

- The Country Investment Plan (CIP) provides Bangladesh with a roadmap towards food and nutrition security
 - Available resources for interventions have grown substantially
 - Implementation should keep up with the increased resources

CIP: Maximizing the impact of growing financial resources

In 2010/11, Bangladesh raised an additional USD 2.2 billion for interventions in food and nutrition security covered by the Country Investment Plan. Such remarkable success was made possible by bringing all relevant partners under this unified investment framework. To maximize the impact of the growing pool of financial resources, particular efforts should be placed on ensuring effective implementation and monitoring.

Comprehensive framework

Achieving food and nutrition security is a complex policy objective. It describes a situation where –stable over time– sufficient quantities of safe and nutritious food are available; people have access to the food they need; and food is properly consumed, complemented by health and sanitation interventions to improve dietary absorption and utilization. With the National Food Policy and the associated Plan of Action, Bangladesh has established a comprehensive policy and planning framework that revolves around these three core dimensions of food and nutrition security. Corresponding investment requirements for improved food availability, access and utilization are outlined in the Country Investment Plan for agriculture, food security and nutrition (CIP).

As illustrated in the 2012 Monitoring Report on the National Food Policy Plan of Action and Country Investment Plan, Bangladesh has made important progress towards its food security objectives. Poverty has been reduced substantially, child underweight and stunting have declined.

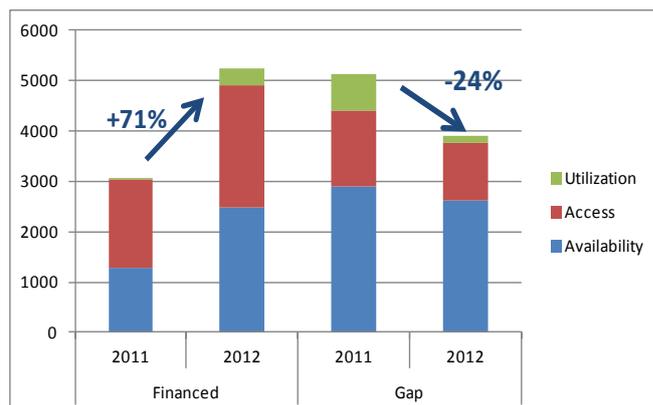


Figure 1: Large increase of CIP resources

Source: NFP PoA and CIP Monitoring Report 2012

Apart from these outcome measures, the success of fighting hunger and malnutrition within a unified framework is also demonstrated by the increase of funds and the number of interventions under the CIP.

Growing in size and relevance

The evolution of the CIP illustrates a success story. The framework has stimulated the formulation of new projects and substantially increased financial resources that are being made available in a coordinated and strategic manner, in line with national policy objectives.

In its first year of operation, financial resources for CIP projects grew by USD 2.2 billion or 71 percent. The lion's share of this increase originated from Government sources, but also Development Partners stepped up their contributions considerably. Particularly encouraging is the fact that the financing gap for projects was reduced significantly, from USD 5.1 billion to USD 3.9 billion.

	Total CIP	Financed (ongoing or completed)			Pipeline
		Government	Development Partners	Total	
Availability	5,115	1,829	664	2,493	2,622
Access	3,555	1,392	1,012	2,405	1,151
Utilization	471	66	272	338	133
Total	9,141	3,287	1,948	5,235	3,906

Table 1: CIP Budget 2012 (in million USD)

Source: NFP PoA and CIP Monitoring Report 2012

The framework now covers 265 completed or ongoing interventions; another 140 projects are in the pipeline and await financing. Adding up the monetary value of all CIP interventions, the budget reaches a volume of USD 9.1 billion, an increase of 11.6 percent compared to the previous year (Table 1). These numbers illustrate that stakeholders increasingly use the CIP as the framework for their food security interventions.

Addressing potential challenges

Interventions in the CIP are grouped in three pillars that correspond to the main dimensions of food security. As illustrated in Table 1, the budget is currently imbalanced in favour of the availability and access pillar, with utilization lagging behind in comparison. However, the proportion of funding allocated to different pillars should be interpreted with caution given that nutrition is being increasingly mainstreamed across programmes. For example, many programmes under the availability pillar also contribute to improving the nutritional status of households, such as by supporting the diversification of crops and promoting livestock or fishery production at homestead and community levels. In some cases these programmes even include accompanying measures to maximise their impact on nutrition outcomes, including health and sanitation services as well as nutrition education. For even better results these measures should be applied more systematically.

Ensuring adequate financing of all interventions remains the main challenge to be addressed in the future. Several areas are still insufficiently financed or completely lack funding, such as providing high-quality inputs (availability pillar); improving credit for farmers

(access pillar); and promoting food safety (utilization pillar). Relevant Ministries and Development Partners need to be sensitized to specifically address these neglected areas, especially those that are considered a priority.

Finally, project implementation and monitoring need to become more effective, not least in view of the substantial increase of financial resources. For each dollar spent in 2011 more than two dollars have been made available to finance new activities. This will put additional pressures on already strained capacities.

The way forward

The CIP Monitoring Report has proved to be a valuable instrument to enhance the impact of food security interventions, for example by highlighting areas in which further integration is possible and desirable across investments, and by pointing out where additional resources are required. Strengthening the exchange of information and making it more accessible can make the report even more effective and participatory, especially if the quality of information is enhanced in terms of timeliness and coverage. The annual monitoring process should become a systematic undertaking of all relevant agencies, and inform funding decisions by Government and Development Partners.

As indicated in the 2012 Monitoring Report, project implementation needs to be improved, for example by streamlining and simplifying procedures so as to avoid that the influx of new financial resources creates additional bottlenecks. Such measures should be complemented with training programmes in project management, budgetary control, and reporting that reach out to the various institutions involved in project implementation at central and decentralized levels.

In general, greater focus should be placed on ensuring long-term sustainability to enhance the delivery of results in existing investments, and on improving the quality of newly designed projects. While technical assistance in these areas is frequently provided, measures have concentrated little on expanding national capacities ●

Key sources: ● National Food Policy Plan of Action and Country Investment Plan Monitoring Report 2012.