THE ROAD TO ADDIS ABABA AND BEYOND

The Agriculture, Nutrition and Health (ANH) Academy was established in 2015 as a new platform to facilitate learning and sharing among researchers and policy makers working at the intersection of agriculture-food systems, nutrition, and health. Little over a year since its launch, the Academy brought together the growing global community of interdisciplinary researchers and research-users to learn, share and strengthen collaborative partnerships and capacity.

The ANH Academy builds on the successful legacy of five agri-health research conferences organised in London by the Leverhulme Centre for Integrative Research on Agriculture and Health (LCIRAH), as well as ongoing events and activities coordinated under the CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH), which is led by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). These foundations have helped to increase interest and momentum around the critical pathways linking agriculture and health and have been important factors for enabling the Academy to pursue its goals. One of the key aims of the Academy is to expand on both the scope and participation in future events and initiatives, of which relocating the conference on an annual basis is a primary strategy.

With support from UKAid from the UK Government, through the Innovative Metrics and Methods for Agriculture and Nutrition Actions (IMMANA) research programme it was possible to realise this ambition by staging the first annual ANH Academy Week in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. With over 300 participants joining throughout the week, the event was more than twice the size of previous LCIRAH conferences, and it attracted a diverse array of researchers, policy makers, practitioners and funders representing a large and equally diverse number of institutions from across the world.

The Academy Week began with two days of learning labs; training sessions that covered a broad selection of impact measurement methods and skills used in interdisciplinary research. This was followed by a three day abstract-driven research conference featuring oral presentations, mini poster sessions and keynotes speeches, as well as plenary round tables, side events and working group discussions.

This report highlights some of the key proceedings and outcomes of the Academy Week and situates their relevance in the wider research and policy landscape. Resources from the event including presentations, videos and photos can be found on the Academy website (ANH-Academy.org) and a formal account of the conference proceedings will appear in the journal Food Security, in due course.
DAY 1-2
LEARNING LABS

The Academy Week in Addis Ababa started with two days of training sessions - Learning Labs - covering a broad selection of impact measurement methods and skills, as well as sessions focusing on interdisciplinary research, gender-sensitive interventions and getting published, among others. Here is a brief description of what was offered.

MIXED METHODS IN PROCESS AND IMPACT EVALUATION
The Learning Labs sessions commenced with a plenary presentation from Amy Webb Girard, highlighting how methods to evaluate current nutrition specific interventions can often prove inadequate in tackling complex problems. More complex evaluation process across sectors, disciplines and actors should be envisaged and designed so that we can understand why interventions work and don’t work. Mixed methods play an important role in integrating two worldviews - positivist/empirical and constructivist/interpretive - and increasing the robustness of findings.

LEAD ORGANISATION: Emory University
FACILITATOR: Amy Webb Girard

OPTIFOOD
Optifood is a software tool that applies linear programming to target group specific dietary intake, food cost, food composition and nutrient requirement. It can be used to design and estimate impacts of agricultural and food system interventions on nutrition, can be applied in the development of behaviour change interventions and assist policy decisions. The workshop introduced Optifood and its key functions, demonstrated its applications and discussed potential applications in the work/interest area of the participants.

LEAD ORGANISATION: London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM)
FACILITATOR: Frances Knight

INDICATORS OF FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION
The session gave the opportunity to review and analyse the draft User’s Guide* developed by the Food Security Information Network (FSIN) technical working group and to collaboratively construct and interpret the indicators from existing data. Participants were involved in group discussions concerning each type of indicator, brainstorming on best practices and recommendations for future priorities in research and policymaking in agri-health.

LEAD ORGANISATION: Tufts University
FACILITATOR: William Masters, Shibani Ghosh


MAINSTREAMING NUTRITION IN NATIONAL AGRICULTURE INVESTMENT PLANS
The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) was used as the central focus to reflect on how to mainstream nutrition within agricultural investment plans and policies. Participants worked in groups and explored technical and capacity building challenges. Areas covered included future opportunities for integrated agriculture-nutrition curricula, promotion of national statistical institutions to incorporate nutrition indicators and leveraging multi-sectoral coordinating structures developed under the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement at country level.

