



INTERNATIONAL
FOOD POLICY
RESEARCH
INSTITUTE

HIGHLIGHTS OF RECENT

IFPRI food policy research for **IRELAND**



Reducing Poverty and Hunger
through Food Policy Research

Foreword

Nearly 170 years ago, Ireland confronted the Great Famine and out of this tragedy grew the unwavering commitment of the Irish people to continue the fight against hunger and undernutrition worldwide. Today, as it was during the time of mass Irish suffering, it is not the inability to produce enough food but rather it is the policy failures that have relegated the most vulnerable to increasingly desperate situations. With a focus on improving smallholder agriculture, targeting the prevention of mother and child undernutrition, and promoting governance and leadership, Irish Aid supports the work that tackles root causes of hunger, particularly in Africa.

In the wake of the food crises of the early 1970s and the resulting World Food Conference of 1974, a group of innovators realized that food security depends not only on crop production, but also on the policies that affect food systems, from farm to table. The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) was founded in 1975; one year after Ireland initiated its official development assistance (ODA) program. For the past 38 years, IFPRI has worked to provide solid research for evidence-based policy options to partners in donor and recipient countries.

Agriculture and rural development will continue to play a critical role in alleviating poverty and undernutrition – but the issues have changed over time, moving from food subsidies and commercialization of agriculture in the early years to promotion of public–private partnerships, investment in agricultural research, provision of safety nets to strengthen resilience, prioritization of nutrition intervention for women and children, strategies for climate change adaptation and mitigation, support for agricultural growth, and partnerships with other stakeholders in global movements such as the diverse and impressive Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) in recent years.

Working with many longstanding partners, including Irish Aid, Concern Worldwide, and others, IFPRI's food policy research has contributed to reducing poverty and improving food security for the world's poor. This agricultural research is a good investment: every €1 invested in CGIAR research yields approximately €9 worth of additional food in the developing world. By serving as a trusted voice on food policy issues, IFPRI helps to change the thinking and provide the evidence about how to improve food and nutrition security. This brochure highlights some of the key collaborations between IFPRI and its Irish partners.

Developing Agricultural Strategies at the National Level

Ethiopia Strategy Support Program

MOTIVATION

Ethiopia has achieved significant reductions in poverty in recent years. While nearly 46 percent of the population resided below the poverty line in 1995, this figure dropped to nearly 30 percent by 2011, according to the World Bank. This achievement can be attributed, in part, to policies that effectively targeted the rural poor.

Central to the development of effective policy responses is sound research. IFPRI initiated its research program in Ethiopia in the 1980s, producing influential

studies on famine and food insecurity. These research results provided much-needed insight into the causes of and appropriate policy responses to drought-related food shortages in Ethiopia and beyond.

In 2004, IFPRI launched the Ethiopia Strategy Support Program—in partnership with the government of Ethiopia and regional partners—to cultivate country-specific solutions. In Ethiopia, as in many countries, development strategies face design, implementation, and monitoring challenges. IFPRI's in-country work is dedicated to reducing hunger and undernutrition throughout Ethiopia. This is accomplished by fostering the efforts of universities, government agencies, and nongovernmental organizations as they shape the country's development priorities and strategies.

IRELAND, A GLOBAL LEADER ON NUTRITION

Irish Aid is an international champion in bringing nutrition into the global development agenda, supporting innovative initiatives to ensure that children and their mothers are better nourished. In 2010, Ireland's then Foreign Minister Micheál Martin, in partnership with United States Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, launched the 1,000 Days Initiative. This initiative aims to improve nutrition in the first 1,000 days between conception and a child's second birthday. Help during this "window of opportunity" can break the cycle of poverty and hunger in families, communities, and countries.

