



Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

Online Version: <https://www.feedthefuture.gov/country/nepal>

COUNTRY PROFILE



Nepal

In Nepal, Feed the Future targets investments in 24 Districts plus 25 Food for Peace Districts and focuses on improved market linkages of the rice, maize and high-value vegetable cultivation value chains for maximum impact on poverty reduction. These statistics reflect the challenges facing Nepal and the results of Feed the Future's work there.

POPULATION	POVERTY	STUNTING	RURAL	GDP
28.5 Million Number of people living in Nepal (World Bank, 2015)	20.9 Percent Percentage of population living below Nepal's total poverty line in Feed the Future target regions (AHS, 2014)	47 Percent* Percentage of children under 5 suffering from stunting in Feed the Future target regions (MICS, 2014)	81 Percent Percentage of population living in rural Nepal (World Bank, 2015)	3.4 Percent Annual GDP growth; agriculture accounts for 33.7% of added value (World Bank, 2015)
FARMERS	SALES	NUTRITION	HECTARES	INVESTMENT
88.7 Thousand Producers using new technology and practices with Feed the Future's help in FY15	\$72 Million New income earned by Feed the Future farmers in FY15 from agricultural sales	1 Million Children under 5 reached with nutrition help in FY15 across Nepal	76.8 Thousand Hectares tended with improved technologies or management practices in FY15	\$1.6 Million New private investment leveraged by Feed the Future in FY15

Approach

More than 70 percent of Nepal's population works in agriculture, yet this South Asian country struggles to produce an adequate and affordable supply of food. Weak growth in agricultural production and low crop yields have weakened rural economies, increasing urban and international migration and straining the ability of families to avoid malnutrition. Two out of every three Nepalese suffer from food insecurity at some time during the year and the prevalence of stunting for Nepal stands at 37.4 percent nationally while 47 percent of children under 5 are stunted in Feed the Future target regions.

The underlying causes of hunger, poverty and undernutrition in Nepal include low agricultural productivity, limited livelihood opportunities, weak market connections and coordination, inadequate production and consumption of highly nutritious foods, poor infrastructure, and inadequate government resources. Gender and caste relationships play an important role in food security as a majority of women and many disadvantaged persons, who often do not have access to their own land, cash or other productive assets, work in agriculture. Widespread migration of men gives women more say over production decisions but imposes labor and other time allocation constraints on them. Furthermore, women and children typically suffer greater levels of hunger and poverty than men.

Despite these difficulties, there are many opportunities for substantial improvement in Nepal. The Government of Nepal and donors have made food security a national priority and have increased support to developing the agriculture sector for better food security, stronger resilience to shocks and stresses, more commercial opportunities, and to address global and regional trade issues with India and China.

Nepal has the agroecological potential to be a food surplus country and has an excellent track record in piloting ground-breaking development programs. Through multi-sector efforts that incorporate best practices, such as conservation agriculture, crop rotation and small-scale irrigation, the potential is high for activities to stimulate agricultural production, increase incomes, improve nutrition and boost food security.

Strategy

Goal: Reduce [prevalence of poverty](#) in the areas where Feed the Future works by 20 percent.

Goal: Reduce the [prevalence of stunting in children](#) under 5 years old in the areas where Feed the Future works by 20 percent.

To achieve its goals, Feed the Future is making key investments to:

- Improve agriculture and agribusiness policy environment
- Enhance agricultural productivity
- Increase livelihood opportunities
- Facilitate access to markets
- Improve nutrition and hygiene
- Increase resilience of vulnerable communities and households through skills development

Feed the Future is focusing its efforts in targeted regions and value chains to maximize impact.

Value Chains

- Vegetables
- Cereals (Rice and Maize)
- Lentils

Target Regions

Feed the Future activities are implemented in 20 hill and terai districts in the western, mid-western and far western regions and in four additional earthquake-affected districts in the central and eastern regions of Nepal.

