to increase the capacity for policy analysis and implementation, two sets of capacity-strengthening activities have been initiated. The first set involves the exchange of researchers between IFPRI and collaborating institutions. The second set involves the development of training workshops to strengthen policy analysis and policy communication capacity. In selected countries, IFPRI holds training programs on certain tools of applied policy research not only for collaborators, but also for a wider audience. As a result of these programs involving local institutions, NGOs, and the private sector, IFPRI is strengthening local capacity to enable applied policy research to continue in the relevant regions.

Particular topics on which IFPRI expects to focus in South Asia in the coming years include:

- Agribusiness issues related to smallholders, especially in view of the supermarket revolution underway in the region
- Safety-net issues, including migration, labor markets, and employment-guarantee programs in rural areas
- Governance issues in rural service delivery and major rural and poverty-alleviation programs
- Gender and nutrition issues
- Water-management issues

Latin America

Latin America offers challenges and opportunities for IFPRI's research strategy targeting rural poverty reduction. On the one hand, this region is among the most challenging environments in the world for rural development, whether because of altitude, climate, and topography, or because of striking income inequality in spite of economic growth and huge inequality in the distribution of land (currently the largest 7 percent of landholdings in the region—those above 100 hectares—accounted for 77 percent of the land, while the smallest 60 percent of landholdings accounted for only 4 percent of the land). On the other hand, there are significant opportunities to learn, given the numerous structural reforms most of these countries have undertaken in recent decades to reduce poverty and inequality.

IFPRI's strategy in this region is based on five major approaches: (a) identifying current emerging issues in close collaboration with national and regional research institutes and ministries; (b) making strategic alliances with local partners to provide research solutions; (c) learning from the design and implementation of successful and unsuccessful reforms; (d) recognizing the necessity of increasing the region's capacity to convert research results into sound policy proposals; and (e) striving to reach a large regional and national audience by using a wide range of bilingual (Spanish and English) communications tools, including seminars, videoconferences, training workshops and consultations, local media and publications, policy-focused briefs, and dialogue through its network of partners and collaborators.

Priority research themes in the region include the following specific topics within the three focus areas of IFPRI's strategy: rural growth, globalization and trade liberalization, rural infrastructure, income diversification to high-value agriculture and rural nonfarm activities, investment in less-favored lands, and governance. Geographically, IFPRI's current entry points are Central America and the Andean region because both of these subregions share the problems of uneven economic growth, unacceptably high poverty and malnutrition rates, and lagging agricultural growth. More than 60 percent of the region's poor people live in rural areas, where slow economic growth, unequal distribution of assets, inadequate public investment and public services, and vulnerability to external natural and economic shocks are major policy issues. IFPRI is assisting policymakers through the generation of research-based options for addressing these issues and is supporting rural development with effective policy and investment strategies.

Finally, IFPRI has been and continues to be involved in designing and evaluating innovative poverty-alleviation programs in several Latin American countries that simultaneously improve child nutrition and other dimensions of human development, such as health and education. The most important of these programs are conditional cash-transfer programs such as *Oportunidades* in Mexico and the *Red de Protección Social* in Nicaragua. These research activities enhance IFPRI's understanding of the policies, interventions, and circumstances that have supported the reduction of poverty and undernourishment—especially with regard to preschool children—and increased levels of educational attainment among school children.

IV.

OUTLOOK

IFPRI will proceed in the strategic directions outlined in this strategy paper in order to enhance its role as

- a trusted global research center that provides the knowledge needed for food and nutrition policy serving poor people, that boldly presents findings based on sound analysis even if they are controversial, and that does not shy away from correcting conventional wisdom;
- a source of in-depth understanding of the linkages between research and policy change, able to respond quickly to changing conditions and opportunities for food policy change serving low-income countries and poor people;
- a valued strategic partner within the CGIAR system and within an enlarged community of partners and stakeholders;
- a strong presence in developing countries through partnerships, networks, and decentralized operations;
- a home to high-quality staff who are diverse in terms of academic background and experience; and
- an effective communicator of food policy research results.

Looking ahead, who will IFPRI's major clients and partners be in 5 to 10 years? IFPRI has two sets of clients with overlapping interests: (a) those who provide funding (donors/investors who show effective demand) and (b) those who use IFPRI's outputs to set and implement food policy agendas (developing-country governments and policymakers, national and regional research organizations, international organizations, civil-society organizations, the private sector, donors and investors, and the CGIAR). Both sets of clients are IFPRI stakeholders.