IFPRI, together with Ireland, Concern Worldwide, and others, is a partner in the Scaling Up Nutrition movement, a global push for action and investment to improve maternal and child nutrition spurred by the 1,000 Days initiative. This work is part of IFPRI's

wider research agenda focusing on programs and policies that improve the diet quality, nutritional status, and health of poor people in developing countries, especially women, infants, and young children who are most vulnerable to the effects of undernutrition. IFPRI also leads the CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for

Nutrition and Health, coordinates the HarvestPlus Challenge Program, which works on biofortified staple foods for the poor, and conducts evidence-based research on issues such as integrated approaches to address undernutrition, value chains for improved nutrition, and evaluations of food security interventions.



An Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs Eamon Gilmore with US Secretary of State, Hillary Rodham Clinton and Prime Minister Pinda of Tanzania at the launch of the 1000 Days Initiative in Dar es Salaam, June 2011.

Through the years, with support from several donors including Irish Aid, the Ethiopia Strategy Support Program has promoted sustainable development and poverty reduction in Ethiopia through policy-oriented research, capacity building, strengthening of institutions, and an open dialogue on economic and agricultural policy. Key local partners include the Ethiopian Development Research Institute, the Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Agricultural Transformation Agency, and the Ethiopian Economics Association.

OUTCOMES

- ▶ An external impact evaluation has revealed the following outcomes of the Ethiopia Strategy Support Program:
 - ✦ The program has strengthened the capacity of five core national institutions in their role as local



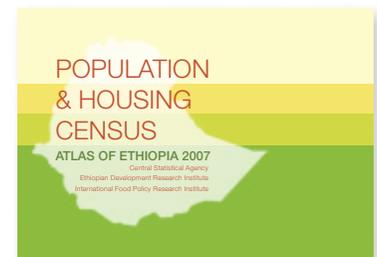
partners: Ethiopian Development Research Institute, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, the Central Statistical Agency, and the Ethiopian Institute for Agricultural Research.

- ✦ There is widespread acknowledgement within the donor community in Ethiopia that IFPRI's research contributed substantially both to the establishment of donor priorities and efforts to support government policies consistent with those priorities.
- ✦ The Ethiopian computable general equilibrium model, developed by IFPRI together with local partners, has been used in national policy formation, such as the exchange rate devaluation in 2010, in which IFPRI research indicated that devaluation of the Ethiopian birr was the best way to deal with excess demand for foreign exchange. The government took this input into consideration and the birr was allowed to depreciate significantly.
- ▶ The Productive Safety Net Programme: The Productive Safety Net Programme is the second-largest social safety net program in Africa south of the Sahara, targeting transfers to poor households through public works and direct support. IFPRI played a principal role in monitoring and evaluating the program's effectiveness in addressing the formidable food security challenges faced by Ethiopia's poorest citizens. IFPRI's work has been useful in measuring program outcomes and impacts, keeping stakeholders well informed about the program's operations, and contributing to in-depth donor coordination, which has fostered an unusually open and constructive environment among donors. These contributions led directly to strong support for IFPRI to design and execute sophisticated monitoring and evaluation systems for other major funded programs such as the Agricultural Growth Program.

- ▶ Ethiopia Commodity Exchange: IFPRI's research and technical support on agricultural commodity markets led to the launch of the Ethiopia Commodity Exchange. The Exchange, by generating market information for farmers on important crops such as coffee, sesame, haricot beans, maize, and wheat, is bringing transparency and integrity to the pricing system, which increases smallholder farmers' incomes by allowing them to sell at higher prices.
- ▶ Agricultural Transformation Agency: Currently, IFPRI is providing technical research, capacity building, and policy communications support to Ethiopia's Agricultural Transformation Agency. This new government agency, a catalyst for sustainable change in the sector, is developing a national agenda to achieve both growth and food security by addressing systemic bottlenecks.
- ▶ Since 2004, the government has relied heavily on IFPRI's analysis in formulating and implementing the Agricultural Development Led Industrialization Strategy. In addition, IFPRI worked with the Central Statistical Agency to provide analysis to the Agricultural Growth Program, a major government project.
- ▶ IFPRI has built capacity at partner institutions such as the Central Statistical Agency, the Ethiopian Development Research Institute, and national universities.
 - + The Ethiopia Strategy Support Program has trained more than 800 Ethiopian participants in areas such as computer economic models and mapping—a contribution that has been applied in a variety of research contexts, from the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme goals to climate change scenarios in Ethiopia.
 - + Since 2009, 40 working papers and research notes, jointly authored with the Ethiopian Development Research Institute, have been published in an effort to improve access to relevant research results at the country level.