LEAD ORGANISATIONS: A4NH/IFPRI, FAO, NEPAD
FACILITATORS: Namukolo Covic, Dia Sanou

Mixed methods in process and impact evaluation: plenary
Optifood: 40
ANH101: 70
Indicators of food security and nutrition: 137
Mainstreaming nutritional agriculture investment plans: 25
Getting published: 39
Data that speak: 50
Interdisciplinary journeys: 30
Systematic reviews: 60
IFSTAL food system approach: 35
Mapping and analysing policies to inform: 45
Using WEIA: 32
Options for achieving optimal diets in

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GETTING PUBLISHED

Particularly well attended by young researchers, this learning lab provided an opportunity to discuss common rules and hints in organizing and writing a scientific manuscript and increasing the probability of getting published in relevant journals in the area of food and nutrition. The session covered issues such as submission and peer-review processes drawing from the Nutrition Society Journal and the shared experiences of the participants.

**LEAD ORGANISATION:** African Nutrition Society (ANS)
**FACILITATOR:** Tom Ndau

DATA THAT SPEAK: DATA VISUALIZATION FOR IMPACT

Data visualization is a crucial part of research, whether for publications in academic and scientific journals or to inform policy makers. In this interactive session participants engaged with the basics of data visualization and learnt about innovative tools that can be used to effectively communicate research that highlights the myriad implications that climate change has on agriculture, nutrition and health.

**LEAD ORGANISATION:** World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)
**FACILITATORS:** Christine Lamanna, Todd Rosenstock

INTER-DISCIPPLINARY JOURNEYS

Through interactive participation and visual cues, this learning lab explored the need to build multi-disciplinary skills and knowledge. Barriers to this included different priorities, knowledge systems and incentives across disciplines, transaction costs and time to integrate multiple disciplines and critical communication gaps. The outcomes of the learning lab included consensus on applying systems perspective lends, re-tooling and training with a culture of cross-disciplinary learning and addressing issues of power in projects and research design and funding.

**LEAD ORGANISATIONS:**
- Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, LCIRAH
- IFSTAL /LCIRAH
**FACILITATORS:**
- Linsey Chiwona-Karltun, Sabrina Trautman
- Lauren Blake

SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS WITHIN EVIDENCE-INFORMED DECISION-MAKING (EIDM) IN NUTRITION AND HEALTH

This learning lab focused on systematic reviews as a basis for setting research and policy priorities relating to agriculture, nutrition and health. It explored how to align the production of scientific knowledge and evidence with the information needs of decision makers, and included discussion on sources of evidence for EIDM, identification of steps in conducting systematic reviews and share of good practices in framing research questions.

**LEAD ORGANISATION:** EVIDENT
**FACILITATOR:** Roos Verstraeten, Richmond Aryeetey

ISTAL FOOD SYSTEMS APPROACH AND QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

The complementarity of mixed research methods across complex multi-sectoral issues in agri-health research is well supported. Through a food systems approach this session focused on concepts and tools to integrate qualitative methods into such research. Participants discussed the need for applying, documenting and sharing best practices on systemic approaches and qualitative research and the means by which to do this.

**LEAD ORGANISATION:** IFSTAL /LCIRAH
**FACILITATOR:** Lauren Blake

MAPING AND ANALYSING POLICIES TO INFORM FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION PLANNING

Policy coherence is crucial for effective promotion of nutrition sensitive food systems. Policy mapping and policy analysis play a major role in informing policy makers on food security and nutrition. Participants learned how policy mapping can improve linkages between research and policy and create bridges among disciplines and stakeholders.

