Agricultural or Food System Transformation in Asia?

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What Is the Future of Small Farms in Asia?

Towards better metrics and policymaking for seed system development

RESAKSS ASIA

The Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System for Asia (ReSAKSS-Asia) is being facilitated by IFPRI with the goal of mobilizing research to inform policies that reduce poverty and hunger in Asia. It accomplishes this through the creation and strengthening of a regional network of food policy researchers, analysts, and development practitioners to make research results, data, and information readily available to policy makers.

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Outline

- Significant progress in reducing hunger and malnutrition, but challenges remain
- Transformation of Asia’s food system is crucial – what are the current challenges?
- What lessons Asian Countries offer?
- Evidence-based Policy research support, Data systems, Capacity for policy analysis
Asia: Despite progress, child undernutrition remains high; overweight / obesity rising (Fan, 2016)

![Graph showing prevalence of child undernutrition](image1)

Prevalence of child undernutrition (%)

- Underweight
- Stunting
- Wasting

- Asia
- SSA
- 1990
- 2000
- 2010
- 2020

![Graph showing prevalence of specific micronutrient deficiencies](image2)

Prevalence of specific micronutrient deficiencies (%)

- Anaemia
- Vitamin A def.

- C Asia
- E Asia
- S Asia
- SE Asia
- W Asia
- Developing World

![Graph showing prevalence of adult overweight/obesity, Southeast Asia](image3)

Prevalence adult overweight/obesity, Southeast Asia, 2014 (%)

- Overweight
  - Female: 28%
  - Male: 21%

- Obese
  - Female: 8%
  - Male: 4%

![Graph showing economic cost of micronutrient deficiencies in Myanmar](image4)

Economic cost of micronutrient deficiencies in Myanmar = 2.4% of GDP annually
Challenges to Food System Transformation in Asia

- Climate resilient food systems
- Technology and innovation systems
- Institutional bottlenecks
- Policy process challenges
- Cross-cutting issues
Climate change and extreme weather events (Fan, 2016)

Overall vulnerability: Physical impacts adjusted for coping ability

Myanmar ranks 2nd out of 187 countries in the Global Climate Risk Index

Technology Challenges

• Technology – labor saving?
• Getting out of agriculture?
• Rural non-farm employment?
Increasing productivity actors and players in rural landscape

- Kisan Call Centre
- Mass media – TV, Radio, Newspapers
- Agriclinics
- NGOs: BASIX, BAIF
- Private: Rural Business Hubs
- ICT projects

ATMA
State Dept of Ag
Krishi Vigyan Kendra

Farmers and Extension in India

NGOs:
- BASIX
- BAIF

Private:
- Rural Business Hubs

Mass media: TV, Radio, Newspapers

ICT projects
Technology to Institutional Challenges

- Institutions to help the poor?
- Who are the poor?
- Where are they?
- Why are they?
- How to help?
Rural Institutions

- The Gram Panchayats – Village level governance
- Linkages to service delivery
- Linkages to government programs
- Linkages to NGOs
- Linkages to Private Sector
- Working with Women Self Help groups
Institutional challenges affect Myanmar’s agriculture
(Thein and Babu, 2015, ADS, 2018, Fan, 2016)

Agriculture sector lacks structural competitiveness, e.g.
• Natural rubber production: 77% increase over one decade
• Sugarcane production: ~30% increase

Growing land constraints
• Competing use from other sectors; land speculation; land concession
• Smallholders who lack assets, credit find difficulty to purchase/lease land
• Land consolidation: Slow, limited process due to requirement of huge government budget
• Sound approach needed, e.g. Block farming in the Philippines
Food System to Health Transformation?

- Macronutrients to Micronutrients
- Iron – Anemia
- Vitamin A deficiency
- Child malnutrition remains high
- Obesity and overweight
- Food system approach to nutrition
Policy Process Challenges

• What policies are in place?
• Who really makes the policy?
• What programs are in place?
• How they affect people?
• How to influence policy?
• What is our understanding of the policy process?
• How to monitor the impact?
Resnick, Danielle; Haggblade, Steven; Babu, Suresh; Hendriks, Sheryl L.; and Mather, David. 2018.