These analyses have provided timely inputs to the government's formulation of exchange rate and wheat price stabilization policies and have supported the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme's assessment of the implications of agricultural investments on growth and poverty.

- ▶ Together with local partners, IFPRI has published several atlases that have been met with keen interest from stakeholders. In particular, the *Atlas of the Ethiopian Rural Economy* (2006), the *Population and Housing Census Atlas of Ethiopia 2007* (2011), and the *Atlas of Agricultural Statistics 2006/07–2010/11* (2011) are in high demand for decisionmaking and spurring policy dialogue.



The Malawi Strategy Support Program

MOTIVATION

Malawi ranks among the world's most densely populated and least-developed countries. Despite recent economic growth, as of 2010, more than 50 percent of the population was still living below the poverty line, according to the World Bank. Poverty and hunger are widespread, with more than half of children younger than five too short for their age and almost one in five underweight for their age due to undernutrition. Because agriculture is the main source of income for most of the population, the development of targeted policies that spur growth in the sector, particularly in smallholder-based agriculture, is critical to meeting the country's food security and poverty reduction goals. Essential to the development of these policies is state-of-the-art research, and IFPRI researchers have met this soaring demand.

The Malawi Strategy Support Program was established in 2010 to promote demand-driven, in-country research and policy analysis, building on local capacity. With Irish Aid funding, the program provides technical assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security working with local collaborators.

OUTCOMES

- ▶ **Malawi's Agricultural Sector-Wide Approach:** IFPRI supports the implementation of the Malawi Agricultural Sector-Wide Approach, an initiative to accelerate agricultural growth through efficient resource allocation and development strategy, consistent with the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme. IFPRI's research results have been included in official government documents such as the *CAADP Post-Compact Review: Malawi*, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security's *Malawi Agricultural Sector-Wide Approach: A Prioritised and Harmonised Agricultural Development Agenda: 2011–2015*.
- ▶ **Conservation Agriculture:** IFPRI is a partner of Malawi's National Conservation Agriculture Task Force hosted by the Department of Land Resources and Conservation of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security. The Task Force brings together stakeholders from government, the private sector, civil society, and academia to coordinate the promotion of conservation agriculture—a practice that adapts farming systems to the challenges of climate change by improving soil fertility and protecting the natural resource base. With the support of Irish Aid, IFPRI facilitated the development of the task force's strategy, and supported a demand-driven baseline survey titled *Approaches to the Implementation of Conservation Agriculture among Promoters in Malawi*.
- ▶ **Farm Input Subsidy Program:** IFPRI is conducting an analysis, financed in part by Irish Aid Malawi, on the economywide impacts of the program, focusing, among other things, on weather risk, fertilizer price



risk, and the economic policy environment in Malawi. IFPRI's research reports on Malawi's Farm Input Subsidy Program have been recognized by partners as key sources of information on the program. Additionally, Irish Aid Malawi cofunded three other research papers in 2012 on the topics of crop diversification, multidimensional poverty, and analysis of Malawi's food and nutrition security.

ONGOING WORK

The Irish Aid–IFPRI collaboration in Malawi has strengthened the country's agricultural sector. Irish Aid entered a global partnership with USAID in 2010, working with Malawi's Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security to support projects implemented by the Malawi Strategy Support Program. To facilitate a sectorwide research strategy for Malawi's agricultural research system, in 2012, IFPRI conducted an assessment of the country's research capacity, finding that research funding is unevenly distributed between agricultural research centers, making collaboration essential; and that not all agriculture research institutions communicate their findings to policymakers, making research communication channels necessary. IFPRI also initiated

a food and nutrition security atlas in 2012 to assist decisionmakers in detecting looming food security challenges and devising timely interventions.

