

Influencing Policy and Practice – LANSa Pakistan

Introduction

The [Collective for Social Science Research \(CSSR\)](#), LANSa's Pakistan partner, is engaged in a number of LANSa research studies and related activities. Some of these studies are CSSR led while others are led by consortium partners. While producing new and validated evidence on the enabling and disabling factors for better nutritional outcomes is LANSa's focus, there are many other activities being conducted. These activities can be grouped into four general categories: landscaping, research studies, policy dialogue and stakeholder engagement. As part of the landscaping activities, current policy and programmes were reviewed and existing evidence assessed. While there were specific landscaping activities undertaken at LANSa's outset, this is an ongoing activity. Landscaping has informed research design, produced outputs that have contributed to policy dialogue and resulted in stakeholder engagement. However there is direct feedback between each of these activities and landscaping. As Figure 1 depicts, engagement in these activities is not linear, CSSR is involved in these activities simultaneously with the expressed purpose to help LANSa achieve its overall outcomes and to ensure that CSSR produces research that is relevant and useful to its stakeholders.

Review and landscape analysis

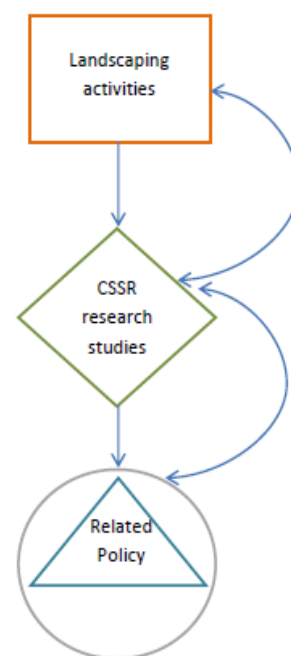
During LANSa's inception phase, CSSR drafted an [Evidence Review](#), reviewing the current evidence base, trends and policymaking in agriculture and applied a framework to analyse pathways between agriculture and nutrition. The Evidence Review went on to highlight potential disconnects in the agriculture-nutrition linkage and identified areas for future research.

A stakeholder mapping exercise¹ was conducted to gain a broader understanding of the local environment in which agriculture and nutrition policy is determined. This information was used to build up an [evidence-base for policy making](#) within the agriculture and nutrition sectors in the country. The review revealed that agriculture could have a positive impact on nutrition, but mainly through nuanced approaches. The findings of the inception phase and stakeholder mapping were shared in a consultative workshop with 26 representatives from national and provincial governments, academia, donor agencies, local organizations and media in 2014. These activities not only charted the agriculture and nutrition landscape but also worked to increase stakeholder engagement, and laid the foundation for LANSa's future research in Pakistan. Through stakeholder engagement and policy analysis CSSR determined where agriculture and nutrition might be heading and identified the key actors steering these policies.

Policy Disconnects

Starting with the Agriculture-Nutrition Pathways framework, it was found that the **key disconnects in Pakistan included inequalities in access to agricultural resources such as land, and in gender relations with respect to agricultural work. Governance issues and institutional weaknesses compounded the effects of these inequalities.** This represented a significant point of departure from traditional

Figure 1: CSSR LANSa Activities



¹ The map identifies organisations and individuals that are considered highly influential and/or highly supportive of addressing nutrition within the agriculture sector and from this map 21 influential individuals were interviewed

approaches that have given primacy to agricultural and food output. ***The review found that while conventional agricultural policy in Pakistan had, in effect, become limited to selected price interventions***, there might be scope for leveraging agricultural growth through more nuanced approaches such as supporting women agricultural workers, improving access to agricultural resources, and using market-based approaches to bridge agriculture-nutrition disconnects. It was also concluded that provincial governments had become important drivers of nutrition programming and needed to be engaged with more deeply in a targeted manner. ***These topics informed the design and focus of LANSA research studies in Pakistan and related to the areas where this research is most likely to have an impact on policy and programming.***

LANSA research and research uptake in Pakistan

Women in agriculture

Pillars 1 and 3

Pillar 1 research on women's work in agriculture² (which straddles Pillar 1 and 3) analyses the linkages between women's work in agriculture and nutrition outcomes. While the relationship between women's agricultural work and nutrition is beginning to get acknowledged in the local policy landscape, there is relatively little empirical evidence on it.