**LEAD ORGANISATION:** Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)
**FACILITATOR:** Charlotte Dufour, Marie-Caroline Dodé

USING THE WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT IN AGRICULTURE INDEX (WEAI) FOR NUTRITION SENSITIVE PROGRAMMING

Challenges in measuring empowerment and best practices were the core of this learning lab. Participants learnt how to carry out WEAI modules through an interactive session where they acted as enumerators and respondents. In addition, learning to adapt the WEAI tools to the local context and the challenges in doing so and different evolution of the metric were discussed. The learning lab concluded with a quiz to test the participants’ knowledge of the WEAI.

**LEAD ORGANISATION:** IFPRI
**FACILITATORS:** Hazel Malapit, Kenda Cunningham

ANIMAL SOURCE FOODS AND OPTIONS FOR ACHIEVING OPTIMAL DIETS IN RESOURCE-LIMITING SETTINGS

Taking an eco-health approach, this plenary learning workshop reviewed options for promoting linkages between nutritional programs and nutrition-sensitive agriculture and value-chains at local and national levels. Main points discussed included impacts of agro-ecological zones on food availability and formulation of optimal diets across seasons tailored by target group.

**LEAD ORGANISATION:**
- University of Sydney, ILRI, LSHTM, RVC
- IFPRI
**FACILITATORS:**
- Robyn Alders (USyd), Delia Grace (ILRI), Paula Dominguez-Salas (LSHTM and RVC)
DAY 3–5
AGRI-HEALTH RESEARCH CONFERENCE

The Research Conference of the ANH Academy Week was programmed in plenary in order to facilitate and maximise cross-disciplinary learning and sharing through presentations, open Q&A and group discussions. The three-day programme was populated with a mixture of abstract-driven sessions, round table discussions and keynote speeches from across the spectrum of agriculture, nutrition and health disciplines.

SESSION 1: AGRICULTURE AND NUTRITION LINKAGES
Agriculture and food systems have great potential for improving nutrition security, however, this potential has not yet been realised. This session explored the themes of methods and metrics to inform policy and evaluate programmes, and pathways between agriculture and nutrition. New approaches were introduced including models for predicting nutritional outcomes from agricultural interventions, better measurement of livelihoods, and creation of national data platforms. A variety of pathways were shown to link agriculture and nutrition, including technology, labour, consumption from own production, and reduced post-harvest losses.

SESSION 2: AGRICULTURE AND SUSTAINABLE DIETS
Session 2 focused on various elements of sustainable agriculture and diets, including health, social, economics, and environmental implications. IMMANA-funded work on surveillance of climate-smart initiatives, and a project highlighting the food security impacts of climate-smart initiatives were presented. Opportunities exist for achieving sustainable and healthy diets in India, though there also exist trade-offs across sustainability outcomes, such as resilience, nutritional composition, and yield of different cereals. It was also shown that local forest foods can be important contributors to healthy diets in some regions.

SESSION 3: HEALTH IMPACTS OF ANIMAL SOURCED FOODS
Livestock is gaining importance as a driver of nutrition security. Presentations emphasized the need for comprehensive approaches to understanding benefits of dairy value chains, and research gaps in the political economy of livestock systems. Several examples were presented of health improvements opportunities from meat and dairy intake among undernourished populations. However, there are still important contamination and health risk considerations in livestock value chains in LMICs. These risks require improvements in legislation, awareness and training across value chains. An IMMANA-funded project is underway on food systems, animal health, and human nutrition.

SESSION 4: WOMEN, HOUSEHOLDS AND NUTRITION
Livestock is gaining importance as a driver of nutrition security. Presentations emphasized the need for comprehensive approaches to understanding benefits of dairy value chains, and research gaps in the political economy of livestock systems. Several examples were presented of health improvements opportunities from meat and dairy intake among undernourished populations. However, there are still important contamination and health risk considerations in livestock value chains in LMICs. These risks require improvements in legislation, awareness and training across value chains. An IMMANA-funded project is underway on food systems, animal health, and human nutrition.

