CHAPTER 8
GLOBAL INSTITUTIONS

Governance Reform for Food, Nutrition, and Agriculture

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KEY FINDINGS

- Policy and governance issues related to food and nutrition security are becoming increasingly complex—including conflict-related hunger, the triple burden of malnutrition, environmental risks, and the politics of global integration.
- Inadequate responses to food crises reveal the need for nations to strengthen global planning and coordination of policy on food, nutrition, and agriculture.
- Global governance can provide and protect "international public goods," such as standards for healthy and safe foods or international coordination of food aid in a disaster.
- Food and agricultural systems must be able to innovate and adapt to changing circumstances, given the rapid and uncertain pace of global change, but this will require better coordination and integration of science into policy.
- Formal institutions, less formal networks, and food and agriculture corporations all have roles to play in governance for food security and nutrition.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Conduct formal stakeholder consultations on what a well-functioning global institutional architecture and governance of agriculture, food, and nutrition should look like.
- Base redesign of governance on the principles of legitimacy, accountability, effectiveness, and inventiveness.
- Create institutional coordination capacity to match the increased scope of global action required to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and address growing complexity.
- Design a "Governing Platform" for intergovernmental coordination, decision making, and funding that can facilitate global action and support consultative participation by stakeholders.
- Establish an "International Panel on Food, Nutrition, and Agriculture" comprising members of the global scientific community to meet the demand for research-based evidence to support sound policy making at the global level.

As food and agricultural systems become increasingly globalized, the policy and governance issues related to food and nutrition security are becoming more complex. New and growing complexities require more systematic, coordinated, and evidence-based responses. Among these complexities is the need for diplomacy and security interventions to prevent hunger in conflict- and war-affected zones. Another complexity is the triple burden of malnutrition—undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies and other diet quality problems, and obesity in an increasingly urban world—all three requiring simultaneous attention but different policy responses. A third is posed by the need to address production constraints and environmental risks, including low agricultural productivity growth, climate change, increased soil and land degradation, and loss of biodiversity. Finally, food and nutrition policy must account for the complexity related to global integration through trade and investment, most notably contested positions on fair and free trade, risks of market and price volatility, food industries' international roles, and the protection of food safety. These interwoven challenges call for global governance to improve food and nutrition security.[1] This chapter argues that a redesign of the current global food and agricultural governance system is needed to facilitate actions for accelerated reduction of undernutrition and malnutrition.

The world food and agricultural system shows signs of serious malfunctioning. The number of chronically undernourished people increased by 38 million in 2016, after years of slow reduction in absolute numbers of undernourished.[2] Governance failures—resulting in complex emergencies and violent conflicts—underlie this adverse turn. Following the inadequate response to the 2008 food crisis, the world remains ill-prepared to manage the major challenges facing the global food and agricultural system and the nutritional deficiencies of the 21st century. In the two regions most affected by hunger—South Asia and Africa south of the Sahara—different patterns of undernutrition and nutrition deficiencies prevail: In South Asia, child undernutrition, as measured by child stunting and child wasting (often related to

This chapter draws on J. von Braun and R. Birner, "Designing Global Governance for Agricultural Development and Food and Nutrition Security," *Review of Development Economics* 21, no. 2 (2017): 265–284, and on J. von Braun and M. Kalkuhl, *International Science and Policy Interaction for Improved Food and Nutrition Security: Toward an International Panel on Food and Nutrition* (IPFN), ZEF Working Paper 142 (Bonn: Center for Development Research [ZEF], University of Bonn, 2015).

a poor hygiene and health environment), is higher than in Africa south of the Sahara, whereas in Africa south of the Sahara, child mortality rates (which are significantly driven by malnutrition) and undernourishment levels (reflecting overall calorie deficiency) are higher.[3] Some African countries have significantly improved their food and nutrition situation; what these countries have in common are government commitment and reform of governance arrangements for food and nutrition security.[4] Asian countries with noted progress, especially in East and Southeast Asia, implemented more social protection, hygiene, and child nutrition policies. More is needed to spread these benefits more widely. Countries could benefit especially from strengthening joint and coordinated policies on food, nutrition, and agriculture.