The study has the potential to shift the agricultural policy focus towards women, recognising the contribution of their work in the sector. There are emerging opportunities for acting on agriculture-nutrition linkages through the pathway of women's work and potential to generate evidence to help focus health and nutrition policies on the needs of women agricultural workers. LANSA can contribute towards design of nutrition sensitive interventions targeted towards these workers in Sindh. Beyond nutrition and agriculture, there is also scope for influence in the sectors of health, education, labour and women rights. The research may also contribute to the design of social protection policies to optimize the positive impact of women's agriculture work on nutrition as well as contribute towards furthering the labour policy dialogue pertaining to women's work in agriculture. These areas are all captured within the Inter-sectoral Nutrition Strategy and it is in this policy space that LANSA seeks to engender impact through its research.

The Pillar 3 feasibility study on agricultural asset transfers to women has a strong overlap with the Pillar 1 study on women's agricultural work. These studies could help address the issue of asset ownership for women in agriculture potentially influencing discourse on agricultural policy and the design of future programmes through participation in public debate and engagements with government, donors, opinion makers and civil society. The study focused specifically on livestock transfers, which is an integral asset for rural agricultural households in Pakistan and whose ownership is distributed more equally than the ownership of land. Moreover, livestock management is considered the domain of women and (small) livestock is considered a woman's asset.

The study has the potential to shift policy and programming in agriculture to focus on women workers' needs and recognize their contribution as productive and reproductive labour in the sector. The study can also contribute towards design of future interventions for property rights and women centric initiatives. It can also play a part in enhancements of future monitoring and evaluation studies, indirectly resulting in improvements in agricultural programmes.

² The study is titled Women's Work and Nutrition (WWN) and its outputs can be accessed [here](#) and [here](#).

How is LANSa making an impact?

LANSA Pakistan has sought to do this through actively sharing research findings³ with a diverse range of stakeholders in academia, policy making and the village community to shift the policy discourse towards the recognition of women agricultural workers. Research and uptake activities in Pakistan remain closely integrated with some progress towards development of programmes and legislation; generating and influencing local and international discourse on the rights of women agricultural workers and building understanding of agriculture-nutrition policy issues; contributing to strengthening capacity for further related research and creating a network committed towards making concerted efforts for legal recognition of women agricultural workers.

Sharing insights at academic forums: In an effort to build clearer understanding of the agriculture-nutrition linkages, especially in policy and academia LANSa has sought to engage with a diverse range of stakeholders at global and local levels to inform its research and share its findings. In 2013, a version of the Pakistan Evidence Review was published in the [IDS Bulletin Special Issue](#) and presented to nutrition stakeholders in Islamabad and at the LANSa Stakeholder Open Forum in April 2014. A [research brief](#) summarizing key insights from the review was also shared amongst diverse audiences. In April 2015, Haris Gazdar (lead researcher, LANSa Pakistan) [delivered a talk](#) on the [LANSA Working Paper on Women's Agricultural Work and Nutrition in Pakistan: Findings from Qualitative Research](#)⁴ at the 'Transform Nutrition Seminars' at Institute of Development Studies and presented at the 24th International Association for Feminist Economics (IAFFE) Annual Conference in July 2015. In June 2016, Mr. Gazdar delivered a keynote address at the Agriculture, Nutrition and Health (ANH) Academy on '[Making Nutrition Conversations Digestible](#)'. In April 2017, a paper based on LANSa Pakistan's continuing work on women's work in agriculture was awarded the 'Best Paper Award' at the [International Conference on Gender, Work and Society](#) (ICGWS) at Lahore University of Management Sciences. Further work on the study was also presented at the [Agriculture, Nutrition and Health \(ANH\) Academy](#) in July 2017 and at the [21st IUNS International Congress of Nutrition](#) in October 2017. Additional insights and evidence from the women's work and nutrition survey were also presented at the ANH Academy again in 2018, which also featured a separate presentation on the pillar 3 study on agricultural asset transfers in July. Further LANSa evidence on women's work burden and its implications was also presented at the 26th International Association for Feminist Economics (IAFFE) Annual Conference in July 2018 and the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA) in August.

Locally, these insights were presented at a [seminar](#) on 'Pakistan's Challenges of Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition in the context of SDGs issues and progress' hosted by Agha Khan University (AKU), World Health Organization (WHO) and the federal health ministry in November 2017, which was subsequently followed up with submission of written inputs for AKU's upcoming publication on SDGs.

