

**REVITALIZING POLICIES FOR FOOD SECURITY
AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN SOUTH ASIA
(India Component)**

Quarterly Report

Submitted to the:

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
New Delhi, India

by the:

International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)
2033 K St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006-1002
USA
Fax: 1-202-467-4439
Tel: 1-202-862-5600

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Contact Persons at IFPRI:

Ashok Gulati, Director, Markets & Structural Studies Division
Email: a.gulati@cgiar.org, Tel: 1-202-862-8196
Suresh Babu, Sr. Research Fellow, Communications Division
Email: s.babu@cgiar.org, Tel: 1-202-862-5618

Revitalizing Policies for Food Security and Poverty Alleviation in South Asia (India Component)

I. Introduction

The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), as part of its South Asia Initiative started a policy research and outreach project in India in order to identify policy alternatives that will link national food production and nutritional objectives. In spite of achieving national self sufficiency in food grain production twenty years ago and maintaining a current level stock of 60 million tons, the levels of household food insecurity remain paradoxically high and starvation continues in drought stricken areas of India. The recent trend in liberalization and globalization of food trade provides opportunities for reformulating food marketing and trade policies for increasing the access of food to poor households. The major objective of this sub-component of the South Asia Initiative is to design program interventions that will ensure national and household food security, while changing the existing procurement storage and distribution policies relating to food grains towards greater efficiency and sustainability.

II. Activities

This project involves four major activities that will result in a set of policy options for the government of India so that effective programs and policies will be implemented to reduce food insecurity in India. These activities include:

- 1) two consultative workshops;
- 2) two collaborative research workshops;
- 3) participation of a key researcher in IFPRI's visitor exchange program, and
- 4) undertaking an operational research study on key issues addressing the food security paradox in India.

The following activities have been carried out for the past three months.

1. The Consultative Workshops

One of the major activities during the past quarter was the Consultative Workshop which brought together key researchers and policymakers to take an inventory of the food security situation, identify the policy research information gaps, and set priorities among the issues for immediate research and application of policy information.

The Workshop has identified priority research areas for implementing policy research studies that will be initiated and implemented in the next quarter of the year.

Several follow-up activities have also been identified by the workshop participants and will be undertaken in the next 11 months

A detailed report of the proceeding of the workshop is attached.

2. The Research Methods Workshop

The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) jointly with Indian Council of Research for International Economic Relations (ICRIER) and Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) is organizing the South Asian regional conference on “Trade, Technology and Food Security in South Asia” which will be conducted in April 2002. During this workshop the team of Indian researchers working on collaborative research studies will be brought together to discuss research methods that they are currently implementing and the conceptual framework for the studies that are identified during the priority-setting workshop.

3. Implementation of Policy Research Study

Under the program of revitalizing policies for food security and poverty alleviation in South Asia a research study is being initiated on understating food security policies and targeted food security interventions in India. The study is being conducted jointly with the Center for Social Studies (CESS), Hyderabad, India and Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, Mumbai, India. Preliminary design of the study was presented at the priority setting workshop in New Delhi in January 2002.

III. Conclusion

The funding for the project was received almost a month later than expected. Nevertheless the project activities have been initiated as planned and they are currently running smooth. No major constraints in achieving the project goals are anticipated in the next reporting period.