WHY GLOBAL GOVERNANCE?

Global governance is beneficial for addressing problems that nations cannot or will not optimally manage by themselves. Most policy action for food and nutrition security is best managed at a national and local level, but global policy also has a role to play. Globalization of agriculture and its dynamics and complexities, as well as the food system more broadly, have outpaced the capabilities of organizations that have evolved to deal with the global and local dimensions of agricultural and food systems. This chapter focuses on needs and opportunities for action at the global level.

Global governance refers to governing relationships that transcend national frontiers, including global rules, norms, and standards, that is, "the rules of the game" that guide organizations.[5] Global governance of the agricultural, food, and nutrition system encompasses the formal and informal institutions and organizations at the global level that aim to influence this system. Both humanitarian and economic reasons drive action at the global level to improve food and nutrition security. The humanitarian rationale is rooted in welfare and ethical goals, including humanitarian principles such as the international human right to food, global equity, and fairness. The economic rationale calls for global action to address market and other institutional failures that either cannot be addressed at a national level due to their transnational nature or are more efficiently dealt with at the global level.

Central to this economic rationale is the need to provide and protect "international public goods" (IPGs). IPGs differ from private goods in two ways: they are accessible to all, and they do not compete in the market. Here we use the term IPG broadly to include all areas where public action at the global level is justified. Examples include global trade standards for healthy and safe foods, coordinated aid to prevent food crises during disasters and among refugees, and coordination for fair and free trade. Seven clusters of IPGs particularly relevant for food and agriculture are presented in Table 1.

Providing for such IPGs requires governance arrangements.[6] The key principles for sound international governance of public goods are *legitimacy* combined with *accountability*, *effectiveness*, and *inventiveness*. Given the fast-changing and uncertain nature of the drivers of global food, nutrition, and agricultural systems, the capacity to innovate and adapt to changing circumstances is crucial. While the current governance system, with its host of United Nations (UN) agencies, has a strong claim of legitimacy, it lacks both effectiveness and inventiveness in delivering public goods.[7] Inventiveness requires capacity and freedom to experiment and link to and among innovators working in research and innovation systems, possibilities not typically facilitated by the hierarchical structures of global organizations. Creating a governance system that meets these criteria calls for an independent research body to support policy making and the implementing organizations.

GLOBAL GOVERNANCE MECHANISMS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Working together, national governments can, in principle, use the following governance *mechanisms* to pursue the types of global action needed:

- Formulation of internationally agreed upon global goals and priorities (such as the Sustainable Development Goals [SDGs], and in particular SDG2 for ending hunger).
- Negotiated agreements among national governments (such as the Kyoto Protocol under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change).
- Voluntary commitments of national governments (such as the "Voluntary guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food"[8] or the Paris climate agreement).

TABLE 1 International public goods clusters for agriculture, food, and nutrition security