Improving Nutrition in Vulnerable Countries

Realigning Agriculture to Improve Nutrition

MOTIVATION

Stunting, a result of chronic undernutrition, is highly prevalent in Zambia, affecting one million children younger than five years old (45 percent of all children). In Mumbwa District, Central Province, where the Realigning Agriculture to Improve Nutrition project is underway, the prevalence rises to 59 percent. Chronic undernutrition is caused by a combination of a lack of good-quality food, poor health, and inadequate care practices, particularly in the first 1,000 days of life.

The Realigning Agriculture to Improve Nutrition project, a collaborative effort between Concern Worldwide and IFPRI, aims to reduce the prevalence of stunting in children through integrated agriculture, health, and nutrition interventions during the critical period



from conception until 24 months of age. The project increases year-round availability of and access to good-quality foods at the household level through improved production at the homestead level, and optimizes wellness through improved communication on best nutrition and health practices.

ONGOING WORK

IFPRI leads the monitoring, learning, and evaluation component of this recently launched project, with Concern Worldwide serving as the main project implementer. IFPRI will rigorously evaluate the impact of the Realigning Agriculture to Improve Nutrition model, monitor process indicators to understand the intended impact pathways, and document and disseminate learning from the project at local, national, and international levels. Other stakeholders include Mumbwa Child Development Agency (a local community-based organization), the Zambia Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, and the Zambia Ministry of Health.

Reducing Hunger through Policy Dialogue

2020 Vision Conference: Leveraging Agriculture for Improving Nutrition and Health

MOTIVATION

Agriculture, nutrition, and health are inseparably linked—agriculture provides food to nourish people so they can lead healthy lives, and productive agriculture requires the labor of healthy, well-nourished people. But can agriculture do more to improve human health and nutrition?

In February 2011, IFPRI's 2020 Vision Initiative brought together the agriculture, nutrition, and health sectors at an international conference on "Leveraging Agriculture for Improving Nutrition and Health," in New



Delhi, India, to examine what changes are necessary to maximize agriculture's contributions to human health and nutrition, and how human health and nutrition could contribute to an agricultural system that is both productive and sustainable.

Irish Aid, together with a consortium of other sponsors, supported this international conference, attended by more than 1,000 participants from 65 countries. During the conference, Irish Aid cohosted two side-events: one, *Scaling Up Nutrition Country Partnerships*, brought together partners to strategize next steps, and another, *Scaling Up Nutrition and the 1,000 Days Project*, showcased the work being done to make children healthier.

OUTCOMES

The 2020 Conference informed, influenced, and mobilized action by key actors to better employ investments in agriculture to sustainably reduce undernutrition and ill health for the world's most vulnerable people.

According to an independent assessment, the 2020 New Delhi Conference had important impacts on individuals, institutions, and professional discourse.

- ▶ **Individuals:** The conference provided new information to those who attended, gave attendees the tools to make them more effective within their own institutions, and created new networking opportunities.

- ▶ **Institutions:** The strongest institutional impacts came within organizations that wanted to integrate nutrition into agriculture but were unsure of how, or how quickly, to move forward. These institutions included CGIAR, of which IFPRI is a member, as it moved to create a major new research program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health; the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, as it responded to an internal evaluation of its own work in the nutrition arena; and a number of donor institutions, most prominently the UK Department of International Development, which used the momentum generated by the 2020 Conference to help push and guide a major expansion of its funding in the agriculture-nutrition-health arena.

- ▶ **Professional discourse:** The 2020 conference helped to change the conversation about agriculture and food security, incorporating more frequent reference to cross-sector impacts on nutrition and health.

