

Workshop report on

Bringing data and evidence to inform decision making and policy change in Nepal's Agrifood Systems: Integrated Agrifood Systems Situation Reports



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Vivanta Hotel, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Organizers

Institute for Integrated Development Studies (IIDS), International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT), and International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
CIMMYT	International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
CSISA	Cereal Systems Initiative for South Asia
FNCCI	Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IIDS	Institute for Integrated Development Studies
NRB	Nepal Rastra Bank
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme

1. Background

Global markets have witnessed a substantial rise in the prices of key agricultural commodities since 2011. The lockdowns and supply chain disruptions resulting from COVID-19 in 2020-21, along with the conflict in Ukraine, have further heightened the prices of both agricultural inputs and outputs. This prevailing scenario presents challenges for developing countries like Nepal that rely on the import of food and agricultural inputs. With imports constituting approximately 12 percent of total wheat consumption, 23 percent of rice consumption, and 31 percent of maize consumption in 2019, Nepal is also grappling with the repercussions of escalating global agricultural commodity prices.

With the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Cereal Systems Initiative for South Asia (CSISA) has been working to address the intricate and urgent challenges arising from the Russia-Ukraine war. One of the primary objectives of this project is to enhance the ability of USAID Nepal and development partners to respond to agrifood systems crises through improved data-driven insights and strategic guidance. Such data-driven efforts cover compilation of monthly input and output data from its working areas, analyzing them and then developing various reports and development of web-based dashboard.

CSISA has developed a monthly Agrifood System Situation Report that focuses on interpreting national level market trends and their impacts on Nepal's agrifood system. This effort constitutes part of a larger response to the pressing economic challenges sparked by Russia's war on Ukraine and ensuing global inflation and supply chain disruptions of food, fuel, and fertilizers. The eleven monthly reports generated so far aim to generate data-driven insights and strategic guidance to help stakeholders including government policy makers, development organizations, and the public to better understand the trends and impacts of complex market dynamics. The reports draw on economic forecasting and scenario modeling to predict how fluctuations in prices will affect poor consumers and smallholder farmers, emphasizing impacts of price volatility, primarily in national markets for rice, maize, horticultural products, edible oils, fertilizers, and diesel fuel. Similarly, it has developed a dashboard that aims to display all the compiled data from both primary and secondary sources through web-based media. The monthly report is the product of collaboration between several key research entities including CGIAR) members: the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT), the International Fod Policy research Institute (IFPRI), as well as leading Nepali think tank, the Institute for Integrated Development Studies (IIDS). A monthly situational report is then disseminated, presenting the effects on the agrifood system, especially in the Feed the Future (FtF) Zone of Influence (Zoi) and at the national level.¹

To date, monthly reports spanning eleven months have been generated with the support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Cereal Systems Initiative for South Asia (CSISA) since December 2022. These data-driven insights provide strategic guidance to the government, policymakers, development organizations, and the public, aiding in a better understanding of the trends and impacts of complex market dynamics in Nepal. Utilizing economic forecasting and scenario modeling, the reports predict how fluctuations in prices will impact poor consumers and smallholder farmers, with a focus on the effects of price volatility, particularly in national markets for rice, maize, horticultural products, edible oils, fertilizers, and

¹ Feed the Future (FtF) works in 25 districts of Nepal, including Lumbini, Karnali, Sudurpaschim and Bagmati provinces.

diesel fuel. In this context, CIMMYT, IFPRI and IIDS jointly organized the Situation Reports dissemination workshop on 'Bringing Data and Evidence to Inform Decision Making and Policy Change in Nepal's Agrifood Systems'.

2. Objectives

The objective of the workshop was to disseminate the reports and dashboard within a wider audience, gather perspectives to improve its utility, and create clear pathways for ongoing collaboration with a range of decision makers, researchers, and other stakeholders. The workshop will bring together perspectives representing the national, regional/provincial and/or local levels in a conversation about how to improve the utilization of data-driven informational products.

3. Outline of the Workshop

The workshop commenced with welcoming remarks from Dr. Bijan Bhattarai of IIDS, followed by a brief introduction to the initiatives of the CSISA project by Dr. Timothy J. Krupnik from CIMMYT. The workshop agenda is available in Annex 1.

Dr. Krupnik presented the CSISA initiatives, outlining the four core phases of these initiatives and highlighting how they have benefited over 5 million households in Nepal, Bangladesh, and India since 2009. He highlighted the concerning upward trend in the consumption of junk food, particularly in rural areas, and emphasized the need for further investigation, especially by those working in nutrition. Following the overview of the CSISA initiative, Dr. Anjani Kumar from IFPRI emphasized the necessity of collective efforts to provide robust data on the food system to policymakers for better planning and investment in infrastructure, such as cold storage and transportation, to achieve improved market integration. A key message from the situation reports is that while the Nepali agri-food system is resilient, persistent high prices in cereals affect access to good quality and adequate nutrition.