Program Highlights

Earthquake Recovery. In April 2015, a major earthquake of shallow depth measuring 7.8 on the Richter scale struck Nepal. The initial earthquake and subsequent aftershocks caused numerous casualties and extensive damage, particularly in rural communities in remote hill and mountain areas. Feed the Future and USAID's Food for Peace Program expanded their geographic coverage to affected districts in the Central and Eastern Hill Regions and continue to respond to recovery needs through agriculture, disaster risk reduction and livelihood activities, which complement projects by other U.S. Government programs in affected areas. These projects are working to improve nutrition outcomes with better water, sanitation and hygiene, restore poultry farms and vegetable gardens, and support the government and local communities in restoring livelihoods and biodiversity with resilient practices that conserve water and reduce landslide and flood risks.

Resilience. In addition to earthquake response activities, Feed the Future is helping Nepal reduce threats to biodiversity and address vulnerability to climate shocks. This includes integrating tools such as conservation agriculture, weather data, and climate modeling for better decision making on crop and variety selection, land use planning, and understanding of irrigation and water management.

Nutrition. A key characteristic of Feed the Future's strategy in Nepal is integrating agriculture and nutrition. On the supply side, Feed the Future is helping Nepalis sell agricultural products that provide the income they need to purchase more nutritious foods for their families as well as helping them grow more nutritious foods to eat at home. Feed the Future also encourages the distribution and purchase of smallholder farmer-produced nutritious foods. On the demand side, Feed the Future is helping families acquire more nutritious foods and safely and nutritiously prepare and consume them. In collaboration with global health activities, Feed the Future supports a community-based program in Nepal to improve child feeding and family food preparation practices.

Vulnerable Populations. Literacy, life skills and entrepreneurial training empower women, youth and ethnic minorities to take better advantage of agricultural and nutrition programs and integrate into market-led activities. Feed the Future is building the capacity of community leaders to deliver basic literacy and entrepreneurship education to disadvantaged youth, women and groups. Prior experience has shown that literacy, numeracy and life skills training have a transformational

impact, especially for poor rural women. These women are not only inspired but empowered to make informed decisions about family finances and nutrition with confidence.

Scaling Innovations. Feed the Future is focusing on scaling proven technologies and practices to help smallholder farmers in Nepal, including:

- Improved rice, maize and lentil seeds and varieties
- Irrigation and water management
- Integrated pest management for tomato, cucumber, eggplant, bitter melon and cauliflower value chains
- Improved postharvest storage
- Improved market connections and coordination

Results

Results by the Numbers

- Nearly **88,700 farmers and other producers** applied new technologies and management practices for the first time last year with Feed the Future's help.
- Producers used improved technologies and management practices on nearly **77,000 hectares** of land with Feed the Future's help.
- Feed the Future-supported farmers and producers increased the value of their agricultural sales last year by nearly **\$72 million**.
- Feed the Future leveraged **\$1.62 million** in new private investment in food and agriculture in Nepal.
- U.S. Government programs reached more than **1 million children** under 5 years old to improve their nutrition.

Impact

- **Poverty:** The prevalence of poverty dropped by 35 percent in Feed the Future target regions, from 32.9 percent in 2011 to 20.9 percent in 2014.
- ***Nutrition:** The change in prevalence of stunting for Nepal was not statistically significant, meaning the margin of error of the survey sample was too great to [conclusively demonstrate change](#).

For more details on impact data, view the [Feed the Future 2016 progress report](#).