International Public Goods (IPGs) to be addressed for food and nutrition security	Action areas and examples of current deficiencies
1. EFFECTIVELY PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO FOOD AND NUTRITION EMERGENCIES AND TO MIGRATION CRISES	Nutrition as a global problem (including undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, and obesity) has no well-defined organizational home. Food assistance in failed states and war-affected regions remains a tremendous challenge. A more comprehensive emergency aid mechanism is called for in which the World Food Programme (WFP) is essential and where nongovernmental actors find improved ways to effectively engage in a coordinated manner. Global diplomacy and security action capability need to be strengthened and support this function. The UN Security Council rarely addresses hunger crises.
2. TRADE REGIMES, FOOD RESERVES, AND RELATED GLOBAL INFORMATION	Rule-based and fair trade is an essential IPG for food security. Of importance at the global level are regimes that reduce food price volatility and extreme price spikes. There is an institutional vacuum in terms of addressing these matters. An essential basic element is reliable information on markets, production, and stocks at national levels, which is shared internationally. The Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) was an important step in this direction, but needs strengthening.
3. COMPETITION POLICY AND STANDARDS FOR FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI)	Recent mega-mergers among agricultural industries need appropriate scrutiny from a perspective of competitive market functioning, including impacts on markets in low-income countries, which typically are not included in related assessments. An important IPG for FDI is appropriate and transparent rules for assuring efficiency as well as fairness for both investors and countries invested in, including prevention of corruption on both sides. For investments in land and other agricultural resources, voluntary guidelines exist but have limited reach.
4. NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT RELATED TO BIODIVERSITY, WATER, AND SOILS	A more comprehensive approach is needed to provide management guidelines and information bases for these resources as public goods, such as world soil degradation mapping, transboundary water systems monitoring, air pollution monitoring, and biodiversity tracking, including respective standards.[a]
5. CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION RELATED TO FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE	Agriculture is both a contributor to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and part of the solution for reducing GHG emissions related to land use change and animal (ruminants) production.[b] In view of the complex linkages of climate policy relevant to agriculture and food security, a more prominent and integral positioning of agriculture in global climate policies is called for; this is partly governed by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), but other actors should be involved more, such as those related to health (World Health Organization [WHO]) and land use (Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO]).
6. TRANSBOUNDARY FOOD SAFETY AND HEALTH-RELATED INVESTMENTS AND STANDARDS	Food safety cannot be left to national control and enforcement; international food trade and the demands by consumers for sound standards are an essential IPG.[c] Early detection of transboundary food and agriculture-related health risks, such as livestock-originated human diseases, seems to have improved, and WHO and FAO must play important roles in that.[d] Emergency measures to address the root causes of agriculture-linked infection risks remain too ad hoc.
7. INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN FOOD AND AGRICULTURE	The backbone of technological change is research, and for developing countries, international agricultural research in particular is a public good, vital for food security. Current investments in this IPG are too low, and research capacities of middle- and high-income countries are not drawn on enough for global food and nutrition security.

Source: Adapted from J. von Braun and R. Birner, "Designing Global Governance for Agricultural Development and Food and Nutrition Security," *Review of Development Economics* 21, no. 2 (2017): 265–284. Additional sources: [a]TEEB (The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity), *Mainstreaming the Economics of Nature: A Synthesis of the Approach, Conclusions and Recommendations* (Geneva: 2010); E. Nkonya, A. Mirzabaev, and J. von Braun, *Economics of Land Degradation and Improvement—A Global Assessment for Sustainable Development* (Berlin: Springer, 2015); [b]T. Wheeler and J. von Braun, "Climate Change Impacts on Global Food Security," *Science* 341, no. 6145 (2013): 508–513; [c]P. Oosterveer, *Global Governance of Food Production and Consumption: Issues and Challenges* (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 2007); [d]WHO (World Health Organization) and FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization), *International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN): INFOSAN Activity Report 2013* (Geneva: WHO, 2013).

- Creation of global organizations permanently funded by national governments to serve international and national food, nutrition, and agricultural goals (such as the Rome-based development organizations).
- Agreements and implementation of standards and labels by governmental or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and private businesses (such as food standards or monitoring of corporate performance in the food sector in terms of commitment to nutrition, for example, the Access to Nutrition Index).[9]

Global organizations play an important role in achieving coordination and can thus increase effectiveness, efficiency, or productivity across countries in specific sectors. Examples are coordination mechanisms within the UN system, such as the Economic and Social Council, which has the mandate to coordinate the specialized agencies of the UN, including the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The UN Committee on World Food Security (CFS) is a particularly vital coordination mechanism for food security–related global action. Informal coordination mechanisms among governments, notably the G7 and G20, have also come to play a key role in global governance, and agriculture and food have featured on both the G7 and G20 agendas. Global coordination mechanisms among private organizations and NGOs have been set up, such as the critically assessed Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil and the Grow Africa Partnership founded by the African Union, the New Partnership for Africa's Development, and the World Economic Forum to enhance private sector investment in African agriculture.[10]

For most of the seven clusters of IPGs requiring global action, pertinent organizations, conventions, and declarations are already established (Table 2).

