



IFPRI AT 40

LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD

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Speaker Remarks

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Achievements

At the forefront of many aspects of development. Influential not just in generating high quality evidence but in communicating this. Highly successful in elevating debates to high level policy makers and transforming development practices.

Notably:

Influential at several levels in the UK Foresight Report on Global Food and Farming Futures published in 2010. The project used IFPRI modelling in understanding how we can balance future demand and supply sustainably - to ensure that food supplies are affordable. But IFPRI expertise was deployed throughout the process, from the high level stakeholder group and lead expert group, to several of the individual studies. This helped to ensure that the process drew on the most relevant evidence and that its findings were of a high scientific standard.

IFPRI has done a lot to highlight the critical and potentially transformative role that women play in developing countries' agricultural growth. In many ways they have been thought leaders in research to understand the relationships between women and men in food and nutrition issues, and to illuminate the pathway to sustainable and inclusive economic development. Their work on development the Women's Empowerment Index for Agriculture.

IFPRI is at the heart of efforts to ensure that agriculture delivers for nutrition outcomes for women and children. Its 2010 Conference in Delhi on this topic was one which was in many respects a game changer in research and investments. Its work on biofortification is showing the way for other interventions in agriculture for nutrition – both in terms of setting the bar for evidence but also demonstrating how researchers can partner with others to ensure delivery at scale. More recently, IFPRI researchers are leading major global initiatives such as the Global Nutrition Report.

THE FUTURE

The world is changing at an unparalleled pace and despite IFPRI's considerable contribution to global development, its future relevance depends on continuing to identify and respond to the factors that will increasingly drive economic development in the coming decades.

I will identify three areas where IFPRI can play a critical role in generating new evidence need to ensure that future economic growth is broad-based and sustainable, opening new opportunities for the poor, particularly women and girls, and minimising the risks.

COMMERCIALISATION OF AGRICULTURE

African agriculture is undergoing profound changes. Progressive liberalisation over the last two decades has created significant space for private sector investment in agriculture in many developing countries, although poor infrastructure, ad hoc market interventions by governments, perceptions of risk and poor coordination between the public and private sectors result in underinvestment and thin markets. Weak land governance increases the risk to private sector investors and to smallholder farmers.

Over the next 20 years it is likely that increased investment and competition for land will increase these risks. Given the rapid change that has taken place there are still major gaps in our knowledge and understanding of how increasing investment in agriculture and agri-food sector could be more effective in creating jobs and lifting people out of poverty and what other interventions are needed to protect the most vulnerable (notably women). Evidence already shows that agro-industry can add to economic transformations

CHANGING DIETS AND NUTRITIONAL CHALLENGES

Despite economic rapid economic growth and productivity gains in many regions, **poor nutrition** persists among rural and urban populations. An efficient and resilient agriculture and food system is critical to enable access to affordable and nutritious foods for all. Climate change and resource scarcity as well as demographic and dietary changes, and transformations to the organisation and functioning of markets are placing increasing stress on the agri-food system especially in poor countries. These changes will significantly affect the ability of the agri-food system to deliver healthy and nutritious diets to a rapidly increasing population.

URBANISATION

In the next 30 years the numbers of people living in cities will increase rapidly, both in absolute numbers but also as a proportion of the population. There will be new opportunities and risks from rapidly increasing demand for food from an urban population, affecting local, regional and international agricultural markets and supply chains. Migration to cities will change the demographic and social structure of rural areas with implications for agriculture. Increasingly organised and integrated supply chains and demand for goods and services will open new markets and create new opportunities, benefiting some people, but not necessarily all. Urban populations are likely to consume different sorts of food, more processed food and more animal sourced foods, leading to significant changes in diets and on health. People in cities are more likely to eat which has been processed; packaged, transported and stored, changing the risks from food-borne disease in poorly regulated markets. Up to 50% of food produced even in developed countries is wasted, representing a huge loss of value; and it could become a trajectory for developing countries.