



LANSA

Leveraging Agriculture for
Nutrition in South Asia



Agriculture and Nutrition in South Asia: Politics, Policies, Institutions, Incentives

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Outline



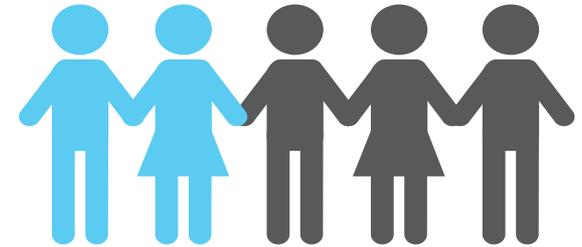
1. Leveraging Agriculture for Nutrition in South Asia (LANSA)
2. LANS's Review & Mapping activities
 - Purpose of case studies based on stakeholder interviews
3. Results
4. Next steps



Leveraging Agriculture for Nutrition in South Asia (LANSA)



- South Asia:
 - High economic growth
 - Population largely dependent on agriculture



39% of children are stunted in South Asia -- [UNICEF 2013](#)

- Six year programme (2013-2018), funded by UK government
- **Countries:** Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan
- **Core question:** *How can South Asian agriculture and related food policies and interventions be designed and implemented to improve their impacts on nutrition?*
 - First 1,000 days, adolescent girls, mothers
- **Partners:** MS Swaminathan Foundation (Lead), BRAC, Collective for Social Science Research, IDS, IFPRI, LCIRAH



LANSA's Research Pillars



Pillar 1:

Enabling environment

What are barriers/facilitators to nutrition-sensitive agricultural development?

How enabling is the wider environment for agricultural systems? How do these systems determine the nutritional status?

Pillar 2:

Agri-food policy/value chains

How can the nutrition impacts of agricultural systems be enhanced through agri-food policy and value chains?

Making Research Stick!

Pillar 3:

Nutrition-sensitive agriculture

How can the nutrition impacts of agricultural systems be enhanced through nutrition-sensitive agriculture?

Gender
Fragility
Innovation systems



Enabling environment for nutrition (Pillar I)

Mapping & review



What are barriers/facilitators to nutrition-sensitive agricultural development in the region? How do policymakers perceive nutrition? What are (dis)incentives for decisions/actions to become more 'pro-nutrition'?

Objectives:

1. Capture stakeholder knowledge/perceptions about the political economy of agriculture and nutrition in their respective countries
2. Identify information sources and when and how evidence is used
3. Identify capacity needs

Countries: India, Bangladesh, Pakistan



Methodology

- Selection of stakeholders:

Mapping exercises
Evidence & policy reviews
Informal conversations



Short list of individuals (15-20)
influential in the agriculture/nutrition
policy space

Stakeholders from: Government, research, civil society, multi/bi-lateral organizations, media, private sector – in agriculture, nutrition and health

- Data collection: December 2013 – February 2014
Key informant interviews
India (22); Pakistan (21); Bangladesh (10; 5 to follow)
- Data analysis -- info categorized according to 3 themes:
i) politics & governance **ii)** knowledge & evidence **iii)** capacity & resources



Results – Politics & Governance

Is improved nutrition a consideration in agriculture and the broader agri-food sector?

India

YES

- Nutrition gaining attention as malnutrition continues despite economic growth
- Production/quantity has improved so more room for discussion on quality

Bangladesh

YES

- Discussion on production widening to dietary diversity; nutrition considered important for preventing disease / achieving dev't outcomes

Pakistan

YES

- Nutrition increasingly emphasized – intersectoral mechanisms promising

NO

- Continued production focus (rice, wheat); lack of focus on pulses, veg, fruit, MN (policy/programming)

NO

- Staple crops continue to dominate discourse; nutrition marginal though slowly gaining ground

NO

- Production is a priority-- assumed that sufficient quantity will result in adequate nutrition



"Our focus is on [...] self-sufficiency. We might get into enhancing nutritional value once we have addressed these issues. [Once] food security [is] ensured [and] we have exportable surplus, then this [nutrition] might be the priority."— Ag, Provincial Planning & Development Department, Pakistan

"India had tremendous rates of growth, and [malnutrition] seems very incompatible with that, this is the issue that bothers everybody. [...] when poverty rates are falling, growth is happening, why should malnutrition persist? So, that is why it is suddenly come on the agenda" -- State level government official, India



Politics & Governance

*What are the factors preventing nutrition being prioritised within agriculture?
What can the government or other actors do to address this?*



India

- Focus away from indigenous foods
- MWCD has mandate, may not have convening power
- Lack of coordination
- Lack of understanding
- Nutrition doesn't win votes
- Policy – implementation gap