Of course, IFPRI is not the only provider of international food policy research. Other providers include universities, think tanks, research branches of international organizations, and so on. IFPRI aims to remain competitive in the sense that it provides higher value for investment in food policy research than other public research institutions. This requires careful and constant attention to comparative advantage and to complementarities with partners.

Almost any single IFPRI research project could be designed and executed by another entity, but it is the critical mass, the learning from experiments and experiences, and the confidence and trust of its clients—notably developing-country policymakers and investors and donors—that make IFPRI competitive and in high demand. In certain fields, such as agricultural technology and natural resource policy research, the potential for multidisciplinary research in cooperation with the other CGIAR centers positions IFPRI uniquely.

CLIENTS IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS

IFPRI expects that the patterns and importance of its clients (that is, stakeholders) will undergo the following changes in the coming decade:

1. Traditionally, IFPRI's clients are largely **national governments** in developing countries, and these clients are likely to remain important.
2. In the wake of increasing decentralization in countries around the globe, new clients are likely to include **provincial governments** in large countries such as China, India, Ethiopia, Nigeria, and Brazil.
3. New clients are likely to include **agribusiness associations, large business houses, and financial institutions** dealing with food systems. This is likely to become more common as governments gradually reduce their role in agriculture and make space for the private sector. The private sector will play an increasingly important role in creating new technologies and institutions and in influencing policies affecting farms, agroprocessors, and supermarkets. IFPRI's research on public-private partnerships ensures that the Institute is well placed with regard to this trend.
4. The role of **NGOs** is likely to change in the coming years, given the increasing pressures on the environment and widening inequalities. IFPRI may have to interact more and directly cooperate with knowledge-oriented NGOs.
5. IFPRI's donors/investors will most likely include **more nontraditional sources**, including **middle-income countries, regional organizations, and foundations**.

PARTNERS IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS

The following broad mega-trends relating to IFPRI partners are expected in the coming decade:

1. Traditionally, partners have been primarily **research organizations and universities** in the developed world. This is likely to change in the years to come.
2. **Universities in developing countries** (especially in Asia), and new think tanks formed around them, will be capable of providing food policy research and capacity strengthening/training to public institutions in food and agriculture.
3. New partners may come more and more from the private sector, as many firms in developed countries spread their offices in response to the growing role of and demand from the private sector in the developing world. IFPRI will link with innovative private-sector think tanks to facilitate international learning, but the Institute will continue to focus on international public goods research.
4. Considering the tens of thousands of NGOs founded in the past decade in developing countries, it is reasonable to expect some strong **new research networks/think tanks** to emerge. IFPRI will view these as partners and not as competitors; linking with them can facilitate international learning.
5. The transformation of the CGIAR can result in new intra-CGIAR partnership patterns.

To be successful, IFPRI must find the right priority areas in which to operate. The situation varies geographically (for example, in East Asia versus Africa), and IFPRI's decentralization strategy addresses this. Increasingly, high-quality researchers from developing and middle-income countries can be inducted into the IFPRI stream to manage regional operations in a more cost-effective manner than the current structure permits. Increasing connectivity around the world should help IFPRI to cut its costs through decentralization and to be closer to its clients.

Given all this, IFPRI's dynamic comparative advantage (and thus the demand for its services) lies in its ability to

- respond to demands for high-level research work,
- be able to take lessons and ideas from one part of the world and apply them elsewhere,
- provide international public goods,
- be able to provide a wide set of skills,
- remain independent, and
- be able to respond quickly to new challenges and opportunities.

IFPRI actively seeks to strengthen the capacity for policy research in developing countries. In the process, it often strengthens its own competition. In some cases, competitors should rightly grow to fill some of IFPRI's old niches, but for many broader international public goods there will continue to be plenty of room for IFPRI and its competitors to grow and collaborate, given past underinvestment in food policy research.

In conclusion, it is possible to greatly accelerate progress toward cutting hunger and to move rapidly from there toward assuring sustainable food security for all. Food policy research, policy communications, and capacity strengthening—carried out by IFPRI and its partner organizations—play an essential role in helping to achieve a world free from hunger. The payoff for doing so will be enormous in terms of human welfare, economic growth, equity, and environmental sustainability.

NOTES

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