

# About the Agriculture Global Practice

The world will need to produce at least 50 percent more food by 2050 to feed 9 billion people. Agriculture is critical for fighting hunger, boosting food security, tackling malnutrition, improving incomes, creating jobs, and protecting the environment. The numbers alone speak to the urgency of increasing food production in a sustainable way: 75 percent of the world's poor are rural, and most are engaged in farming; over 842 million people go

to bed hungry every day; 26 percent of all children under age five are stunted and 30 percent suffer from Vitamin A deficiency. Although agriculture is vulnerable to climate change, it is also the largest contributor to greenhouse gases. A changing climate means that in Africa alone, a warming scenario of 1.5°C to 2°C for the 2030s and 2040s will trigger a 40 to 80 percent reduction of area where maize, millet, and sorghum are currently grown.

**IN 2014, NEW BANK GROUP COMMITMENTS TO AGRICULTURE AND RELATED SECTORS WERE \$8.3 BILLION.**

The World Bank Group's Agriculture Global Practice brings together a multidisciplinary team to tackle today's complex development problems in food and agriculture, especially those that require multi-sector, multi-stakeholder solutions. It defines strategic direction in the food and agriculture sectors and develops and deploys expertise globally. It delivers integrated

solutions, collaborating across the World Bank Group, while capturing and leveraging knowledge effectively for maximum development impact needed to end poverty and boost shared prosperity. The aim of the new World Bank Global Practices is to bring together global experts from all areas of expertise to make the World Bank Group a true solutions Bank.



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## REDUCING GLOBAL POVERTY AND HUNGER

Improving agricultural performance is the most powerful tool to end global poverty and hunger and boost shared prosperity. Agriculture remains fundamental in the 21st century for economic growth—feeding the world’s growing population expected to reach 9 billion by 2050—and tackling the interlinked challenges of food security, food safety, nutritional

food and combating resource degradation brought on by unsustainable agricultural and land management practices. Agriculture accounts for one-third of gross-domestic product (GDP) and three-quarters of employment in Sub-Saharan Africa. Improvements in the agriculture sector can also be a source of job-led growth for middle-income countries.

Agricultural development is an especially pro-poor source of economic growth—about two to four times more effective in raising incomes among the poorest than growth in other sectors.

**“Boosting shared prosperity will be achieved by raising incomes, creating jobs, educating children, and providing all with access to food, water, shelter, and health care. By doing so, we will grow our collective wealth and nurture our humanity.”**

JIM YONG KIM

President, World Bank Group  
Speech at Howard University  
October 1, 2014

The World Bank Group is committed to boosting agriculture and agriculture-related investment. In 2014, new commitments to agriculture and related sectors were \$8.3 billion. Funding from the World Bank and International Development Association (IDA) for agriculture and related sectors rose to \$4.3 billion in FY14, up from \$3.6 billion in FY13. At \$4 billion, the International Finance Corporation’s (IFC) investments were at one of its highest levels ever. Altogether, the commitments meet the Bank Group Agriculture Action Plan’s projection of between \$8 to \$10 billion. Support from IDA for agricultural assistance to Sub-Saharan Africa was particularly strong, reaching \$1.6 billion, a 59 percent increase over FY10–12. Some 75 percent of agricultural lending



goes to increasing productivity and 21 percent is for improving access to markets. IFC's agricultural lending goes to agribusiness value chains.

The Agriculture GP also works on programs that allow communities to take charge of their own development, known as **Community Driven Development**. This approach gives community groups and local governments control over planning decisions and investment resources. These rural livelihoods projects promote inclusive growth and address rural poverty by supporting representative institutions of the rural poor.

The Bank Group's work in agriculture emphasizes five areas: raising agricultural productivity, linking farmers to markets, reducing risk, vulnerability and gender inequality, improving rural employment, and making agriculture more environmentally sustainable, as well as a source of environmental services.

## TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE

Agriculture is more vulnerable to climate change than any other sector. A warming climate could cut crop



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yields by more than 25 percent. Worldwide, almost 70 percent of freshwater is used for agriculture.

Agriculture and land use change are also responsible for between 19–29 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. But agriculture can also help to stop a 4°C warmer world as it is the only sector that can absorb carbon out of the atmosphere. To be sustainable, agriculture needs to produce more food on less land. It also needs to be resilient to extreme weather and minimize its negative impact on the environment. To raise yields sustainably, climate-smart approaches have the potential to increase productivity, enhance resilience, lower the carbon footprint, promote agricultural innovation through research and education, and facilitate responsible agricultural investment.

**Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA)** is an approach to managing landscapes—cropland, livestock, forests and fisheries—sustainably in the face of climate change. It aims to: **increase productivity** by producing more food to improve food and nutrition security and boost the incomes of 75 percent of the world's poor, many of whom rely on agriculture for their livelihoods; **enhance resilience** by reducing vulnerability to drought, pests, disease and other shocks and improve capacity to adapt and grow in the face of longer-term stresses like shortened seasons and erratic weather patterns; and **lower emissions and/or emissions intensity** by pursuing lower emissions for each calorie or kilo of food produced and avoid deforestation from agriculture. The Agriculture GP works with its partners to increase support for CSA.

## GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS

The evolving global context—with increased food price volatility and climate change—calls for stronger collective action to alleviate these impacts on the world's poor. The Agriculture Global Practice will work with its partners across regions and sectors, offering both financing and knowledge products to address these issues. For example:

- **The Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)** is dedicated to reducing rural poverty, increasing food security, improving human health and nutrition, and ensuring

more sustainable management of natural resources (approximately \$1 billion per year).

- **The Global Agriculture and Food Security Program** (GAFSP) supports country-led agriculture and food security plans and helps to promote investments, especially for smallholder farmers. So far, nine countries and the Gates Foundation have pledged about \$1.4 billion over three years, with \$1.2 billion received (approximately \$1.3 billion pledged over three years).
- **Global Food Price Crisis Response Program** (GFRP), launched in 2008 in response to the Food Crisis, provides relief to countries hit by high food prices. The GFRP has reached nearly 70 million people in 49 countries—through \$1.6 billion in emergency funds for farming, seeds and fertilizer, and emergency school feeding programs.
- **The Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture**, is a voluntary, farmer-led, multi-stakeholder, action-oriented coalition committed to the incorporation of climate-smart approaches within food and

agriculture systems. Launched in 2014, the aims of the Alliance are: sustainable and equitable increases in agricultural productivity and incomes; greater resilience of food systems and farming livelihoods; and reduction and/or removal of greenhouse gas emissions associated with agriculture (including the relationship between agriculture and ecosystems), where possible.

- The **Global Food Safety Partnership** is delivering a five-year program for training and capacity development, supported by both public and private sources.

World Bank Group clients are seeking integrated solutions that draw on the best available technical knowledge available, backed by financing and the power of partnership represented by the whole World Bank Group. The Agriculture Global Practice is poised and ready to help address the complex issues of global agriculture in a different, more collaborative and effective way for maximum development impact needed to end poverty and boost shared prosperity.



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