After the presentations, Dr. Pankaj Koirala from CIMMYT moderated an open discussion session for queries and feedback on the CSISA initiatives. Mr. Badri Prasad Bastakoti from the International Trade Center highlighted Nepal's rich geographical diversity as a foundation for a resilient and secure food system. He raised questions about the analysis of price volatility in the situational report and expressed curiosity about migration patterns in different geographical regions and their impact on food security and consumption patterns of junk and preservative food in Nepal. Mr. Jiibnath Sharma from CARE Nepal raised queries about the patterns of the local agrifood system and the scenario of marketing and consumption patterns. He suggested the need for mapping the current production scale of local food commodities.

Mr. Anil Chandra Neupane from ADRA Nepal suggested the addition of the agricultural labor market situation in the monthly situational report. He was also eager to know about other bottlenecks in the agrifood system, aside from the lack of robust data mentioned by Dr. Anjani Kumar and questioned the adequacy of market prices of food commodities from 10 districts for the compilation of the situational report.

Following the feedback session, Dr. Nicholas Minot of IFPRI presented the prototype of the Nepal Food Security Dashboard, which will provide information on food prices of important commodities, including weather forecasts and crop calendars. He suggested that this information can be used

Annex

Annex 1: Agenda and schedule of the Workshop

Time	Session	Facilitator/Presenter
9:30 - 10:00	Registration of participants/Tea and coffee	
10:00 - 10:05	Welcome remarks	Dr. Bijan Bhattarai, IIDS
10:05 - 10:15	Building food system resilience to global supply chain and climate shocks in Nepal: An overview of the CSISA Initiative	Dr. Timothy J. Krupnik, CIMMYT
10.15 - 10.30	Nepal Agrifood Situation Reports	Dr. Anjani Kumar, IFPRI and team
10:30 - 11:00	Open discussion	Moderator: Dr. Pankaj Koirala, CIMMYT
11:00 – 11:20	Tea/Coffee Break	
11:20 - 11:50	Nepal Food Security Dashboard	Dr. Nick Minot, IFPRI (virtual)
11:50 - 12:30	Feedback on dashboard	
	Remarks by the Civil Society and Academic Organizations	Mr. D.B Basnet, Chairperson, AEC, FNCCI.
	Remarks by the Government Departments and Institutions	Dr. Prakash Kumar Shrestha, Deputy Director, NRB,
	Open feedback	All Participants
12:30 - 12:40	Remarks by the Guest of Honor	Dr. Jason Seuc, USAID Nepal
12:40 - 12:50	Remarks by the Chief Guest	Mr Rabindra Maharjan, Deputy Director, Nepal Rastra Bank
12:50 – 12:55	Closing remarks	Dr. Timothy J. Krupnik, CIMMYT
12:55 - 13:00	Vote of Thanks	Dr. Aruna Palikhe, IIDS
13:00 -	Lunch	

Annex 2: Participant List

SN	Name	Position	Organization
1	D.B. Basnet	Chairperson	Agro Enterprise Center (FNCCI)
2	Hridesh Sharma	Program Coordinator	Caritas Nepal
3	Achyut Tiwari	Assistant Professor	Central Department of Botany, TU
4	Namdev Upadhyay	Scientist (S-1)	Nepal Agricultural Research Council
5	Ram Chandra Bastakoti	Agricultural and Natural Resources Economist	Como Consult GmbH
6	Anjani Kumar	Senior Research Fellow	IFPRI
7	Avinash Kishor	Senior Research Fellow	IFPRI