SESSION 5: MARKETS, VALUE CHAINS AND NUTRITION
Access to markets, and own production, are important factors for ensuring household dietary diversity, though the relative importance of these may change by context. New metrics were proposed for measuring market food availability, and a case study assessed nutritional impacts of market access in Ethiopia. A variety of research around these themes was also presented, including dietary diversity can be impacted by seasonality of agricultural production, government spending on agriculture and infrastructure, and household nutritional knowledge. Two presentations, including an IMMANA project, examined the role of school feeding and supplementary nutrition programs in supporting healthy diets.

SESSION 6: DETERMINANTS OF DIETS AND NUTRITION
The final session focused on social and economic determinants of nutrition, including data quality, demographics, education, and food prices. Methods were presented for measuring affordability of healthy diets and impacts of price shocks on food security and nutrition, as well as results from two evaluations of school feeding programmes in Ghana. An emerging problem of fizzy drink consumption and overnutrition in Bangladesh was presented, as well as the impacts of data quality on nutritional research. Presentations on consumption patterns among the elderly, and differences between rural and urban food insecurity, highlighted the importance of understanding nutrition across demographic groups.
On each day of the Research Conference keynote addresses were given by leading figures from organisations which, in keeping with the interdisciplinary ethos of the Academy Week, share common visions for the progress and future of agri-health research and policy.

AGNES KALIBATA
(President, Alliance for the Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA))

GEORGE BIGIRWA
(Senior Program Officer, Program for Africa’s Seed System, AGRA)

Dr. Kalibata leads AGRA’s efforts with the participation of public and private partners towards ensuring a food secure Africa through rapid, sustainable agricultural growth and improved productivity by empowering millions of smallholder farmers. She is a former Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources in Rwanda and is widely considered to be one of the most successful Agriculture Ministers in sub-Saharan Africa.

The opening keynote speeches – presented by AGRA - situated agriculture, health and nutrition in the African context. African countries need to accelerate nutrition improvement, in the face a growing and urbanising population. Rapid sustainable agricultural growth could be achieved by empowering millions of smallholder farmers. This should be coupled with a focus on all food system components, including agricultural inputs, post-harvest losses, through to determinants of consumption. Public and private engagement will be critical to ensuring a food secure Africa.

HARRIS GAZDAR
(Senior Researcher, Collective for Social Science Research, Pakistan)

Haris Gazdar is a Senior Researcher with the Collective for Social Science Research in Pakistan; an independent research organization specializing in social policy and political economy.

The research community should be aware of the “blind spots” across the research process and the importance of better understanding the needs of communities and citizens in order to develop appropriate research goals. Valid and meaningful fieldwork depends on understanding the communities being surveyed: the political processes of change in different contexts; and the knowledge and narratives that communities have concerning nutrition, health, and scientific concepts. At the end of projects, researchers must act as their own translators for their work. It is hoped that, by creating transparent metrics and distilling evidence such approaches “can make things simpler”.

SHAWN BAKER
(Director of Nutrition, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation)

Shawn Baker is Director of the Nutrition team at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. In this role, he leads the foundation’s efforts to ensure that women and children receive the nutrition they need for healthy growth and development.

Malnutrition remains a critical issue and food systems often do not deliver safe, affordable, nutritious food. However, in the past years the agriculture and nutrition communities have made great strides in coming together around these issues and governments are increasingly recognizing the importance of nutrition. This conference is testament to the significance of bridging health, agriculture and nutrition communities together. At the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation priorities in research and interventions include further research and improvement of data collection methods; increasing affordability and safety of food; investing in women and their empowerment; capacity building and political leadership. Thanks must be given to the agri-health community for finding the answers that have saved many lives and for striving to answer the questions that remain.
**ETHIOPIA AND FOOD SYSTEMS**

Representatives from the Ethiopian Ministry of Health, universities and research institutes discussed opportunities and challenges for the country’s food system.

