Bangladesh
Assessment of Food Security and Nutrition Situation

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IFPRI Representative in Bangladesh

Roundtable Discussion
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Progress in reducing hunger, but more to be done

• Progress in 4 GHI components:
  
• **Undernourishment** fell from 32% to 16% (1990-2015)
  
  – Number of hungry people fell from 36 to 26 million in same period

• **Child wasting** fell from 18% to 14% (1992-2014)

• **Child stunting** fell from 63% to 36% (1992-2014)

• **Under-five mortality** fell from 14% to 4% (1992-2014)

*Source: 2015 GHI Report*
Despite progress, Bangladesh is in the “serious” category
Poverty persists despite strong economic growth

- Lower-middle income country with strong GDP growth
  - 6.3% average growth from 2005-2015

- Poverty greatly reduced, but 31.5% live below national poverty line (2010)

- Majority of poor live in rural areas, where poverty and hunger are highest

Source: BBS; World Bank
Crop production and area growth rates

Annual growth rates, last five years (%)

- Rice: 0.3%
- Wheat: 2.9%
- Vegetable: 3.4%
- Pulses: 10.6%
- Potato: 0.9%

Annual growth rates, five years before then (%)

- Rice: 2.4%
- Wheat: 5.7%
- Vegetable: 7.2%
- Pulses: 12.7%
- Maize: 6.2%

Rice and wheat: From 2010-11 to 2014-15
Vegetable and pulses: From 2009-10 to 2013-14

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Various years
Agricultural growth has slowed down

- Agricultural growth has declined mainly due to decreased growth in rice production.

- Fish production has increased rapidly, at an average annual growth rate of 5.5% over 5 years from 2007/08 to 2013 (share in ag GDP reached 25% in 2013/14).

- Livestock subsector experienced a growth rate of 3%, and share in agricultural GDP was 12% in 2013/14.

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Various years
Agricultural wages increased sharply

• Real Agricultural wages have increased sharply in the recent past. In June 2008, agricultural laborers could buy 4.5 kg of rice from a day’s wage. Rice wage increased to 9 kg of rice in June 2014.

• Agricultural wage laborers are among the poorest in rural Bangladesh; increase of real wages has boosted their earnings, improved their food security, and helped them escape poverty.

• Rural agricultural labor is no longer abundant, so policies should focus on ways to improve productivity in the wake of rising labor costs.

• Mechanization, accelerating the adoption of modern agricultural technologies for improving crop yields, and improving labor productivity may ease farmers’ burden.

Source: IFPRI-PRSSP research
Selected determinates of nutrition

• Diet diversity: Rice-dominated diets
  – Average proportion of calories from rice: 70% (2013)

• Water, Sanitation, & Hygiene (WASH): Increased coverage from 1990 to 2015
  – Safe drinking water: 68% to 87%
  – Improved sanitation coverage: 50% to 89%

• Women empowerment is shown to improve nutrition, food security

Stunting prevalence varies by region

A paradox: stunting is highest in regions of lowest poverty, and vice versa

Source: WFP 2012
Paradox is partly explained by regional difference in women’s empowerment

- Sylhet division: lowest women’s empowerment, second highest income
- Barisal division: highest women’s empowerment, second lowest income

% of women empowered in 2012 by division (measured by WEAI)

Source: IFPRI-PRSSP
Do empowered Bangladeshi women break poverty and hunger trap?

Using two rounds of Bangladesh Integrated Household Survey (BIHS) panel survey data (2011-2015), IFPRI research results show that, an increase in women’s empowerment in agriculture (measured by Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) scores) helps:

• people move out of poverty;
• increase farmers’ income;
• improve household, child, and maternal dietary diversity; and
• increase agricultural diversity.

Results also show that increased agricultural diversity improves household dietary diversity.

Source: IFPRI-PRSSP research
Household diet quality improved
(using WFP's Food Consumption Score: 0-112)

Average FCS score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011/12 Baseline</th>
<th>2015 Midline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food consumption score</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>66.7</td>
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</table>

Percentage of households with low FCS (<42)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2011/12 Baseline</th>
<th>2015 Midline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
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Source: IFPRI-PRSSP 2011-2015 BIHS data
Frequency of food groups consumed in past 7 days increased

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staples</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legumes</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat/eggs/fish</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oils/fat</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar/honey</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
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Proportion of people who did not consume the food group in past 7 days

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Group</th>
<th>2011/12 Baseline</th>
<th>2015 Midline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staples</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>29.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legumes</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy</td>
<td>65.2</td>
<td>47.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat/eggs/fish</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oils/fat</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar/honey</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: IFPRI-PRSSP 2011-2015 BIHS data
## National frameworks and plans for food security and nutrition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy/Plan</th>
<th>Relation to food security, nutrition</th>
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| **Vision 2021** | • Aims to eliminate food deficiency and attain self-sufficiency in food production  
• Includes some nutritional targets/goals (e.g. drinking water, diet diversity) |
| **7th Five Year Plan** | • Centers on economic growth and poverty reduction  
• Food security and nutrition strategies in line with National Food Policy |
| **Strategic Plan for Health, Population, Nutrition Sector Development Programme (2011-2016)** | • Sets policy intentions regarding health, population, and nutrition services  
• Strategies include coordination of activities across sectors |
Architecture of nutrition governance in Bangladesh

Source: Rashid and Manandhar 2013
Selected policy gaps

- Examining and improving key policies driving diet diversity and quality
- Leveraging agriculture for growth, reduced poverty, and better nutrition and health
- Developing a national monitoring and evaluation system to guide policy formation and implementation
- Enhancing multisectoral approach through nutrition mainstreaming in all relevant sectors
Selected implementation gaps

• Improving coverage of key nutrition programs (e.g. micronutrient supplementation)

• Improving coordination across sectors, stakeholders, AND levels of government

• Engaging with media and civil society to improve awareness, accountability
Selected knowledge gaps

• Building productive and resilient agriculture and food systems
  – E.g. Adapting to and mitigating the impacts of climate change

• Accelerating progress in nutrition
  – E.g. Sustaining progress in reducing stunting (3 percentage points drop from 2013-14)

• Nutrition, health, and social protection
  – E.g. Addressing short and long-term shocks while boosting productivity and nutrition
## In summary

### Challenges and opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Strong and sustained economic growth</td>
<td>• Unfavorable land tenure arrangements</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Government commitment to evidence-based policymaking</td>
<td>• Low level of women’s empowerment</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Highly suitable for investment, e.g. in biofortification interventions</td>
<td>• Weak access to improved WASH</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Momentum from MDGs/SDGs and commitment from DPs</td>
<td>• Natural disasters and climate change</td>
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<td>• Strong set of NGOs</td>
<td>• Population growth/changing demographics</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Huge potential for rural nonfarm sector</td>
<td>• Rising land constraints</td>
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