All these formal organizations serve important functions in the global arena and all have made valuable global contributions. However, formal global organizations account for only a part—and not even the bulk—of global action in support of agricultural and food systems. Increasingly, a complex global web of less formal government networks, in which a collection of nation states communicates via heads of state, ministers, parliamentarians, and the UN and in which corporations and NGOs participate in various ways, is driving global action on food and nutrition.[11]

CORPORATE SECTOR GOVERNANCE AND IPGS

Sound competition policy is identified above as a global public good. Internationally operating food and agricultural corporations should be viewed as players in global food governance, and attention should be paid to two types of impacts. First, their own governance should be transparent, accountable, and fair to all stakeholders, not just shareholders. Second, corporations must not have excessive power in markets, which can impede market functioning either internationally or locally and contribute to food insecurity. For instance, large-scale mergers and acquisitions with potential to cause global impact by reducing competition—for example, the Syngenta/Chem China and Monsanto/Bayer mergers or the Amazon/Whole Foods and Google/WalMart partnerships—should be scrutinized not only in the countries of their headquarters. Global attention is also needed, including voices from developing countries. However, institutional mechanisms to facilitate this global stakeholder input are lacking.

Policies on trade and foreign direct investment, like policies on competition, are increasingly integral to providing IPGs. For example, voluntary guidelines have been established for investments in land and other agricultural resources. For foreign direct investment, appropriate rules for assuring efficiency as well as fairness for both investors and countries receiving investment are an important IPG. Policies for constraining corruption and illicit financial flows, including from developing countries, provide an IPG that is important for rural infrastructure investments and agricultural investment and trade. These issues must be addressed at the international corporate level, as well as through strengthening of countries' legal systems.[12]

RESPONDING TO SHORT-TERM AND EMERGING CRISES

Food crises occurring in the context of armed conflicts are an important cause of the recent increase in the number of undernourished people. Global response to these conflict-driven crises lacks a functioning formal coordination mechanism and is largely reactive rather than preventive. The food and nutrition crises in 2016/17 in the Horn of Africa, South Sudan, northeast Nigeria, Yemen, Iraq, and in and around Syria must not be seen in isolation. They are not just local policy and governance failures; international powers are involved directly or indirectly in the conflicts that have led to

TABLE 2 Global organizations and mechanisms with relevance for agriculture, food, and nutrition

Sector/Specialization	Intergovernmental organizations and mechanisms	Other organizations by type
SPECIALIZED ORGANIZATIONS IN THE AGRICULTURE, FOOD, AND NUTRITION SECTOR	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Committee on World Food Security (CFS) International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) World Food Programme (WFP)	■ Global networks of farmers' organizations (such as World Farmers Organization, La Via Campesina) ■ Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) ■ CGIAR ■ Organizations of multinational agribusiness enterprises (such as New Vision for Agriculture, Global Harvest Initiative) ■ Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN)
DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL ORGANIZATIONS WITH AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS	World Bank Group United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Regional development banks	■ NGOs with some focus on food and agriculture (such as Oxfam, CARE, Welthungerhilfe, Concern) ■ Private foundations (such as Rockefeller Foundation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation)
SPECIALIZED ORGANIZATIONS FOCUSED ON OTHER SECTORS RELEVANT TO AGRICULTURE, FOOD, AND NUTRITION	United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) International Labour Organization (ILO) Global Environment Facility (GEF) World Health Organization (WHO) UNICEF World Trade Organization (WTO) United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)	■ Environmental NGOs (such as World Wide Fund for Nature [WWF], Greenpeace) ■ NGOs with watchdog function over global organizations (such as Global Policy Forum) ■ International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
GOVERNANCE BODIES IN CHARGE OF UN CONVENTIONS RELEVANT TO FOOD AND AGRICULTURE	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Green Climate Fund Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture	■ NGOs and their networks, some having observer status ■ Business organizations and their networks, some having observer status
GENERAL GLOBAL GOVERNANCE BODIES WITH COORDINATION FUNCTIONS	United Nations Secretariat, Assembly, and Security Council, UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) G7, G20	■ NGOs and their networks, some having observer status ■ Business organizations and their networks, some having observer status

