

STRENGTHENING AGRICULTURE-NUTRITION LINKAGES IN INDIA

A side-event to the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)'s 2020 International Conference on "Leveraging Agriculture to Improve Nutrition and Health", organized by the Indian Economics Association and the Tackling Agriculture-Nutrition Disconnect in India (TANDI) initiative of IFPRI

*8.30 – 12.15, Jehangir Room, Taj Palace Hotel, New Delhi
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India is home to one third of the world's undernourished children. Undernutrition is widespread among adults too, with one third of all Indian men and women affected. For a G20 member with an annual GDP growth rate of over 8% in the last five years, the stagnation in undernutrition rates is extraordinary.

What lies behind the paradox of sustained economic growth and nutritional stagnation in India? And why focus on agriculture?

Agriculture and allied sectors in India accounted for 16.6% of the GDP in 2007 but the sector employs 52% of the total workforce and continues to have a major role in the overall socio-economic development of India. Agriculture cannot in itself solve the nutrition crisis in India, but it can play a much bigger role. This basic belief gave rise in January 2010 to the TANDI initiative ("*Tackling the Agriculture-Nutrition Disconnect in India*"), facilitated by IFPRI, with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The goal of TANDI is to better understand and address the failure of economic and agricultural development to make significant inroads into reducing undernutrition in India. The initiative promotes a multistakeholder platform, bringing Indian economists, nutritionists, public health experts and other stakeholders together to address key knowledge gaps, and drive a change in policy and program processes to maximize the role of agriculture in accelerating the reduction of undernutrition.

Following opening session remarks by Dr. Abhijit Sen (Member, Planning Commission) and Dr Shenggen Fan, (Director General, IFPRI), the session comprises three main segments. First, an overview of nutrition and agriculture trends and pathways will be presented, drawing upon work undertaken by IFPRI/TANDI and the Indian Institute of Dalit Studies. A conceptual framework showing key pathways linking agriculture and nutrition will be presented. In the second segment, three papers will be presented. The first two will seek to disentangle the dynamic relationship between agricultural growth, poverty, household food consumption and individual nutrition outcomes. The third paper will consider the gender dimensions of agriculture development and its implications for women's agency and power, and the implications for care, nutrition and health.

The third and final segment will focus on how agriculture in India can maximize its contribution to the reduction of undernutrition in coming years. One presentation will focus on options for increasing the nutritional impact of ongoing household food security programs and their links to child nutrition-oriented schemes such as midday meals and the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) program. This will be followed by a panel discussion involving several Indian experts addressing the core question: "*How can policies for agriculture growth and employment become more nutrition-sensitive?*". What policy levers show promise for improving nutritional impact in India, why and how?

AGENDA

8.30-9.00 OPENING SESSION

Chairs: Sukhadeo Thorat and Stuart Gillespie

Opening remarks: Sukhadeo Thorat, President, Indian Economics Association
Stuart Gillespie, Senior Research Fellow, IFPRI

Observations: Abhijit Sen, Member, Planning Commission, India
Shenggen Fan, Director General, IFPRI

9.05-9.30 SESSION 1: THE AGRICULTURE-NUTRITION DISCONNECT: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

Chairs: Sukhadeo Thorat and Stuart Gillespie

Nutrition and agriculture in India: trends and pathways

Suneetha Kadiyala, Research Fellow, IFPRI

Discussion

9.35-10.45 SESSION 2: AGRICULTURE AND NUTRITION LINKAGES: THE EVIDENCE

Chairs: J.V.Meenakshi, Professor, Delhi School of Economics

Agriculture growth, poverty and nutrition

Amaresh Dubey (Co-investigator: Amit Thorat), Professor, Social Sciences, Centre for the Study of Regional Development, Jawaharlal Nehru University New Delhi

Agriculture, women, and nutrition

Amita Shah, Professor, Gujarat Institute of Development Research, Ahmedabad

Agriculture and National Food Security Bill: Some key linkages

Himanshu, Assistant Professor of Economics, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Discussion

10.45-11.00 BREAK

11.00-12.00 SESSION 3: RESPONSES

*Chairs: Sayeda Hameed, Member, Planning Commission, India (TBC)
Ashok Gulati, Director, Asia Office, IFPRI*

How can food security programs become more “nutrition-sensitive”?

Mahendra Dev, Director, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research (IGIDR), Mumbai

Panel: How can policies for agriculture growth and employment become more “nutrition-sensitive”?

Panelists: A. K. Shiva Kumar, Adviser, UNICEF, India; Member, National Advisory Council (NAC)
Prabhu Pingali, Deputy Director, Agricultural Development, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
Shanta Sinha, Chairperson, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)
Dr. Sreeranjana, Joint Secretary, Ministry for Women and Child Development, Government of India (TBC)

12.00-12.15 WRAP-UP

Stuart Gillespie (IFPRI)