



IFPRI Board of Trustees

Meeting Summary: December 15-17, 2025

The IFPRI Board of Trustees met in person at IFPRI's Headquarters in Washington, DC on December 15-17, 2025. IFPRI's Board took part in IFPRI's special 50th anniversary hybrid event "Shaping Food Policy in a Changing World: Research Priorities for Greater Impact" on December 15th and went on to hold a series of Board and Committee meetings on December 16th and 17th. These meetings included a special session on IFPRI's finances, reserves, and resource mobilization and meetings of the Board's Strategy and Program Council, Audit Committee, and Nominating and Governance Committee. The culminating Board meeting was held on the afternoon of December 17, 2025. A summary of the Board's discussions and decisions follows.

The Board:

- **Congratulated IFPRI on its 50th anniversary event**, which included a diverse range of distinguished speakers, a rich set of presentations and discussions, and over 3,500 online views.
- **Welcomed two new members to IFPRI's Board:** Dr. Jill McCluskey and Dr. Tavneet Suri. IFPRI's Board, Director General, and senior management team welcomed IFPRI's newest voting Board members and the depth of the expertise they bring to IFPRI's governance and accepted Dr. Suri's apologies for being unable to participate in the fourth quarter Board meetings.
- **Acknowledged the funding crisis that IFPRI and CGIAR are facing and commended IFPRI's senior management for its thoughtful, targeted, and measured responses.** The Board appreciated its close engagement with IFPRI's Director General and senior management team during 2025 and will remain active in strategic discussions and decisions on IFPRI's sustainability in 2026 and beyond as funding uncertainty to international non-profit organizations will likely only increase.
- **Complimented IFPRI staff on their productivity** and the high quality of their work over the past year, despite the major upheaval presented by the closing of USAID and a pervasive funding crisis. IFPRI published an impressive special edition of its Global Food Policy Report (GFPR), launched a new Research Strategy for 2026-2030, and released an external impact assessment on the past 50 years of IFPRI's work as part of a wider suite of tools and materials that were developed by IFPRI colleagues to capture and showcase IFPRI's impact on the ground. IFPRI also remains at the top of the RePEc rankings and active in high-level fora on global food policy. These achievements, and more, were highlighted in the Director General's presentation.
- **Approved the three-year appointment of Akhter Ahmed and reappointment of Howarth Bouis as IFPRI Emeritus Fellows.**
- **Received an update from IFPRI's Director of Human Resources on the staffing impact of the funding crisis**, support offered, and mitigation measures being taken. **The Board approved IFPRI's 2026 Salary Program**, which includes three (3) percent of the salary budget for merit increases and two (2) percent of the salary budget for salary adjustments in IFPRI's US and overseas offices.
- Supported plans to further restructure the Institute, including removing the department structure, aligning the research units with the five themes of IFPRI's new strategy, reducing the senior management



team, and reviewing and consolidating strategy, outreach and resource mobilization functions, which are currently housed in different groups.

- Received a report from Ernest Aryeetey, Chair of IFPRI's Nominating and Governance Committee (NGC), and, upon recommendation of the Committee, **approved the appointment of Jill McCluskey as a member of the Audit Committee and Tavneet Suri as a member of the NGC**, as well as the re-appointment of Susanne Frueh and Jill McCluskey as CGIAR-appointed IFPRI Board members. The Board also **approved the CGIAR Internal Rules Framework and the revised CGIAR System Framework and Charter of the CGIAR System Organization**.
- Received a report from Susanne Frueh, Chair of IFPRI's Audit Committee (AC), who noted that the AC **approved two proposed audits included in the 2026 Internal Audit plan** (research project management and data governance/classification), with a third audit to be discussed in the spring of 2026, **the 2026 Internal Audit Plan budget, and the IFPRI Internal Audit Charter**. The AC agreed that the AC Chair would recommend to the Integrated Partnership Board's Audit, Finance, and Risk Committee (IPB-AFRC) a CGIAR system-level cybersecurity audit. Upon recommendation of the AC, **approved the RSM US LLP 2025 external audit plan and associated fee, and approved IFPRI's 2026 preliminary budget** with a projected revenue of \$92.7 million, expenditure of \$94.1 million, and deficit of \$1.4 million, which compares with a revenue of \$111.9 million (and surplus of \$0.3 million) for 2024 and a forecasted revenue of \$98.2 million (and surplus of \$0.4 million) for 2025.
- **Approved the use of up to \$1 million in additional operating reserve funding through fiscal year 2027 to invest in IFPRI's long-term stability**, with a request that management report back on how it intends to refine its long-term stability plan during the Audit Committee's Q2 2026 meeting.
- Upon the request of the AC, **approved adding IFPRI's AC Chair to IFPRI's Lighthouse Services (Ethics and Business Conduct hotline and case management system) account**, with access limited only to allegations of misconduct concerning IFPRI's Director General, Director of Finance and Administration, and/or Director of Human Resources.
- Received an overview of IFPRI's current financial standing and the Institute's approach to managing financial risk, including maintaining operating reserves above risk-based thresholds, investing strategically in operational efficiency and sustainability, and evaluating investment returns. **IFPRI's Board Chair requested that management share the amount of IFPRI's operating reserves as a percentage of expenditure for the last eight or so years to help determine an appropriate level of precaution for IFPRI**.
- Participated in in-depth discussions on how IFPRI intends to finance and operationalize its new research strategy in the coming one to five years. A new draft Business Plan informed these discussions, which was developed in response to a request from the Board in 2024. The Board welcomed the new Business Plan, which was shared for feedback only at this time.
- Received updates from IFPRI management on the Institute's AI strategy and recommendations for how to take forward IFPRI's GFPR in 2026 and beyond. The Board supported management's decision to continue featuring the 2025 GFPR in 2026 while planning for a 2027 GFPR. The Board appreciated IFPRI's progress in advancing its approach toward and use of AI and recommended developing an IFPRI AI policy.