The kaleidoscope model of policy change: Applications to food security policy in Zambia.

World Development 109(September 2018): 101-120.
Policy and Program Interventions

- Cash transfers
- Food related programs
- Price and tax subsidies
- Fee waivers in health
- Public works – asset creation
- Microcredit and informal insurance
Lessons from Selected Asian Countries

- Bangladesh
- China
- India
- Vietnam
- Thailand
- What about Cambodia, Nepal, Laos and Myanmar?
Lessons from Vietnam (Fan, 2016)

- **Doi Moi reforms**
  - Decollectivization of farmland, equitable land rights
  - Liberalization of agric. marketing, trade, FDI
- **Large public expenditure for nutrition and health**
  - Nationwide health coverage and subsidies to poor people
  - ~25% of national health programs on nutrition
  - Child-health and family-planning programs
- **Supporting human capital development and rural non-farm economic growth**
- **Large scale social programs for nutrition, health, and family planning**

Source: Klump 2007; von Braun et al. 2008; Vandermoortele & Bird 2011

![Graph showing Prevalence of undernourishment and child stunting](source: FAO 2015; UNICEF/WHO/WB 2014)
Lessons from China (Fan, 2016)

- Decollectivization of agriculture
  - Introduction of Household Responsibility System for securing land rights
- Pro-market reforms and dismantling of state planning and monopolies
- Policies for human capital development and rural non-farm economic growth
- Large scale social programs incl. on nutrition, health, and family planning
- Complementary investments in education, clean water, and good sanitation

Source: von Braun et al. 2008; Fan et al. 2007; Fan 2010
Lessons from Thailand (Fan, 2016)

- **Market-oriented agricultural growth**
  - Modernized marketing chains that connected smallholders to markets
  - Increased investments in agricultural research and extension
  - Product specialization and high diversification

- **Integrated and community-based nutrition interventions**
  - Nutrition programs integrated into national plan
  - Focus on underdeveloped areas and vulnerable populations
  - Clear linkages between agriculture and nutrition for sustainable impact
  - Involvement of community health volunteers for service delivery

**Lessons from India (Fan, 2016)**

Much effort made to improve food security and nutrition at national, household level

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<th>Category</th>
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| **Production** | - Food Security Mission  
                  - Subsidy in fertilizer and irrigation  
                  - MSP and assured procurement                                    |
| **Availability** | - Food reserve and stocks (> 80 million ton)  
                    - 500 thousand fair price shops                                    |
| **Access**     | - Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Program  
                  - Direct Cash Transfer                                              |
| **Affordability** | - Subsidized food to people BPL  
                        - Food Security Bill (Right to Food)                                 |

Source: Joshi 2013

Much effort made to improve food security and nutrition at national, household level.
Lessons from Bangladesh (Fan, 2016)

- Integrating nutrition into social safety net improves nutritional outcomes
- ~12% of government budget (2.3% of GDP) allocated to social safety net programs for Fiscal Year 2015 in Bangladesh
- Evidence from WFP program
  - Safety nets reduce household poverty and improve food security and women’s empowerment
  - BUT few improvements on child nutritional status

Source: Hoddinott, Ahmed, et al. 2015
What about Developing Asia?

Key attention areas

- Investment in Research and Development
- Smallholders farming and transformation
- Value Chains – farm producer organizations
- Food systems approach
- Build resilience towards climate change
- Multisectoral strategies
- Local level transformation
Cross-cutting Issues

- State vs Private sector
- Institutional capacity
- Targeting the vulnerable
- Evaluation – impact vs process
- Political economy of rural development
- Gender mainstreaming
- Community based development
- Paradigm shifts – Food security – Farming Systems
  Research – Livelihood approaches – Food System Resilience
Capacity Development?

- Translate policies and programs into action
- Build capacity for local governance
- Empowering rural youth?
- Ride the new wave of High Value Agriculture
- Public-Private Partnerships
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