SN	Name	Position	Organization
8	Aruna Palikhe	Team Leader	IIDS/IFPRI
9	Bijan Bhattarai	Program Specialist	IIDS
10	Shalini Gupta	Researcher	IIDS/IFPRI
11	Madan Adhikari	Researcher	IIDS/IFPRI
12	Nanda Kumar Maharjan	Program Officer	IIDS/IFPRI
13	Meena Pandey	Research Intern	IIDS/IFPRI
14	Supratik Mansingh Pradhan	Research Intern	IIDS/IFPRI
15	Anusha Satyal	Intern	IIDS
16	Shrayada Regmi	Intern	IIDS
17	Saroni Shrestha	Admin Assistant Officer	IIDS
18	Ujjal Tiwari	Assistant Professor	Agriculture & Forest University
19	Badri Prasad Bastakoti	Consultant	
20	Chandra Kant Dallakoti	Chairperson	Fertilizer Association of Nepal
21	Jibnath Sharma	Food Security and Livelihood Manager	Care Nepal
22	Gaurab Shrestha	Managing Director	Chandragiri Machinery Udhyog
23	Chandra Singh Thapa	Agriculture Credit & Project Mgt Department	Agricultural Development Bank Limited
24	Nabaraj Basnet	Chairperson	National Farmers Group Federation
25	Haile Girmai	Head of Program	UN World Food Programme
26	Sakkal Thapa	Executive Director	Sakkal Agro Group
27	Uttam Babu Shrestha	Director/Research Fellow	Global Insitute for Interdisciplinary Studies
28	Yubaraj Gurung	Managing Director	Munaa Krishi Limited
29	Prakash Tiwari	Head of Resilience and Livelihoods	World Vision International Nepal
30	Lalit Prasad Sah	Agriculture Lead	iDE Nepal
31	Ramesh Sharma	Senior Economist (Rtd)	FAO
32	Krishna Timilsina	Chief	NAPRC, NARC
33	Kamal Raj Gautam	Agricultural Economist	Freelancer Researcher
34	Chandra Karki	Senior Program Officer	Practical Action
35	Krishna Prasad Sapkota	Regional Hub Manager	FORWARD Nepal
36	Pankaj Koirala	Senior Research Associate	CIMMYT
37	Cynthia Carmona	Project Manager	CIMMYT
38	Laba Thapa	NSAF MEL Specialist	CIMMYT
39	Binaya Parajuli	Country Head	CIMMYT
40	Asmita Khadka	Project Assistant	CIMMYT

SN	Name	Position	Organization
41	Nabin Maharjan	Comms. Specialist	CIMMYT
42	Menila Kharel		Practical Action
43	Mahima Shrestha	Intern	IDDS
44	Sagar Kafle	Assistant Research Associate	CIMMYT
45	Salin Acharya	Assistant Research Associate	CIMMYT
46	Lokendra Khadka	Research Associate	CIMMYT
47	Pratik Bhujju	Research Associate	CIMMYT
48	Ramhari Sharma	Secretary	NFGF
49	Prajuna Kc	Country Director	iDE Nepal
50	Harish Chandra Devkota	SAPD	KISAN II
51	Sudha Sapkota	Senior Sceintist	NARC
52	Aini C. Neupane	.	ADRA
53	Kavi Kumar Prajapati	D. Director	CNI
54	Rashmi Poudyal	Officer	CNI
55	Abid Hussain	Action Coordinator	ICIMOD
56	Shrawan Adhikari	Program Operation Specialist	FAO
57	Rabindra Maharjan	Deputy Director	Neepal Ratra Bank
58	Sushil Nhemaphuki	Program Manager	R&D Innovative
59	Anil Regmi	Founder	Smart Krishi
60	Sita Pandey	Manager	Munaa Krishi Limited
61	Jason Seuc	.	USAID
62	David Grist	Agriculture Officer	USAID
63	Laura Simkiss	.	US Department of States
64	Rojee Suwal	Director	Hellen Keller International
65	SK Ale	Board Member	National Consumer Forum Nepal
66	Manawata Ale	Member	National Consumer Forum Nepal
67	Kaji Ram Bhatta	Admin. Coordinator	CIMMYT

- Both English and Nepali
- Depend on user English or nepali
- English and Nepali
- Nepali
- Both Nepali and english
- Nepali
- Nepali
- English and Nepali
- English and Nepali
- E and N
- If possible add regional language as well
- Nepali and English both
- Nepali and english
- Nepali
- English and Nepali
- English ok
- Nepali and English
- Also in Nepali too
- English
- Nepali.
- English and Nepali
- English n Nepali both
- English and Nepali
- Nepali
- Nepali
- English
- Both english and Nepali.

6. Please provide your organization's name and what you believe you will use the dashboard for. (N=33)

- Please organize training for economic students on dashboard design and geographical targeting if localized info is available To reflect monitor the progress
- Cimmyt Food commodity and inputs price
- Market analysis for project design and targeted implementation
- Research, agricultural pricing related info
- Indeed let's provide access to raw data for all!
- WFP for promoting nutrition sensitive and adequacy of social protection transfers, promoting healthy diets, etc
- World Vision To inform poroject
- CIMMYT - analyzing field contexts and redesigning the project interventions
- DoS: Reporting
- IDE Nepal Used this dashboard to link with other inter project and find connectivity
- If the raw data are available, it can be used for research
- Winrock International.... Data for research

