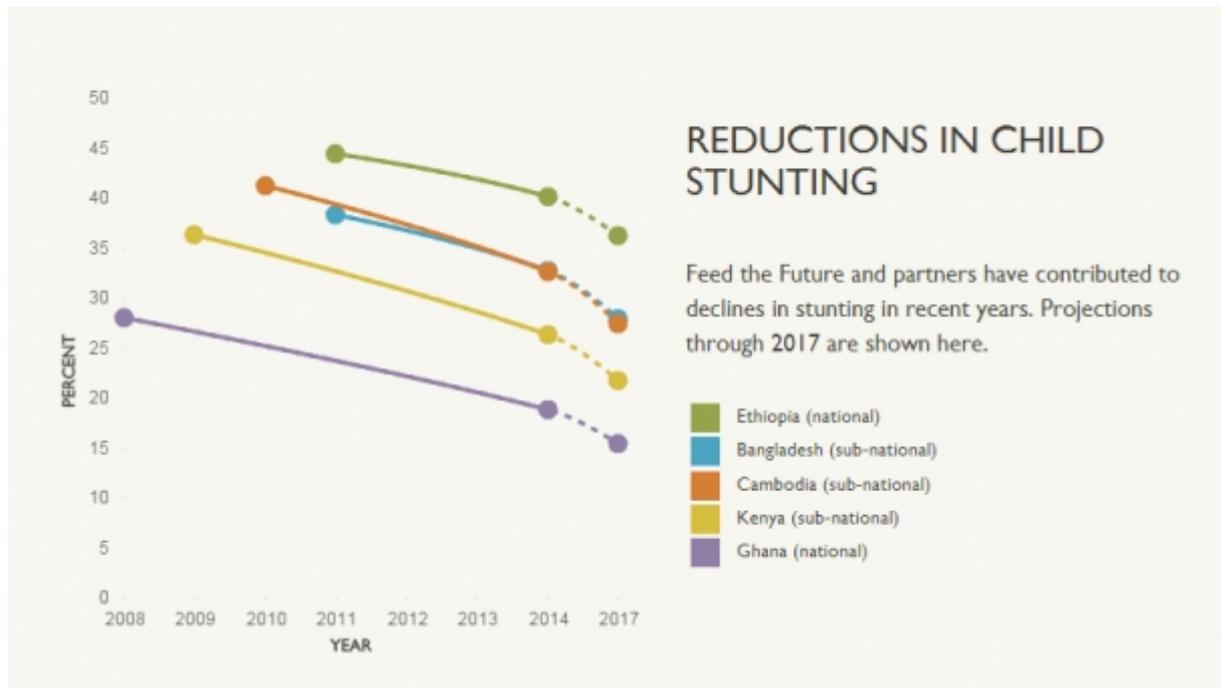




Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

Online Version: <https://feedthefuture.gov/article/behind-impact-data-feed-future%E2%80%99s-new-report-6-questions>

Behind the Impact Data in Feed the Future's New Report: 6 Questions



Feed the Future

When President Obama first took office, he promised that the United States would work along the people of poor nations to make farms flourish, nourish starved bodies, and feed hungry minds.

Since then, Feed the Future, his signature global hunger and food security initiative, and related U.S. Government efforts have mobilized tremendous public and private support to unlock the transformative potential of agriculture to connect more people to the global economy and pave a path out of poverty.

Today, the President [announced](#) new data on the impact to which these efforts are contributing.

Over the past few years, Feed the Future has helped millions of smallholder farmers around the world. They're the backbone of rural economies in many developing countries where hunger and poverty are often concentrated. They're also the heartbeat of Feed the Future, which emphasizes agriculture as an engine of growth that can fight hunger, poverty and malnutrition in these places.

Successes achieved by these individual farmers and communities reached by Feed the Future and related U.S. Government efforts are contributing to impact. And this year, we have additional data that highlight notable declines in poverty and childhood stunting in specific rural areas and countries.

How did we get to this point? What's new and different about the numbers this year? We've answered a few common questions below. Read on to discover the answers.

And, make sure you take some time to [explore the data and the stories](#) of the lives behind the numbers in Feed the

Future's new interactive report.

What makes this report different than past ones?

This year's report is groundbreaking: It shares Feed the Future's traditional output and outcome results, but also includes data that suggest that these results, along with others achieved by related U.S. Government efforts, are contributing to drops in poverty and malnutrition—Feed the Future's top goals. Other contributors include host country governments, other U.S. Government programs, and development partners.

This is our first glimpse into where the results we've reported since 2011 – such as the number of farmers applying new technologies, the value of their sales, and the number of people trained in nutrition – are leading: To true changes in the wellbeing and livelihoods of the people with whom we work.

Why do we have this kind of impact data now?