- ▶ **Unleashing Agriculture's Potential for Improved Nutrition and Health in Malawi:** The head of Irish Aid in Malawi, who attended the 2020 New Delhi Conference, subsequently asked the IFPRI office in Malawi to facilitate a conference on how the country could use its agricultural potential to improve the nutrition and health of its people. The conference, "Unleashing Agriculture's Potential for

Improved Nutrition and Health in Malawi,” with support from Irish Aid and other partners, took place in September 2011 in Lilongwe. Participants at the Malawi conference reported that the conference raised the profile of agriculture-nutrition-health linkages in both the public and policy debate. Irish Aid used the Policy Action Note from the Malawi conference to realign some of its activities in the country.

The Global Hunger Index

MOTIVATION

Assessing countries’ progress in fighting hunger is no easy task. To provide a simple way of ranking countries and illustrating global trends in hunger, IFPRI developed the Global Hunger Index (GHI), in collaboration with its Irish partner Concern Worldwide and the German Welthungerhilfe, as a tool for annually measuring the state of hunger worldwide and by country.

The GHI highlights successes and failures in hunger reduction and provides insights into the drivers of hunger. The Index captures three interlinked dimensions of hunger: consumption of too few calories or nutrients, underweight of children, and child mortality. The Global Hunger Index then ranks countries on a 100-point scale: Zero is the best score (no hunger), and 100 is the worst. In addition, each issue of the GHI highlights a specific aspect in the fight against hunger, showcasing the on-the-ground work of Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe. Events based on the annual GHI findings have been organized across the globe; policy roundtables or debates involving national level politicians have taken place in Berlin, Brussels, Delhi, Dublin, Dushanbe, London, Milan, Nairobi, and Paris. By raising awareness and understanding of regional and country differences, the GHI aims to trigger tangible actions that reduce hunger.

OUTCOMES

- ▶ Policy debate: The Indian Secretary of Agriculture requested that IFPRI provide a briefing on the Global Hunger Index.
- ▶ Use of the GHI by IFPRI’s partners: At least four major European nongovernmental organizations (Welthungerhilfe, Concern Worldwide, Cesvi, and the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development) use the GHI as a key element in their advocacy work. These organizations complement the Index with data from their on-the-ground projects in various developing countries. In 2012, the Global Hunger Index was used by the Earth Security Initiative in its Land Security Agenda to describe food security in specific countries.
- ▶ Media and outreach impacts: On World Food Day 2011, the French newspaper *Le Monde* published a special edition based on the Index and carried an op-ed signed by the directors general of IFPRI, Welthungerhilfe, Concern Worldwide, and the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development. The German newspaper *Die Zeit* distributed teaching material based on the GHI to more than 1,000 teachers in Germany.
- ▶ Essential evaluation tool: The European Commission’s Food Security Thematic Programme has referred to the Global Hunger Index as one of the relevant international indicators for monitoring progress in reaching the Millennium Development Goal of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. The Index was externally evaluated for Welthungerhilfe in 2009 with regard to relevance, effectiveness, impact, efficiency, and coherence. The external auditor concluded that the GHI is an outstanding tool for raising public awareness on hunger issues because of its combination of a ranking system, a map visualizing country classification, and its annual publication. The evaluator stated that the Index is one of the most important public outreach instruments for

Welthungerhilfe, with the strong media response indicating that it reaches a broad public audience.

- ▶ In October 2012 at Concern Worldwide's inaugural hunger lecture in Belfast, former Irish President Mary Robinson highlighted the importance of the Global Hunger Index as a tool for benchmarking progress and failures in combatting hunger.

Understanding the Links Among Agriculture, Nutrition, and HIV and AIDS

Regional Network on AIDS, Livelihoods, and Food Security

MOTIVATION

Nutrition and access to nutritious foods are vital in the fight against HIV and AIDS. Undernutrition heightens vulnerability to disease transmission, and pairing antiretroviral drug therapies with adequate nutrition increases their effectiveness. Income inequality and food insecurity have also been found to increase the likelihood of exposure to HIV, driving up rates of infection in food insecure regions.