Bangladesh

- Focus on staple crops
- Lack of coordination
- Lack of understanding
- Weak value chains

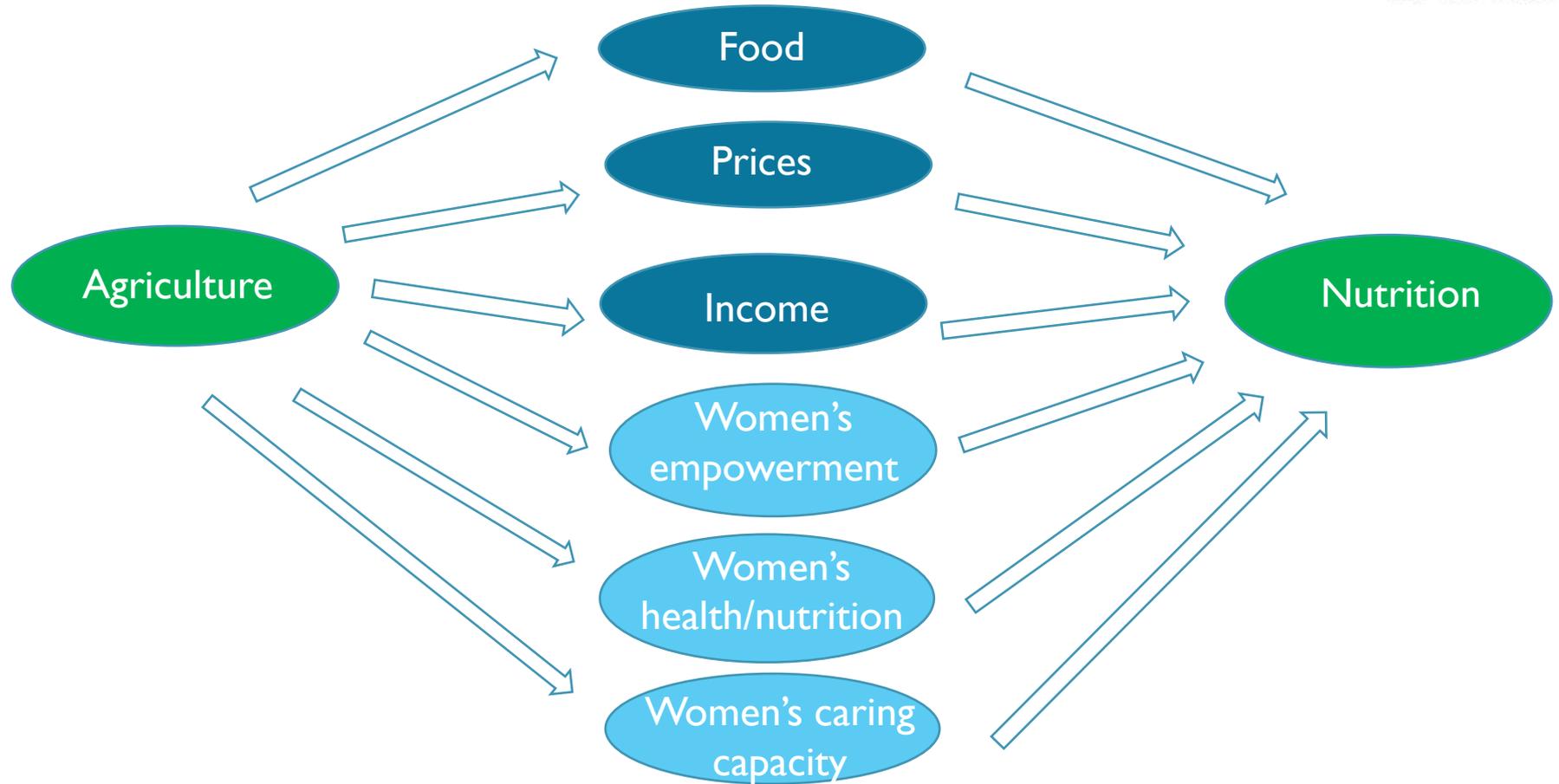
Pakistan

- Quantity over quality
- Nutrition is mandate of Health
- Lack of coordination
- Lack of knowledge about nutrition; impact on economy
- Lack of leadership, tech capacity
- Lack of inclusion of nutrition indicators in other sectors
- Security



Knowledge & Evidence

What are the direct linkages between agriculture and nutrition?



- WASH mentioned across all countries as an important nutrition-sensitive intervention to enhance agriculture's impact on nutrition



Knowledge & Evidence

Is there sufficient data/evidence of 'what works' related to agriculture's impact on nutrition outcomes?