Stakeholders have been anxiously awaiting this story for a few years, but impacts and data on them both take time. Transformation doesn't happen overnight. We conducted interim surveys and assessed key indicators about three years after baselines were established in the areas where Feed the Future works – what we call “zones of influence” – to give our programs time to work. Surveys collected and indicators assessed this year provide a second data point to establish trends in poverty and malnutrition when compared to the baseline.

As you'll see in this year's [digital report](#), we also projected trend lines to 2017, when we will conduct the next set of surveys and analyze data to give us a third data point. The data we're publishing this year suggest that Feed the Future can meet its ambitious goal of reducing poverty and stunting by an average of 20 percent each across the areas where the initiative works.

How did you calculate the impact data?

We calculated the impact numbers using household survey data, such as Feed the Future's own [population-based surveys](#), the [Demographic and Health Surveys](#) (DHS) and the [Living Standards Measurement Study Integrated Survey in Agriculture](#). In each country where data were available, we looked for a way to most accurately assess changes in poverty and stunting in areas where Feed the Future programs were working and to which we would have contributed.

In many cases, we used data from national level surveys, such as the DHS, to assess changes that have occurred in poverty or stunting overall in the countries where we work, such as in Ethiopia and Ghana. In other countries, where data were reported at sub-national levels, such as by province, we calculated values for the areas which most closely aligned with Feed the Future zones of influence, such as for stunting in Kenya or Bangladesh. And, where we had full data sets for the zone of influence, as in the case of Bangladesh's poverty data, we calculated the change in the zone.

While there are varying levels of exactness in these methods, in all cases, the data and changes reported give us strong indications that Feed the Future is contributing to positive impact.

Weren't these downward trends in poverty and malnutrition already happening?

The trend lines we're seeing in the data currently available exceed what's happened historically in these countries and our zones of influence, particularly for stunting. Trends in childhood stunting reductions each year have doubled, from 2 percent per year in 2010 when the initiative's activities began to ramp up to 4 percent per year, on average across five Feed the Future countries where data is available. For poverty, we're still waiting to receive data from more countries to determine if and how Feed the Future may have accelerated poverty reduction, which we'll publish later this year.

We're conducting additional studies and analysis, such as impact evaluations, to examine how our programs are affecting poverty and malnutrition, but the increasing scale of the results we're achieving each year signal that the United States is contributing to impact on poverty and malnutrition. You can dig a little deeper into the data that's currently available in our interactive report at feedthefuture.gov/progress2015.

Since Feed the Future's approach is proving to be a successful one, why isn't the initiative working in more countries, such as South Sudan, which is facing a hunger

crisis as we speak?

One of the reasons we've been able to be successful is that we haven't tried to do all things in all places. Instead, we took a very selective, strategic and focused approach to support specific countries through Feed the Future. We looked at where these countries were already interested in investing and where we could come alongside them and maximize that work. You need a certain level of government commitment and capacity for improving agriculture in order to have that type of partnership.

That doesn't mean we don't work in countries that have great need but may lack certain aspects of capacity or commitment. We have a set of aligned countries in which Feed the Future operates – though in more limited scope than focus countries – that have a high need for food security-related activities and opportunity for U.S. support to make an impact. Often, these countries are reached through regional Feed the Future activities related to trade and research. These include countries such as Burma, Nigeria, and South Sudan.

This past year, we added Sierra Leone and Guinea to this list as well, given how hard their agriculture sectors were hit during the fallout from the Ebola crisis, and the opportunity that agriculture provides to strengthen those countries and help alleviate the conditions that allow a single outbreak to turn into an epidemic.

Humanitarian assistance in times of crisis will always be important—and the United States will continue to be a world leader in providing emergency aid to [alleviate acute suffering](#). But we're also working to strengthen countries' and communities' resilience and help lessen the occurrence of shocks and the devastation they can cause to vulnerable families when they do hit. Feed the Future is all about a long-term approach to address the root causes of poverty and hunger so families can move out of them, for good.

So, what's next for Feed the Future?

The impact data this year tells us that U.S. Government leadership has made a difference since 2007 and 2008. Feed the Future has built on resources allocated during the George W. Bush Administration to boost agricultural productivity in Africa, and it's encouraging to see strong bipartisan support today for reducing global hunger, poverty and malnutrition. In fact, members in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives have introduced legislation this year to [authorize and codify](#) international food security programs.

Momentum is strong, but there is still more to do. The 795 million people who go to bed hungry every night deserve nothing less than our full commitment to ensuring progress toward the Millennium Development Goals continues through achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, which will be announced later this year.

In the year ahead, you can expect to see more impact data from Feed the Future as more survey data become available and we are able to calculate values in poverty and stunting for additional Feed the Future countries. And, as I mentioned before, we'll be publishing future evaluations to continue to share how our programs are working and how well we're fulfilling the President's promise to help farms—and the smallholders that tend them—in poor nations flourish.