KEY

■ Global NGOs and nonprofit networks
■ Foundations primarily focused on funding
■ Global organizations receiving public funds
■ Global private sector organizations and networks of for-profit organizations
■ Global networks of different types of organizations

Source: Adapted from J. von Braun and R. Birner, "Designing Global Governance for Agricultural Development and Food and Nutrition Security," *Review of Development Economics* 21, no. 2 (2017): 265–284.

these food crises. Hunger is a common outcome, and sometimes even a weapon, in such conflicts, but global action to prevent and resolve these humanitarian emergencies has been limited.

That was different in the food crisis of 2008. Unlike the current set of crises, the 2008 event shocked global players into action. However, in that global food stress situation, the lack of a functioning coordination mechanism became obvious. Without an established mechanism, parallel coordination efforts, supported by numerous consultations, led to slow responses on the ground. The then G8 and the G20 discussed food security extensively at the heads of state meetings in 2008 and 2009, committing to coordinated action, and in 2015, the G7 committed to lifting 500 million people out of hunger by 2030. The issue of food security remained on the G20 agenda in 2017 and 2018, but these initiatives have failed to address the growing number and scale of conflict-related hunger crises.

High-level conferences in 2008 and 2009, including summits, were held under the auspices of the FAO, and a reform agenda was established for the UN's Committee on World Food Security (CFS). The reform of the CFS in 2009 constituted a significant step toward global cooperation, but the organization warrants further strengthening.[13] Unlike other UN committees, the CFS has an advisory committee as part of its governance structure that includes UN bodies, civil society organizations, international agricultural research organizations, private sector associations, and philanthropic foundations as equal members. The CFS also established a High Level Panel of Experts as a mechanism to provide evidence for decision making.

A burgeoning number of conferences on agriculture and food security since 2008 has created an unprecedented marketplace of ideas and proposals for action that—with considerable overlap—shapes international agenda-setting today. Conferencing, however, has made little difference for people increasingly caught in emergency food situations.

Not only acute but also emerging slow-onset crises require global attention. The increased burden of obesity is one such crisis. Advancing effective nutrition policy is constrained by the complex web of interest groups that complicate the political economy of nutrition policy.[14] In view of industry opposition and government reluctance to regulate for healthier food environments, quasi-regulatory approaches might be considered to address such problems, including strengthened accountability systems and engagement of civil society in creating demand for healthy foods.[15] Examples include strengthening consumer information, nutrition education, evidence-based and understandable labeling systems, and support for formation of consumer interest groups and for giving them a seat at international food-related policy negotiations.

TOWARD REDESIGN OF INTERNATIONAL GOVERNANCE

The common response to the world's unresolved food, nutrition, and agriculture challenges has been to seek solutions in meetings at the global level, often with large-scale conference events, that leave the governance structures untouched. Consultations are overdue on what a well-functioning global institutional architecture and governance of agriculture, food, and nutrition should look like, and how it could be achieved. Redesign of the governance of the essential IPGs related to food, nutrition, and agriculture systems must be based on the principles mentioned above: legitimacy, accountability, effectiveness, and inventiveness. Global governance of food and nutrition security needs to be lifted from the current technical levels to a much higher political level of decision making. Ending hunger is a goal that all major nations already agreed on in setting SDG2. Ideally, a legitimate and innovative set of well-informed strategic bodies should help coordinate global policies, including the work of existing international organizations, to overcome the current governance challenges.

Following these four principles and with the goal of strengthening support for the currently underdelivered IPGs, institutional coordination capacity must be created to match the increased scope of global action required to achieve SDG2, an end to hunger and malnutrition, as well as the SDGs aiming for related health and sustainable agriculture and environmental outcomes. The current system offers complementarities and a fair amount of competition among food-, nutrition-, and agriculture-related international organizations. While such competition and complementarities address global problems to some extent, without stringent oversight this institutional arrangement leaves critical gaps (as depicted in Table 1), including for nutrition, and creates inefficient overlaps among organizations due to "mission creep" in organizations' programs.