Key Achievements

- Feed the Future trained 121,928 smallholder producers, formed over 4,000 farmers groups, and supported 465 additional private sector enterprises and organizations. This enabled producers to tend thousands of hectares of land with improved technologies or management practices, averaging 9.7 technologies or practices per producer.
- Using these technologies and practices, producers substantially increased their yields over baseline by an average 29-42 percent for cereals (rice and maize), 51 percent for lentils and up to 91 percent for vegetables.
- With better yields, producers increased their sales for these crops by \$71.8 million--an average of \$862 in new sales per farmer. Gross margins improved too over 2013 levels: rice increased 38 percent (\$700), maize increased 63 percent (\$796), lentils increased 139 percent (\$781) and vegetables increased up to 161 percent (\$10,343).
- Feed the Future supported the Ministry of Agricultural Development on critical policy reforms such as the Agribusiness Promotion Act (Contract Farming), Agriculture Mechanization Policy, Seeds and Fertilizer Project, and Foreign Investment and Technology Transfer Act. Nepal finalized six of the nine directives required for implementation of the Seed Regulation and Seed Act in 2015. These accomplishments directly contribute to business- and smallholder-friendly policies.
- Nutrition efforts established 30 outpatient therapeutic centers and screened 83,580 children (6 months to 5 years of age) for severe acute malnutrition. The United Nations and others predicted much higher severe acute malnutrition rates, but there was no significant increase in the districts reached by U.S. Government effort (only 244 cases out of the children screened).

Source

These results above reflect information from the U.S. Agency for International Development, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Peace Corps and the U.S. Department of the Treasury (through the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program) reported into Feed the Future's central monitoring system for fiscal year 2015 (FY15). Impact data for poverty and stunting statistics come from the 2015 Nepal Interim Assessment Report, originally collected through the Nepal AHS in 2013-2014 (poverty) and the Nepal MICS in 2014. For more information on the indicators above, please view our [2016 Feed the](#)

[Future progress report](#). All dollar amounts are in U.S. dollars.

Opportunities

Over the past five years, the Government of Nepal has increased annual state investment in agriculture. In August 2015, the Cabinet approved a 20-year Agricultural Development Strategy, which identifies the private sector as an important engine for agriculture growth. A seed summit organized by the Ministry of Agricultural Development in September 2015 also outlined the importance of private sector engagement in boosting the country's seed production and marketing system.

Addressing undernutrition is a major priority for the Government of Nepal. Nepal has been a member of the Scaling Up Nutrition movement since 2012 and its Multi-Sector Nutrition Plan aims to reduce the prevalence of child stunting and underweight women by one-third by 2017. The Government of Nepal plans to accomplish this goal through combining nutrition-sensitive interventions across various sectors, including health, education, agriculture, water and sanitation. The Nepal Health Sector Program includes a Nutrition and Food Security Coordination Committee that engages donors, implementing partners, the private sector and civil society groups in nutrition planning and advocacy. The Government of Nepal encourages civil society organizations and private sector actors (such as retailers and wholesalers) to carry out nutrition-related activities that contribute to achieving national objectives--for example, salt iodization and water and sanitation activities.

Looking for opportunities to work in our Feed the Future countries? Visit the opportunities tabs on our [Research](#) and [Civil Society](#) pages. If you're a [private sector](#) company interested in a partnership with Feed the Future agencies in the areas of food security and nutrition in Nepal, use our [interactive online tool](#) to learn more.

Activities

Feed the Future supports the following programs, partnerships and organizations in Nepal.

- Cereal Systems Initiative for South Asia (CSISA)
- Feed the Future Business Literacy Project
- [Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Horticulture](#)
- [Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Integrated Pest Management](#)
- [Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Nutrition](#)
- Feed the Future Policy Reform Initiative
- Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance III (FANTA)
- Food for Peace Promoting Agriculture, Health and Alternative Livelihood (PAHAL)
- Food for Peace Sustainable Action for Resilience and Food Security (SABAL)
- Global Agriculture and Food Security Program
- Knowledge-Based Integrated Sustainable Agriculture and Nutrition Project (KISAN)
- Nepal Seed and Fertilizer Project
- Peace Corps
- Suaahara Integrated Nutrition Program
- USAID's Development Credit Authority (DCA)
- USDA McGovern-Dole Food for Education Program

Target Regions

Funding

