



# LANSA

Leveraging Agriculture for  
Nutrition in South Asia

## Gender, Work and Nutrition: Policy Insights from LANSA

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# Gender, Agriculture & Nutrition Pathways



1. Agriculture as a source of food/income: limited by seasonality, landlessness, diversification of crops/livelihoods
2. Food Prices and expenditure patterns: under-nutrition a distributional problem (lack of purchasing power, health expenditures)
3. **Women's work – care – nutrition links:**
  - Control over earnings & decision-making – improved nutrition
  - Reduced time for care/feeding – child nutrition outcomes unclear
  - Increased energy expenditure on farm and domestic tasks – maternal undernutrition (Kadiyala et al. 2014)



# Findings from Pakistan

Women's Work and Nutrition Survey conducted in irrigated areas of Sindh with 1161 mother-infant pairs.

43% women reported doing crop-related work while pregnant (cotton picking, weeding, harvesting)

Controlling for education and wealth, we have evidence that:

- a) This had a negative effect on maternal BMI
- b) Cotton-picking during pregnancy led to higher levels of child stunting.
- c) 14% of negative effect on child stunting through mother's own health.



# Findings from India

Time Use & Diet Surveys with 60 households in two sites across seasons (planting, harvesting and lean)

1. Women perform 56% of total work: 75-80% of productive/agricultural work in planting and harvesting and 95% of domestic and care work.
2. Time deficits for care more intensive for women from landless and marginal households, 30% decline during planting and harvesting seasons.
3. Women encounter greater seasonal weight loss (3-4% of body weight) than men – reduced consumption but intensive activity





# Policy Priorities



1. Recognition of Women as Farmers and Agricultural Workers
2. Agriculture Policies and Programmes to be Gender-Sensitive
3. Nutrition-specific behaviour change: Addressing and redistributing the care deficit
4. Social Protection and public investment: Reducing women's time burdens and expanding choices