GOVERNING PLATFORM

A governance body providing policy oversight could help address these coordination issues. Ideally, this oversight body should have legalized intergovernmental authority and could take the form of a *Governing Platform for International Food, Nutrition, and Agriculture*. It should be designed as a mechanism for intergovernmental coordination, decision making, and funding that can facilitate global action, as well as providing a platform for associated consultative participation by government-to-government networks, the private sector, and civil society organizations. This Platform should be nimble and able to respond quickly to new risks and opportunities. To facilitate rapid response, power over budget allocations should be at the level of the Platform, above the relevant technical agencies. And to ensure legitimacy, governance of the Platform should be built on the governance bodies of related technical agencies, thus aggregating, not duplicating, governance.

The Governing Platform would be tasked with providing clarity, currently lacking, regarding who has the authority to do what, and who is accountable and responsible. Providing this clarity will reduce the likelihood of organizations' being held responsible and accountable for situations in which they have not been granted authority to act. This would require strengthening the existing agencies, such as FAO, the World Food Programme, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development, with a view to delivering the IPGs that facilitate sustainable agricultural transformation, food security information, and global food safety services. Global nutrition policy, for example, currently split among many agencies, needs an organizational home; and the World Food Programme needs to be supported to better mitigate and respond to emergency food crises, including through a reliable global food store and funding mechanisms that would permit flexible responses to crises.

In today's political context and multipolar world, there should be no illusion that such a sweeping change in international governance arrangements can be easily achieved. However, it is equally hard to imagine that under the current arrangements the international challenges posed by food, nutrition, and agriculture could be suitably addressed in the coming decades.

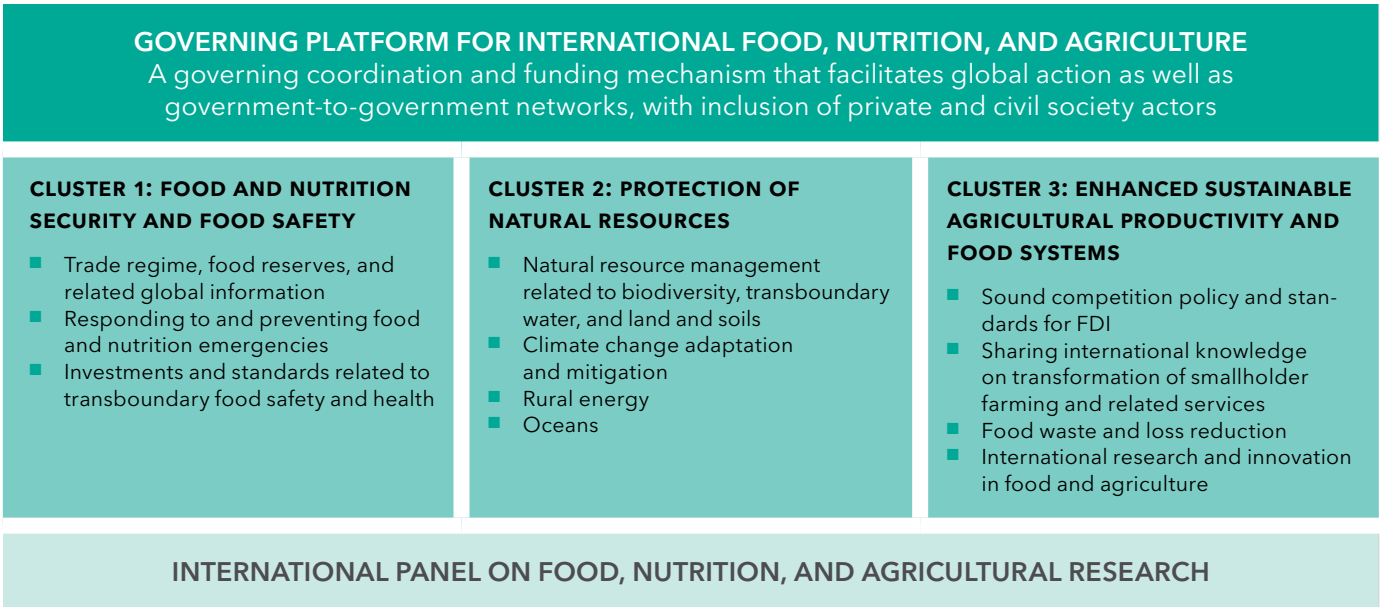
A promising structure for the Governing Platform would comprise three clusters of organizational setups (Figure 1)—each having coordination capacity and authority—to serve the seven IPGs for which global action is required:

