

# Toward Food and Nutrition Security

## *IFPRI's Strategy for Food Policy Research, Capacity Strengthening, and Policy Communication*

### Executive Summary<sup>1</sup>

This paper sets out the strategy for the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) for the next decade. A new look at IFPRI's strategy is timely, because progress on reducing hunger and malnutrition in the developing world slowed considerably over the past decade. Also, the policy environment has changed dramatically: central government authority is more diffuse, with many more actors involved in food policy. Third, new technologies offer great promise for advancing food security, but research is needed to identify policies to assure that food-insecure people have access. Finally, global health crises pose significant threats to food security and nutrition.

#### Setting Our Priorities

IFPRI uses four sets of criteria to determine its priorities:

1. IFPRI's work program must conform to its mission: *to provide policy solutions that reduce hunger and malnutrition.*
2. IFPRI seeks to address the major emerging issues affecting food security.
3. IFPRI considers its comparative advantage in giving priority to research that produces results applicable to many countries—i.e., international public goods.
4. IFPRI confers with and responds to stakeholders to select essential food policy research that helps the greatest number of people in deepest need.

#### Research

Based on the above considerations, IFPRI groups 12 partly inter-linked themes under three overarching objectives<sup>2</sup>.

- (I) **Global Food System Efficiency:** Policies supporting more efficient functioning of the global food, nutrition, and agriculture system that enhance inclusion of low-income countries and improve food and nutrition security of poor people.
  1. Global food situation and scenarios of policy risks and opportunities.
  2. Globalization, retail food industries\*, and trade negotiations related to food and agriculture.
  3. Managing natural resources of particular importance to food, nutrition, and agriculture—land, water, trees, genetic resources, and biodiversity—and responding to climatic change\*.
  4. Food systems in disaster prevention and relief, and rebuilding after crises\*.
- (II) **Food System Governance:** Policies improving global and national governance, political participation, and institutions for pro-poor food, agriculture, and natural resource management systems.

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<sup>1</sup> Extracted from the new Board – approved long term strategy document of IFPRI.

<sup>2</sup> Themes and sub-themes involving substantial new work at IFPRI are marked with an asterisk (\*). The other themes represent essential core business for IFPRI that will continue for the long run; these, too, may change focus over time.

5. Appropriate roles of state, market, and civil society in food, agriculture, nutrition, and natural resource management policy\*.
6. Food and water safety policies\*.
7. Policies addressing hidden hunger, enhanced food and diet quality for poor people, and the nutrition transition\* in developing countries.
8. Policies and interventions for sustainable poverty reduction and nutrition improvement.
9. Cross-cutting research on country and regional food, nutrition, and agricultural strategies\*.

(III) **Food System Innovations:** Policies to foster scientific and institutional innovation and technology use for the benefit of poor people in developing countries, and development of related comprehensive food and agriculture strategies.

10. Food- and nutrition-related science and technology policy (molecular biology, biosafety, and information and communications) serving poor people.
11. The future of smallholder farming in efficient and equitable food systems.
12. Urban-rural linkages\* and non-farm rural development.

Most of the above themes are linked with each other, and will be pursued not in isolation, but form parts of an integrated research program at IFPRI.

### **Capacity Strengthening**

IFPRI will continue to strengthen the capacity of research collaborators in developing countries to design and carry out food policy research and communication. New approaches include cooperation with university networks and open universities in developing countries with a focus on food and agriculture policy, and contribution to advanced teaching materials needed by such partners.

### **Food Policy Communication**

IFPRI will make food policy research results available to all those who can apply or use them and will foster public awareness about food security. It will actively pursue opportunities for communication with policymakers and organize stakeholder dialogues and debates on policies in cooperation with others, to achieve food security.

### **Key features of IFPRI**

IFPRI's desired features are to be a trusted global research center that provides the knowledge needed for food and nutrition policy serving poor people; to communicate findings based on sound analysis boldly and independently, 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; 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 operation.