

Synopsis of Compact2025 Event in Ethiopia (December 2017)

Compact2025 and partners organized the event on “The Future of Ethiopia’s Agriculture: Towards a Resilient System to End Hunger and Undernutrition” on Friday, December 15, 2017 in Addis Ababa.¹ The event featured new research on agriculture and food system development in Ethiopia, and served as a follow-up to the [Ethiopia Roundtable Discussion](#) (RTD) held in Addis Ababa the previous year. In this year’s meeting, progress on recommendations from the last RTD was assessed toward ending hunger and undernutrition.

The event was co-organized by IFPRI and its Compact2025 initiative, the Ethiopian Development Research Institute (EDRI), and the Rural Economic Development and Food Security (RED&FS) Sector Working Group. It brought together stakeholders from government, academia, civil society organizations (CSOs), and the development partner community. This brief summarizes the discussions from the meeting and highlights the Compact2025 session on reshaping Ethiopian agriculture to end hunger and undernutrition in Ethiopia.

The Future of Ethiopia’s Agriculture

The conference was an important forum to discuss new research to inform Ethiopia’s agricultural policy. Agriculture will continue to play a critical role for Ethiopia to achieve its ambitious Seqota Declaration to end child stunting by 2030, among other goals.

Justin Yifu Lin, founder and first director of the China Center for Economic Research and former chief economist of the World Bank, delivered a keynote on agriculture’s critical role in transforming economies, achieving food security, and improving nutrition. Therefore, in order to end hunger and undernutrition while accelerating economic growth, agricultural transformation through modernization must become a reality. Increasing availability and access to modern technologies for farmers will be key to modernize agriculture. Another keynote address from Paul Dorosh, IFPRI division director, on “The Future of Ethiopia’s Agriculture: Economy-wide analysis of future scenarios” discussed ongoing research, which shows that non-farm investment is the best mechanism for welfare gains in society. As such, agriculture is projected to remain highly effective at reducing poverty through 2040.

H.E. Ato Mekonnen Manyazewal, Executive Director EDRI reflected on the investment priorities discussed in the keynotes and offered a reminder that growth and development should serve people at large, and therefore Ethiopia should make the choice that improves welfare. It was noted that Ethiopia’s commitment to transforming agriculture for larger economic transformation has been a centerpiece of the country’s strategy and will continue to play a key role for years to come.

Overview of recent research on Ethiopian agriculture, welfare, and resilience

Researchers discussed ongoing work in the first session on land, agriculture, and livestock. Agriculture and markets in Ethiopia are changing in the face of population growth and urbanization, income growth, and infrastructure development. Expected changes include a slow increase in caloric consumption, an increase in consumption of animal-sourced foods and processed, convenience, and ready-to-eat products, offered through modernized food distribution channels. Dynamics and potential for crop and livestock productivity were discussed, with overviews of Ethiopia’s crop and livestock sectors. Lastly, an analysis of Ethiopia’s economic and climatic boundaries for cropland expansion shows potential for expansion in lowland areas with improved market connectivity.

Sessions on recent research on welfare, safety nets, and resilience followed. One presentation discussed changes in nutrition outcomes in Ethiopia from 2000-2016. Ethiopia has registered one of the fastest reductions of stunting in

¹ [Compact2025](#), launched in November 2015, is a bold initiative for accelerating progress to end hunger and undernutrition by 2025. It brings stakeholders together to set priorities, innovate and learn, fine-tune actions, build on successes, and synthesize sharable lessons to accelerate progress.

the world. There are, however, little improvements in average birth sizes, and dietary diversity is alarmingly poor. A second presentation focused on lessons from 10 years of evaluation of Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP). Overall, the Productive Safety Net Programme has been successful in achieving its core objectives of targeting chronically food insecure households (especially in the Highlands), closing the food gap, preventing asset depletion, and building community assets of value. But it has had less success increasing incomes and improving productivity and nutritional status. Incorporating nutrition behavior change communication activities and developing complementary livelihood packages would help the latest Productive Safety Net Programme redress these limitations. Lastly, ongoing work on droughts, resilience, and long-term development in Ethiopia provided evidence on long-term effects of droughts on nutrition in children and mothers, leading to impacts on the next generation. For Ethiopia's prospects for long-term development, environmental degradation, climate change, and population growth are challenging factors. A systems perspective toward a more integrated economy whose focus is on drought-prone or dryland areas will help foster long-term development.

Reshaping Ethiopian agriculture to end hunger and undernutrition in Ethiopia

The Compact2025 session on reshaping Ethiopian agriculture to end hunger and undernutrition discussed the critical need for Ethiopia to accelerate progress to achieve its goals. Progress has been made on RTD recommendations from the previous year, specifically the development of a technical support unit to support the Ethiopian National Information Platform (NIPN) on Nutrition Technical Advisory Project (ENTAP). A distinguished panel then discussed what Ethiopia has done to achieve its progress on food security; how to improve programs and institutions to provide immediate relief and long-term development; how to improve accountability, coordination, and communication for food and nutrition across sectors; and the key challenges and opportunities to integrate nutrition into resilience programs.

Panelists noted Ethiopia's commitment to end stunting in children under-2 years of age by 2030 through their Seqota declaration and the need for greater coordination and accountability across sectors to achieve the goal. Institutions such as Ethiopia's extension services and the Productive Safety Net Programme were critical for Ethiopia's success and they will continue to be key factors for success in going forward. Infrastructure development was very important in Ethiopia's progress, and increasing crop diversity in agricultural production toward more nutritious crops will be decisive. Panelists also noted that agriculture must be transformed to be inclusive, sustainable, efficient, and nutritious. More collaborative research, monitoring and evaluation, and information sharing are needed. There is also a need for a clear strategy on land and water resources, and the need for technology, research, and extension systems to support farmers.

Next steps

A summary of key points of the meeting and next steps for Compact2025 in Ethiopia include:

- The Government of Ethiopia is committed to ending hunger and undernutrition by 2030 or even before. Good governance and accountability structures are needed to follow through. A robust M&E system and coordinating agency will be critical.
- Knowledge, data, and capacity are critical. NIPN is a great opportunity to help continue to build knowledge and capacity. More research is needed on questions such as whether agriculture has led to more improvements in nutrition, and how to make programs such as Productive Safety Net Programme more nutrition sensitive?
- Mutual learning can help accelerate progress and Ethiopia is willing to learn from other countries. To continue to promote South-South learning, IFPRI and others will convene a global gathering to share successes and experiences.

A follow-up roundtable will be held next year to reconvene stakeholders, evaluate progress, identify action gaps, and fine-tune next steps toward ending hunger and undernutrition by 2025 in Ethiopia.