- Research focus on staples, not micronutrients (I)
- Inconsistent collection of nutrition data; insufficiently integrated data systems (I, P)
- Not enough known about program implementation impacts in different contexts (I); or 'what works' (I)
- Need for data on nutrition-sensitivity of value chains (I)
- Lack of information about cost-effectiveness (I)

- Data exists but not used effectively (P)
- Data is mainly from agricultural interventions that had specific nutrition objectives (P)
- No accountability: policymakers not incentivized to use data (P, B)



Knowledge & Evidence

Where do policy makers get their information?



- “Short policy briefs that have very clear 'to dos', listed out at policy and program levels [...]. They just need to know what to do” (I, B)
- Evidence from other developing countries (I) / evidence of ‘what works’ in-country that can be replicated/scaled (I, P)
- Personal contacts/technical experts (I, P, B)
- Research the government is involved in (B)
- Findings highlighted in the media (I, B)



Capacity & Financial resources

to improve nutrition-sensitivity of agriculture



| Capacity | Financial resources |
|--|--|
| <i>India</i> | |
| Capacity needed for convergence down to community level, sector coordination, nutrition literacy, scaling up, expertise in gov't especially at local levels | "Funding is not a problem in India. The problem is how to use the money" |
| <i>Pakistan</i> | |
| Capacity among bureaucracy to use financial resources and implement is limited | No short of financial resources, but spending is politically motivated or diverted for disasters |
| <i>Bangladesh</i> | |
| Lack of understanding re nutrition, policy analysis, translating research into policy and policy into action, quality of research deteriorating, technical skills at the top | Enough money; not enough manpower -- Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries has limited funding compared to Ministries of Ag and Health |



Next Steps



- Finalize interviews (Bangladesh) and analysis
- Regional synthesis to be prepared, comparing and contrasting countries – to be published later this year.
- Used as a benchmark on perceptions in first year of LANSA – similar quick review to be undertaken in 2018 to investigate change.
- Outcomes of interviews used for:
 - a call for concept notes (on locally identified research priorities)
 - developing policy influence/research uptake strategy
- Similar exercise underway in East Africa (Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia)
- 6-country (inter-regional) online consultation possible later.

Stay tuned!

“the purpose of agriculture is not just to grow crops and livestock for food and raw materials, but to grow healthy, well-nourished people”
(Fan, Pandya-Lorch and Fritschel, 2012, p1)



Further resources



www.lansasouthasia.org

Pinstrup-Andersen (2012) *Guiding Food System Policies for Better Nutrition*

Kadiyala et al. (2012)

Agriculture and Nutrition in India: Mapping Evidence to Pathways. Submitted to Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences

Kadiyala et al. (2012) *A Nutrition Secure India – Role of Agriculture*. Economic & Political Weekly Vol XLVII No 8.

Balagamwala & Gazdar (2013) *Agriculture and Nutrition in Pakistan: Pathways and Disconnects*. IDS Bulletin 44 (3).

Ruel & Alderman (2013) *Nutrition-sensitive interventions and programmes: how can they help to accelerate progress in improving maternal and child nutrition?* In the Lancet Nutrition Series 2013

Webb (2012) *Impact Pathways from Agricultural Research to Improved Nutrition and Health: Literature Analysis and Research Priorities*. FAO & WHO