Launched in 2001 with the support of Irish Aid, the Regional Network on AIDS, Livelihoods, and Food Security (RENEWAL) operated in Malawi, Uganda, Kenya, Zambia, and South Africa through 2011, producing more than 150 publications during that time. A "network of networks," RENEWAL linked food and nutrition organizations to AIDS and public health practitioners to form national networks. Through capacity strengthening, policy communications, and action research, the program highlighted the relationship among HIV, food security, and nutrition in Africa south of the Sahara in order to develop better policies on HIV prevention and on mitigating the impact of AIDS.

OUTCOMES

- ▶ An external evaluation concluded that RENEWAL "had a direct, positive influence on national capacity to address the critical gaps in understanding the links between HIV/AIDS, nutrition, and food security, in developing ways to respond to these challenges, and in national capacity to respond."
- ▶ RENEWAL led the charge in bringing food and nutrition security into HIV and AIDS strategic plans, policies, and programs in several countries:
 - + **Kenya:** Food and nutrition concerns were included in the National AIDS Strategic Plan (KNASP) (2009/10 and 2012/13).
 - + **Malawi:** The agricultural sector HIV/AIDS policy/strategy (2003–2008), the Fisheries HIV/AIDS Strategy (2007–2011), and the Forestry HIV/AIDS Strategy (2007–2011) include references to the importance of food and nutrition.
 - + **Mozambique:** The Agricultural HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan (2006–2010), launched in 2006, received technical input from IFPRI.
 - + **Uganda:** The Ugandan AIDS Commission credited RENEWAL with introducing food and nutrition into the National Strategic Plan.
 - + **South Africa:** A sector strategy was developed on HIV and AIDS, led by the Ministry of Agriculture, and the government provided support to the RENEWAL land reform project.
 - + **Tanzania:** The agriculture sector strategy for HIV and AIDS and other chronic illnesses launched in 2006 and is still employed. RENEWAL also provided input on the National AIDS Control Council National HIV/AIDS Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.
 - + **Zambia:** RENEWAL provided technical input into the HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan (2006–2010) and the



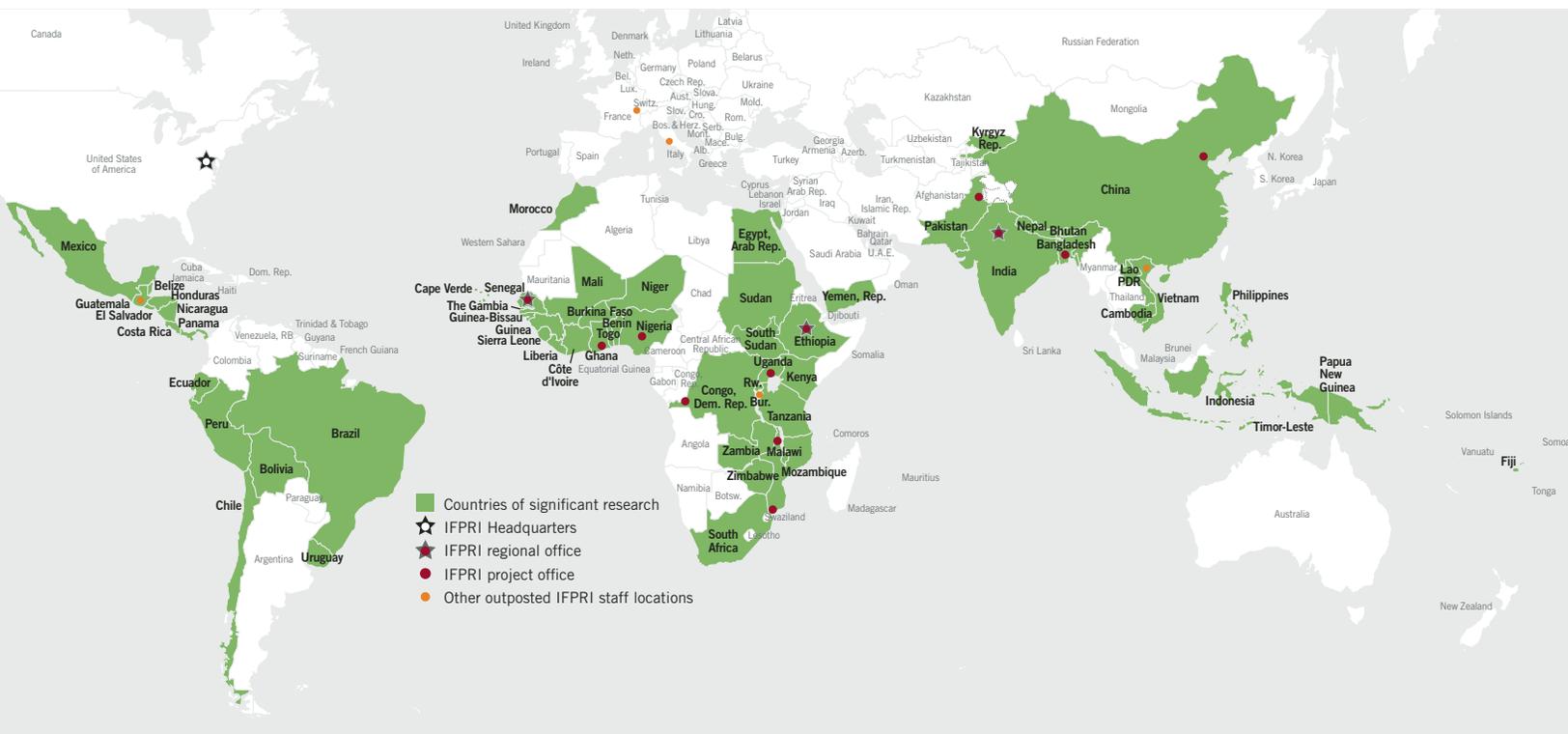
Zambia National Response to AIDS under the National AIDS Control Council.