- NARC/NAPTEC Food and inputs price Other time series dats
- Hi. I am from Cimmyt, Csisa project. I believe the dashboard will be informative for a research enthusiast like me.
- Cimmyt, crop production and irrigation pattern
- Practical Action Nepal. Food deficit vs surplus status. Import vs export staus
- Practical Action, understanding the market trends
- Wi . Fertilizer availibity by district, if added
 - data, to understand seasonal dynamics, to provide info to leadership
- Kisan II, for farmers advisory and planning
- Munaa. Indigenous food information should be on priority
- Cgiar: an example to extend to other countries that can benefit from similar efforts.
- Innovation lab for Horticulture Price fluctuations in horticultural products
- Caritas Nepal: evidence based programming
- Food price and availability of ag I puts
- Smart Krishi. We would love to integrate thesystem into our app (498K downloads) and web portals and help the system to improve with the data our system generates.
- Agri Nepal for agri loan process
- IIDS/ market price and crop suitability in specific location for comparative advantage
- CARE Nepal use as source of information
- USAID - to be informed about trends, to find historical
- CIMMYT International- Research data accumulation, market value chain supply
- Ifpri: as a reference material for research and policy briefs
- USAID. Understanding of real time trends and situation.
- Munaa krishi limited Commodities, Map, crop calender
- ADRA Food security information
- AFU; secondary data for research projects.
- NARC, For Market research
- Tribhuvan University, data analysis

7. Please provide suggestions for additional data tables or graphs you would like to see presented in the dashboard. (N=32)

Heat maps of labor Prices Fertilizers used
 Error bar Name of variety Need to play w DB Dietary diversity
 Input rates farmers apply Robust Temperature and rainfall Indeed let's error bar
 Summary table testimonials Please provide raw data d
 Infographics

Data about Informal trade

InfographicQ&aprice data with GPS sitrep highlights Interprovincial trade
 Snapchat New weed or pest Threatened crops Remote sensing Drag and drop
 Feed price Precipitation trend Level of accuracy
 Local consumption graphs Food processing industry

8. What additional features do you think are missing that could improve the quality and usefulness of the dashboard? (N=32)

- Crop loss information
- Map feature should make more informative and interactive,
- Scientific estimation of price hike
- Tools or methods used for data analysis
- Community food behaviour and traditional food processing information
- More userfriendly for Farmers too.
- Good as of now
- Volume of production and demand
- Local production volume vs imported volume for a crops on particular market (eg Kalimati Market)
- Local market data
- Import information
- Data validation
- Mobile friendly app
- Video testimony of farmers and value chain people on the challenges they experience related to price changes. Give it a more human feel. Qualitative data
- Add event
- Live data from market.
- Price trends and comparisons
- Risk analysis
- Future projections of food deficit vs food supply
- Land price data
- Dqta of informal trade
- Assessment report
- Food Loss and Damage due to pests
- Price comparison chart
- Data download and recording system
- It's good as is for now
- Real time data
- Data table along with infographic
- Volume of trade
- Price trends and comparison
- Harvesting time
- Customized data/graph generator
- Metadata
- Disaggregation
- Ok
- Effect of climate change
- Develop an app
- Dynamic data and infographic
- Data download option
- Interactive

10. Would you like to use the dashboard yourself or recommend colleagues from your organization who can use it? (N=37)

I want to use it and also recommend it to colleagues.



I want to use it.



I want to recommend it to my colleagues.



Not at all

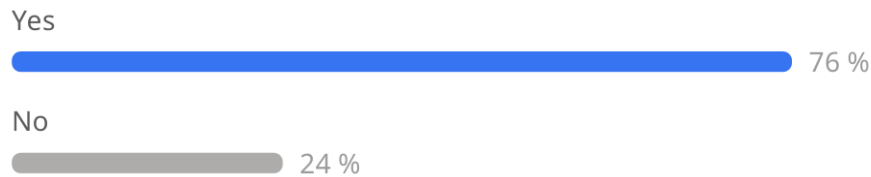


11. Please provide the name of your organization and indicate if you would like to have your staff trained in how to use the dashboard. (N=32)

- CIMMYT - - direly needed. We don't want to be only the data collectors. 😊
- Sakkal Agro pvt ltd
- Cimmyt
- CARE yes at field level
- Smart Krishi. Definatly we would like to explore and help in improvement.
- Practical Action/Yes
- MoFAGA
- Practical Action/yes
- KISAN II yes
- WI. After some features are added
- CGIAR
- Munaa krishi limited, sure
- NARC
- IIDS/ It would be helpful if the interns are trained to use it
- IIDS: Yes
- Fertilizers association of Nepal
- Agri Nepal.
- USAID yes
- ADRA yes
- NARC, yes

- Yes, IDE Nepal team
- Ifpri: Yes
- TU
- Winrock International, Yes
- IIDS Yes
- Caritas Nepal: yes
- iDE Nepal/Yes
- FORWARD Nepal Yes
- AFU; yes!
- Train university economics students in nepal
- Munaa Krishi Ltd
- Cimmyt yes
- World Food Programme, yes
- Cimmyt, yes please

12. In the past 30 days, have you used an online data dashboard of any kind? (N=38)



13. If you answered yes and you have used a data dashboard, please write the name and subject of the dashboard that you used. (N=29)