Raising the issue at the national level: Since 2014, LANSa Pakistan has aimed for clear acknowledgement of women's work in agriculture in high-level policy dialogue. It has also aimed to focus programming in health, agriculture and social protection on the needs of women agricultural workers. CSSR first raised the issue of the poor working conditions of women agricultural workers, especially cotton pickers at the provincial level in its [Stakeholder Workshop](#) in April 2014, which received significant media attention over the year⁵. In December, Haris Gazdar was the keynote speaker

³ This is done through networks, publications, working papers, blogs, meetings, events and features in local media (see impact stories 2015 and 2016)

⁴ Published in January 2015

⁵ The Workshop was [reported in DAWN](#), one of Pakistan's most widely read newspapers. In December 2014, an earlier [DAWN article](#) on the poor working conditions of women agricultural workers was [picked up by Reuters](#).

at Sindh Agriculture and Forestry Workers' Coordinating Organisation's ([SAFWCO](#)) event on Right to Food and the '[Provincial dialogue on Issues of Women Cotton Pickers: Discussing Policy and Legal Perspectives](#)' hosted by the Sindh Community Foundation ([SCF](#))⁶. In October 2017, LANSA Pakistan co-sponsored a policy dialogue with the National Commission on the Status of Women at the 10th Annual [Conference](#) on the International Day of Rural Women hosted by Potohar Organization for Development Advocacy ([PODA](#)) in Islamabad. The panel featured a respected activist, a legislator, a public health expert and a legal expert⁷ to explore the nature and implications of women's agricultural work on nutrition and discussed how legislative action can be taken to recognize them as farmers and labourers. Attended by over 250 participants, the panel's recommendations were adopted by the conference resolution⁸ with the session chair calling on 'all political parties and partners to come together to create a rural women manifesto'. Earlier that year, Mr. Gazdar also delivered the keynote presentation on rural women's health for [NCSW](#)'s roundtable on its 'Status of Women Report'. In November he was invited to be an Advisory Committee member, and has shared further inputs during following roundtables/meetings at the NCSW⁹. More recently, written inputs and findings from the Women's Work and Nutrition study have been included in NCSW's latest Annual Status of Women Report, launched in July 2018. The report, launched in collaboration with UN Women Pakistan highlights the status of rural women as its key theme and highlights the impact of women's work on their own and their children's health and nutrition.

More recently, LANSA has deepened its efforts to support the discourse on the rights of female agricultural workers at a wider scale in Pakistan, with the issue finally being acknowledged by one of the largest political parties in the country. Key messages from LANSA Pakistan's written recommendations and presentation to senior party leaders were reflected in its [election manifesto](#), which features protection of rights of women agricultural workers as one of its key promises.

Raising the issue at global levels: In 2017, LANSA Pakistan streamlined its efforts to bring the issue of recognition of women agricultural workers into focus at the global policy fora. In July it convened a networking event¹⁰ and a [policy dialogue](#)¹¹ at the ANH Academy on the recognition of rights and wellbeing of women agricultural workers bringing together prominent policy influencers, legislators, and government representatives from across South Asia¹². The discussions at both events were framed using emerging LANSA findings from [India](#) and [Pakistan](#) and helped raise the visibility and credibility of the issue at the national level in Pakistan, resulting in public pledges of support from Pakistan's policy makers from which included a suggestion for moving a private members' bill in the National Assembly

⁶ Much of what Haris said was based on LANSA research, and received significant newspaper coverage.

⁷ The dialogue was titled 'Women Agricultural Workers: Recognize, Promote and Protect' and was chaired by the Chairperson, National Commission on Status of Women), co-chaired by Executive Director, PODA and moderated by Mr. Gazdar.

⁸ Excerpt from Conference Resolution: 'Recognizing the need to take urgent steps regarding Nutrition and Health of Rural Women (SDG 3) the conference demands that: a) All women who do any work in farming, livestock and fisheries, whether the work is paid or unpaid, whether it is as labourers or as family helpers, to be given legal recognition as 'farmers and agricultural workers' and entitled all rights of farmers and labourers [Conference Resolution 12] b) Policies and programs in agriculture, livestock, fisheries, health, nutrition and social protection must take into account and proactively mitigate any negative impacts of women's work in agriculture on their health and the health and nutrition of their children [Conference Resolution 13]

⁹ Haris Gazdar has also previously shared emerging LANSA findings with the NCSW Advisory Committee to inform their annual "Status of Women Report" report on [economic empowerment of women in 2015 and has been a member of the Advisory Group from 2016](#).

¹⁰ Participants included representatives from National Commission on Status of Women, Pakistan, National Assembly, Pakistan, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, India, Center for Women and Gender Studies, University of Texas at Austin, United States of America, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, United Kingdom, Economic Empowerment, UN Women, Nepal, Nijera Kori, Bangladesh and Agriculture Research, Department for International Development, United Kingdom amongst others.