- **Cluster 1** on food and nutrition security and food safety: trade regime and food reserves, and related global information; responding to and preventing food and nutrition emergencies; and investments and standards related to transboundary food safety and health.
- **Cluster 2** on protection of natural resources: natural resource management related to biodiversity, water, and soils; and climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- **Cluster 3** on enhanced sustainable agricultural productivity and food systems: sound competition policy and standards for FDI; sharing international knowledge on transformation of smallholder farming and related services such as insurance; food waste and loss reduction; and international research and innovation in food and agriculture.

AN INTERNATIONAL PANEL IN SUPPORT OF THE PLATFORM

Agriculture, food security, and nutrition are increasingly knowledge-intensive sectors, and the provision of a sound evidence base for policy making is crucial. While the demand for research-based evidence should emerge from the proposed policy clusters, the research support for policy making should be organized independently. The challenges of food and nutrition security justify a permanent institutional arrangement to drive appropriate research. An *International Panel on Food, Nutrition, and Agriculture*—modeled on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) but established with lower transaction costs as an international rather than intergovernmental entity—could take on this task.[16] While initially the Panel should focus on research related to the SDGs, it must also have a long-term perspective beyond 2030. Importantly, the Panel should include only the global scientific community in an organized fashion; the experience of the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) has shown that inclusion of stakeholders and interest groups, such as NGOs and industry representatives, can impede assessments based on the best scientific evidence.[17] The Panel should adopt the IPCC design, which separates the provision of science-based assessments from political decision making. Political

FIGURE 1 Global food, nutrition, and agriculture governance design



Source: Author.

decision making should be based on facts, but must also take value judgments and political objectives into account.

This function of the proposed Panel goes far beyond the mandate of any existing science advisory body for food, nutrition, and agricultural policy at the international level. Engaging the entire international science system related to food and nutrition security and agriculture would be an institutional innovation with important advantages, as it would better reflect the diversity as well as the lack of consensus in international science insights from different disciplines. Improved exchange between science and policy domains would be possible. Transparency in the assessment processes and rigorous peer review on key issues for food, nutrition, and agriculture would increase the legitimacy of the assessments and recommendations to governments and society. The Governing Platform and the International Panel would need to interact in productive and constructive ways. The Panel would have a global reach, extending to both developing and developed countries. For example, the InterAcademy Partnership, CGIAR, and the CFS High Level Panel of Experts and their networks, together with many others in university and public research systems, could partner in establishing the Panel mechanism.

NEXT STEPS

While outlining the details of implementation of the governance reform goes beyond the scope of this chapter, clearly a redesign process for global food governance would require consideration of structures, actors, and interests. For practical purposes, it would be useful to establish a high-level, broad-based, legitimized, and time-bound international forum to discuss the organizational implications of redesign proposals. Ensuring that the redesign goes beyond marginal adjustments to the current weak system would suggest mapping that dialogue along the lines of the identified IPGs, rather than along the lines of existing agencies. Any far-reaching and fundamental redesign of the global food, nutrition, and agricultural governance system would be difficult to achieve step by step. Coming to a meaningful implementation of redesign will require leadership. Such leadership for change could come from the UN, from the G20, or from a committed group of nations, in particular emerging economies that are confronting the greatest challenges in food, nutrition, and agriculture.

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