**KEY MESSAGES:**
- Ethiopia needs a food system framework tailored to its contexts and able to capture its agro-ecological diversities
- Unanswered questions include the meaning of healthy diets for Ethiopians and the trajectory of health in the country. Research that seeks to address these questions require a systemic approach
- There is a high demand for capacity strengthening and research on food systems methods
- In this context, better promotion of nutrition sensitive regulations on food production and safety, together with effective monitoring of the enforcement of such legislation is crucial

**ETHIOPIA AND FOOD SYSTEMS**

This round table gathered researchers and government representatives to examine possible solutions and common themes in the African context.

**KEY MESSAGES:**
- Recent years have seen favourable momentum to tackle malnutrition in Africa
- By meeting the needs and language of policymakers, researchers can be an integral part of the decision making process
- Nutrition needs to be the starting point of agricultural policies and strategies at the national level
- There is a need for better coordination among legislating ministries and improved collaboration with the research community

**ONE MINUTE POSTER PRESENTATIONS**

Throughout the three day research conference, researchers from a variety of countries and institutions displayed their posters and delivered flash presentations on the main aspects of their work.

52 posters were presented and divided in five main themes: Agriculture and Food Systems, Environmental Change and Diets; Agriculture and Human Health Linkages; Contribution of Agriculture and Food System Programmes toward Nutrition; Drivers of Food Environment at National, Community and Household level; and Institutions and Governance of Food Systems.

Right: Jessica Lane (Congressional Hunger Centre) was awarded for her poster entitled ‘Demystifying the Pathways of Impact of a Livestock Transfer Program on Household Resilience and Food Security in Central Malawi’.

**SIDE EVENTS**

**AGRICULTURE-NUTRITION IMPACT STUDIES:** The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the UK Department for International Development (DFID) co-hosted a side event aimed at sharing information and methods from their joint agriculture-nutrition research program. Round 1 and 2 grantees presented their research questions and partners, after which future funding priorities, research and policy landscapes were discussed.

**BOOK LAUNCH:** In collaboration with the African Union Pan African Veterinary Vaccine Centre (AU-PANVAC) and the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), the KYEEMA Foundation held a side event and reception to launch the first veterinary cold chain manual targeting animal health practitioners to improve the effectiveness of animal health vaccination in support of food and nutrition security.

**FANRPAN:** The Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) led a side meeting in order to share an overview of the ATONU (Improving Nutrition Outcomes Through Optimized Agricultural Investments) initiative.

Cynthia Matare (above), won the IMMANA Fellows’ and Grantees’ photo competition.
The food system brings global, national and regional processes to local geographies of consumption. These processes shape availability, accessibility and affordability of foods, and as such it is becoming increasingly pertinent to disentangle and quantify the multiple elements that constitute food environments and local food systems.

The presentation outlined the socio-ecological framework, definitions from the literature, the FEWG definition and conceptual framework, methodological approaches, and research gaps – most notably LMIC application. The discussion that followed highlighted the potential to include consumer perceptions and behaviour in the analysis and to explore them from an economics perspective. Different frameworks with various perspectives on food environments were discussed including individual level and household level analysis and the potential links with the food security literature.

The Sustainable Diets Working Group’s session took the form of a social and interactive game, Diet Dimensions. As a live, social game, the purpose was to get people talking, interacting and thinking creatively. Participants coming from a wide range of backgrounds and disciplines formed teams and together came up with projects that can deliver sustainable food systems in various settings. A wide range of projects emerged, from promotion of trees and dairy production in the Ethiopian highlands to supporting women’s agricultural investment groups. The game highlights the multidimensional nature of the field and the varied approaches that emerge as a result of different perspectives and disciplines. Ultimately, it highlights how sustainable diets is a multidimensional field and interdisciplinarity is required in order to adequately discuss and analyse the sustainability of global diets.