¹¹ The dialogue was moderated by Ms. Rachel Lambert (Senior Livelihoods Advisor, Department for International Development, United Kingdom) and included Dr. Nafisa Shah (Member, National Assembly of Pakistan, Pakistan), Dr. Jatinder Kishtwaria (Director, Central Institute for Women in Agriculture), Ms. Khushi Kabir, (Coordinator, Nijera Kori, Bangladesh) and Ms. Indira Dahal (Joint Secretary, Nepal Law Commission, Nepal) as panelists.

¹² The discussion was framed using emerging findings from India and Pakistan, which can be accessed [here](#) and [here](#).

for debate and hosting a session on the same theme at the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).¹³ In October 2017, Mr. Gazdar again highlighted the need for recognition of women agricultural workers' rights at a special event at the United Nations headquarters in New York. The [session](#) was held to present evidence inform the deliberations of the United Nations General Assembly on the sub-item "women in development". Convened by [UN Women](#), moderated by its Executive Director, and chaired by the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Zambia to the United Nations,¹⁴ it was attended by approximately 120 representatives from over 50 countries. This was followed up with submission of written inputs based on findings from the WWN survey for inclusion in UN Women's upcoming Progress of World's Women report, scheduled to be launched in October 2018. The need for recognition of women's work in Pakistan (and across South Asia) will also feature prominently in Haris Gazdar's (lead, LANSAs Pakistan) inputs to UN Women later this year, when he joins an expert panel meeting at the organization's headquarters in New York, USA.

Helping improve programming: Since 2013, LANSAs Pakistan has continued to deepen its engagement with international donor and multi-lateral organisations, and senior staff within the Sindh Government who are responsible for key agriculture and nutrition programming in the province. Following various meetings with the Sindh government's Planning and Development Department, in November 2015 LANSAs delivered the keynote presentation at the Agriculture for Nutrition (A4N) Technical Workshop organized by World Bank to design the agriculture-nutrition component of its project¹⁵. LANSAs's engagement with multi-laterals has continued with separate meetings throughout 2016 and 2017 and include sharing inputs from its insights from the 'Women, Work and Nutrition' study. This included submission of written inputs on the request of Secretary for Development in the Planning and Development Department (P&D), Sindh in February 2016 which was followed up with several other meetings. More recently, Haris Gazdar also delivered the keynote presentation on food security and nutrition based on LANSAs findings at a seminar convened by the provincial government for various government representatives.

In November 2016, Haris Gazdar was invited to a consultative session on 'Accelerated Action Plan for Nutrition' (AAP) to explore LANSAs's contribution in planning for the government's upcoming nutrition projects. Mr. Gazdar was invited to join the taskforce of experts established to guide the government through the planning and implementation of the programme, which was formally launched in February 2017. In addition to these meetings, LANSAs Pakistan has continued high level engagements with the chair of the taskforce, also a Member of National Assembly (beginning in December 2016 and followed up again in February and July 2017) to explore avenues for creating legislation for the rights of women agricultural workers.

Strengthening shared capacity: CSSR has also engaged with various partners including government and donor representatives to provide technical inputs to help bolster shared learning and growth. In 2017, Haris Gazdar was included in the Technical Working Group on 'Generating Data to advance Women's Social and Economic Wellbeing in Pakistan' convened by the Punjab Commission on the Status of Women ([PCSW](#)). PCSW was particularly interested in learning from the innovations in the WWN study.

¹³ For details please refer to Pakistan Story of Influence 2017

¹⁴ The session was moderated by [Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka](#) (Under-Secretary-General, Executive Director of UN Women). The panelists included [Ms. Kinnon Scott](#) (Senior Economist, Development Research Group, World Bank), [Dr. Shahra Razavi](#) (Chief, Research and Data Section, UN Women), [Dr. Agnes Quizumba](#) (Senior Research Fellow, International Food and Policy Research Institute), [Dr. Magdalena Sepulveda](#) (Previous Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, Mexico), and Mr. Gazdar.

¹⁵ These included senior officials from the relevant departments of the provincial government including those working on agriculture, livestock, extension services, planning and development, nutrition and local government.

LANSA Pakistan has actively engaged with the PCSW to share inputs into the design of their proposed survey and participated in the Technical Group meetings in March and November 2017.