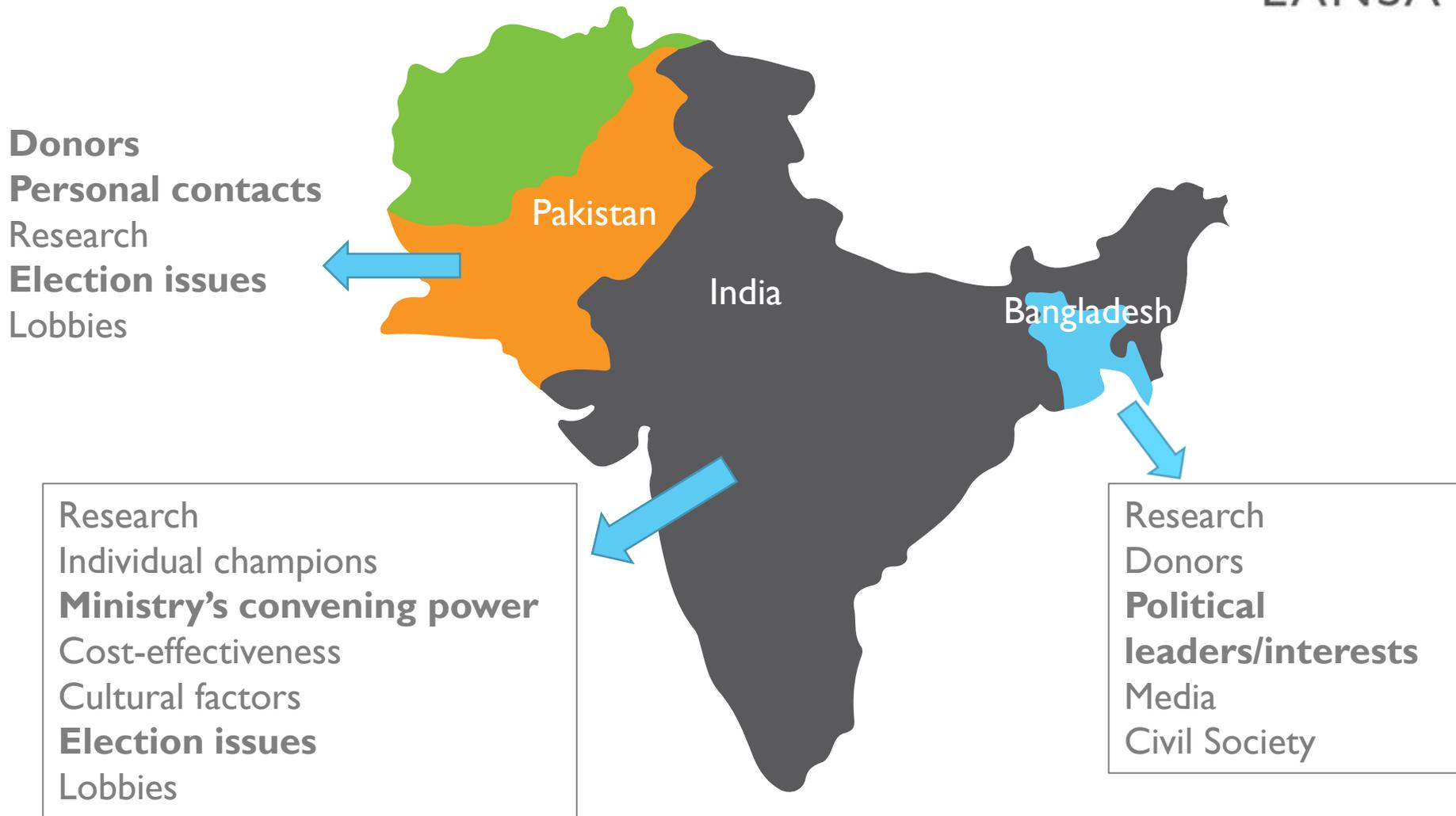


ADDITIONAL SLIDES



Politics & Governance

What influences the policy formulation process?



Rationale and structure

What does an enabling environment for undernutrition reduction look like?



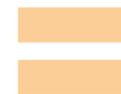
**Framing,
knowledge
and
evidence**



**Politics and
governance**



**Capacity
and
financial
resources**



Impact

Politics & Governance

What are the factors preventing nutrition being prioritised within agriculture?
What can the government or other actors do to address this?

India

- Focus away from indigenous foods
- MWCD has mandate, may not have convening power
- Lack of coordination
- Lack of understanding
- Nutrition doesn't win votes
- Policy – implementation gap

Possible actions:

- Improve coordination btw sectors
- Build capacity (all levels)
- Improve nutrition literacy
- Improve nutrition-sensitivity of existing programs e.g. include nutrition indicators
- Identify nutrition champions

Bangladesh

- Focus on staple crops
- Lack of coordination
- Lack of understanding
- Weak value chains

Possible actions:

- Improve coordination btw ministries incl. nutrition msgs
- Invest in nutrition/WASH/health training - improve awareness of multisectorality
- Strengthen value chains to avoid wastage

Pakistan

- Quantity over quality
- Nutrition is mandate of Health
- Lack of coordination
- Lack of knowledge about nutrition; impact on economy
- Lack of leadership, tech capacity
- Lack of inclusion of nutrition indicators in other sectors
- Security

Possible actions:

- Build Planning Comm. capacity to implement multisectoral strategies
- Raise awareness (Min of Finance)
- Improve political commitment and accountability
- SUN & provincial multisectoral strategies promising



Conceptualising the pathways

Agriculture is a key driver of poverty reduction

but...

Pathways to nutrition are diverse and interconnected

1. Agriculture as a source of food
2. Agriculture as a source of income
3. Agricultural policy and food prices

Gender

4. Women's employment, time and ability to manage infant care
5. Women's status, decision making power, control resource allocation
6. Women's own health and nutritional status / agricultural hazards

Source: Gillespie et al (2012)



Pathways from agriculture to nutrition