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Working group's activities were presented and key issues on food safety in LMICs were highlighted. Food safety is a growing concern for health and development. Consumers are increasingly willing to pay premiums for safer food and are prone to decrease their consumption as a result of health scares related to food. Big supermarkets are expanding and modernising, while traditional food chains persist. The benefits of this coexistence are high in these settings as wet markets provide substantially cheaper fresh food that provides nutrition to poor populations, while they are also key for people’s livelihoods.

The success of many interventions to improve food safety in LIMC contexts is so far elusive, with policies not always being rigorously enforced and generally low compliance to regulations that ultimately create incentives for black markets. Some key concerns in the field of food safety were raised such as the lack of data with respect to the burden of food safety on nutrition security and nutritional status; its multiple impacts on health as well as the need for relevant monitoring and evaluation indicators that are easily measurable and quantifiable. Other issues that emerged included the challenge of finding a compromise between food standards and local food production, e.g. how to train street food vendors to effectively adopt and maintain high levels of hygiene and food safety; food safety standards of indigenous/local foods and finally; the impact and improvement of regulatory gaps from government policies.

The ANH Academy Technical Working Groups are established to synthesise experience in methods and metrics in order to create coherent conceptual frameworks that allow the quantification and analysis of complex issues in the area of Agriculture, Nutrition and Health. They aim to accelerate research and facilitate the field’s progress by bringing together experts from a number of different disciplines with a particular focus on methodological and technical research in fields such as agriculture, environmental science, nutrition, health, food environments research as well as epidemiology and zoonotic and foodborne diseases.

**CONTACT DETAILS**

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REFLECTIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

FORMATION OF THE AG2NUT ETHIOPIA SUB-GROUP

The ANH Academy Week led to an informal side meeting of visiting and Ethiopian-based members of the Ag2Nut Community of Practice. During the meeting members enthusiastically expressed a desire to connect in order to strengthen the community of people working on agriculture-nutrition linkages in Ethiopia and as a direct result the first ever Ag2Nut country sub-group was established.

The Ethiopia sub-group was formed to facilitate the sharing of Ethiopia-specific events, opportunities and resources, and to improve the ease of working together on common capacity and policy issues affecting agriculture and nutrition in the country.

ANH Academy member, Fikadu Reta, of Hawassa University is leading the group, with co-coordination from IMMANA grantee Anna Herforth. Within its first month of existence the group has attracted over 800 members.

WHO PARTICIPANTS MET

I met people from different disciplines (nutrition and health) as well as some of IMMANA fellowship holders. As a researcher (agriculture), exchanging ideas with these professionals would help me design my future work in line with agriculture-nutrition-health.

Researchers working on similar topics, including some collaborators that I had only met remotely in the past. There are some direct opportunities to collaborate that I am now following up on. Also, new connections with funders.

Academics and organization leaders (CAADP). I will communicate with them in the future to advance agricultural research in Africa.

Young researchers seeking mentorship, Ethiopia-based researchers who were able to come together which I am helping to facilitate through Ag2Nut, and new friends.

Researchers and implementers. It is helping me in shaping my research project and opportunity to work on collaboration project.

UNEXPECTED BENEFITS OF ATTENDING

Yes! I did not expect participants from such diverse institutions and countries. I met researchers, academicians, practitioners and policy makers.

The roundtable on how research supports policy making is very informative and well done. It would be great if a stronger connection between research and program can be made, as isn’t it the ultimate goal for research that evidence is being used to inform more effective and larger scale programs.

I did not fully appreciate the collegiate nature of the ANH community. In general people were very willing to engage, share their knowledge and take an interest in new ideas and opinions.
SOUTH ASIA
ANH ACADEMY
WEEK 2017

ANH2017 will take place in South Asia. Feedback from this year was gratefully received and we look forward to working with Academy members to integrate these ideas in order to deliver an even better series of events next year.

For more information visit ANH-Academy.org

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