Creating networks: Building on its engagements with the government and key influencers, LANSA Pakistan seeks to develop a network of partners (including but not limited to policy makers, legislators, opinion leaders, media and the civil society) committed towards pursuing legal recognition of women agricultural workers in Pakistan. The network, still in initial inception phase, will foster a community both at national and regional levels and create opportunities for shared learning. Initial consultative events to explore possible linkages are planned in August and October 2018.

Agri-food policies and markets

Pillar 2

Under Pillar 2.1, CSSR's proposed study on 'Inequality in Agriculture and Nutrition in South Asia', beginning in mid-2017 is a synthetic study that investigates inequality as a key disconnect between agriculture and nutrition in Pakistan. Agriculture's contribution to nutrition improvement in South Asia is thought to be constrained by various forms of social and economic inequality that have persisted in the sector. This study pulls together evidence from LANSA research and elsewhere and examines secondary data in order to examine this proposition, drawing upon selective qualitative research in Pakistan. This research has the potential to positively impact policies and programming in agriculture, labour and health, potentially informing the design and delivery of specific agricultural extension services in the country.

LANSA research under Pillar 2.2¹⁶ investigates the role of market-based approaches, particularly interventions in agri-food value chains, in bringing sustainable nutritional improvements amongst the poor. LANSA research identified two set of agri-food value chain interventions - wheat flour fortification and the introduction of modern dairy processing – as case studies in Pakistan. The research goes beyond technical issues in value chain development and probes institutional constraints to achieving nutrition improvements through market-based approaches. The two studies are significant because they address two of the most important foods consumed in Pakistan, and also the two most important agricultural outputs. The dairy value chain has been the subject of significant private sector investment and policy support, but the success of what were seen as optimistic ventures has been called into question. The LANSA study provides significant backdrop evidence on the sector from a value chains perspective. The wheat flour fortification study provides important pointers to a major DFID-supported intervention in Pakistan that seeks to improve nutrition through food fortification. The LANSA study offers critical insights into the factors which may help or hinder the success of that intervention.

How is LANSA making an impact?

LANSA has actively engaged with partners and various market stakeholders throughout its research beginning from landscaping interviews. It has organized two regional e-dialogues in 2015 and 2017 to further build understanding and create linkages on a regional level. LANSA Pakistan seeks to further this work at the country level by building alliances for greater influence by engaging continuously with relevant stakeholders on the issues arising out of our research. Emerging insights from these case studies were presented to DFID Pakistan in 2017, which is involved in the launch and implementation of an ongoing food fortification programme in various parts of the country.

¹⁶ This includes a review of value chains interventions in Pakistan, published as LANSA Working Paper in 2016, accessible [here](#)

In February 2018, findings from LANSA Pakistan case studies on dairy processing and wheat flour fortification were published in a special edition of the IDS Bulletin¹⁷, and also produced as separate LANSA working papers in June. These outputs were widely disseminated using targeted communication channels and converted into blogs and opinion editorials, which were published in national newspapers for wider consumption. These efforts were supplemented with a targeted social media campaign designed to generate dialogue and ongoing debate on the effectiveness of these value chain interventions, particularly wheat flour fortification. CSSR will continue to engage with various stakeholders, identifying potential opportunities and scope for influence in the local policy landscape and leverage the findings of our case studies for potential impact.

Research uptake at community levels

Recently LANSA Pakistan has further built on its research uptake practices to engage with stakeholders at grassroots levels. In 2016, it launched a pilot project titled 'Research to Action' that seeks to influence evidence based demand making at community levels. It began with community level uptake events (known as Community Circles) that took the preliminary findings from the WWN study back to the surveyed communities, and aimed to elicit interest and support for generating innovative evidence based solutions to causes and impacts of under-nutrition in the communities¹⁸. 39 Community Circles were held in 15 administrative villages that faced the highest severity of undernutrition. Over 95% of these events resulted in identification of potential individuals interested in leading evidence based change in their communities. In 2017 CSSR further engaged with a selected group of people to train and empower them to lead their own evidence generation at community level. 41 'leaders' across 4 districts successfully led data collection on issues ranging from rates of cotton picking, implications of work related to livestock, cleanliness and work during and after pregnancy. Over 70% of these leaders also led similar community events to disseminate their findings on a wider scale and prompt discussion to create possible solutions with their own communities. The pilot can be refined and scaled to lead further uptake work with respect to other research and has encouraged CSSR to adopt the reporting back of research findings to the community as standard practice.

¹⁷ This can be accessed [here](#) and [here](#).

¹⁸ Progress and learnings from the pilot were presented at SAFANSI Roundtable on Government Action for Nutrition in September 2017