- ✦ **Zimbabwe:** The RENEWAL team provided input to the Zimbabwe Agricultural Sector Strategy Plan on HIV and AIDS (2006–2010), initiated in 2006.
- ▶ RENEWAL researchers served on advisory committees and provided guidance to regional institutions such as the Southern African Development Community HIV/AIDS Unit, the Health Economics and AIDS Research Division of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, the Southern African AIDS Trust, and the Regional AIDS Initiative in Southern Africa.
- ▶ RENEWAL joined forces with international organizations such as the World Food Programme, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), and UNICEF on action research in the region and provided significant input to the United Nations and Partners' Alliance on Orphans and Vulnerable Children, Sustainable Livelihoods, and Social Protection to the UK Department for International

Development-funded Regional Hunger and Vulnerability Program.

- RENEWAL elevated food security and nutrition to the global stage by encouraging the inclusion of these concerns in the comprehensive HIV and AIDS responses of several international programs and organizations:
- ▶ Both the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria's food and nutrition guidelines and UNAIDS policy briefs were influenced by RENEWAL's work.
 - ▶ RENEWAL was also directly involved in drafting a nutrition strategy for the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. The strategy, "Report on Food and Nutrition for People Living with HIV/AIDS," was produced in May 2006.
 - ▶ The World Health Organization Assembly resolution WHA57.14, passed in 2005, identifies IFPRI as the source for their call to integrate "nutrition into a comprehensive response to HIV/AIDS."
 - ▶ Article 28 of the June 2006 UN Political Declaration on AIDS recognized food and nutrition as an important part of the global AIDS response, such that "all

IFPRI OFFICES AND COUNTRIES OF SIGNIFICANT RESEARCH



people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food ... as part of a comprehensive response to HIV/AIDS."

Looking Forward

The partnership between Ireland and IFPRI has made great strides in improving food and nutrition security;

supporting economic transformation in developing countries; and reducing poverty, hunger, and undernutrition around the world. IFPRI looks forward to a sustained, fruitful partnership with Irish Aid and other Irish partners as Ireland continues in its leadership role on tackling global hunger and undernutrition and continues to shape international and European development priorities, including in its role as President of the Council of the European Union in 2013, and beyond.

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