Lomonosov Moscow State University
Eurasian Center for Food Security
ECFS

THE WORLD BANK

Call for proposals
Development of food policy case studies
for Eurasian region

Contents

2020

SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Founded in 2011, the Eurasian Center for Food Security (ECFS) is a research institution affiliated with Lomonosov Moscow State University. ECFS's mission is to encourage and coordinate collective action to strengthening food security in Eurasia through research and development. ECFS performs analytical work, undertakes research, performs educational activities, and coordinates intergovernmental research and development studies. ECFS carries out its activities in partnership with international organizations and institutions, including The World Bank. The World Bank's engagement with ECFS is focused on strengthening the capacity for expert and analytical services and applied research.

The objectives of the call for proposals is to announce selection of prospective authors for food policy case studies. The case studies will generate analytical evidence for policy makers, as well as will serve educational material on a relevant and timely food and nutrition policy topic. Each case study is developed by an individual researcher or a team of researchers affiliated with a university or a research institute from the Eurasian region. Researchers develop a case study based on the case study methodology presented in *Section 2*.

Since 2016, 28 case studies on current policy issues of food security in selected Eurasian countries have been published. The World Bank and ECFS are now launching the fifth phase of competitive selection of case studies, and researchers from the Eurasia region are invited to submit proposals for developing new case studies. All proposals are competitively selected and undergo at least two rounds of rigorous review. Detailed descriptions of the theme, selection process and application requirements, and selection criteria are provided below.

SECTION 2. CASE STUDY METHODOLOGY

I. ECFS Food Security in Eurasia – Case Study Series

The World Bank and ECFS, in collaboration with IFPRI[1], commission a set of food-policy relevant case studies for Eurasian region each year through an open competition. This activity is intended to help foster collaboration between researchers in the region to generate analytical evidence for policy makers on a food-policy relevant issues, and to produce a set of short, analytical and educational case studies on selected topics. Due to the success of this approach, these case studies have now become a regular feature of the ECFS contribution to the body of regional knowledge and understanding of policy implications surrounding food security in the region. Successful case studies are published as a book, made available on the ECFS website and presented at the annual ECFS Food Security Conference held every autumn.

Dual objectives
Case studies have the following objectives:
1. **Policy decision support**. Case studies are prepared to generate policy-relevant evidence about improved food security and nutrition in the Eurasia region, to identify policy options to alleviate constraints, to make recommendations about which option to be followed and

---

[1] International Food Policy Research Institute

to suggest which stakeholder group(s) should design and implement the recommendations.

2. **Educational support**. Case studies are prepared as analytical and educational material for graduate and undergraduate students in food policy and related fields, to strengthen their capacity to undertake policy-relevant analyses using real-life examples of issues and problems that policymakers face.

Selection of case study topic

Case studies should focus on current, specific, regionally and globally relevant topics around the area of food policy. The selected topics would identify a specific problem that either requires a solution or a specific example of how a problem is being or has been addressed.

The topic for 2020 case study competition is: Food Security and Food Policy Implications of COVID-19 Crisis.

II. Description of the Methodology

Food security and nutrition is an outcome of 1) the food systems of which they are a part, 2) the external factors that influence the systems, such as government policy, and 3) the behavior of the food systems' stakeholder groups. Food systems are complex, and public policy as well as the behavior of a variety of interest or stakeholder groups are critical to guide them in fulfilling societies' goals. In fact, meeting society's needs is difficult and a function of the goals of the various interest groups including, but not limited, to agents within the public sector, and their relative power to influence decisions. The design and implementation of appropriate government policy depend on a thorough understanding of the food system, how it operates and may respond to various government interventions.

Evidence-based decision-making is more likely to be successful in achieving stated goals than decision-making based solely on ideological reasons. Food policy research is an important source of the evidence needed for sound policymaking.

A case study is a research method that is used for intensive analysis of a single food policy-relevant case or phenomenon within its real-life context for the purpose of clearly understanding the problem and defining policy-relevant issues. The utility of case study results to guide national food policy is limited by the ability of case studies to provide evidence that can be generalized to environments and populations beyond the environment and population for which the study was carried out. Case studies are particularly useful for acquiring in-depth, policy-relevant evidence about how to deal with a particular, well-defined problem such as inappropriate water management associated with a particular watershed or iron deficiency in a particular cohort of women. The case studies under this call for proposals are focused on such specific food security problems and the identification of policy options.

III. Training and orientation of case study researchers

Some successful applicants may not have prior experience with the case study approach. This is not a problem as before starting work on the case studies, all participating researchers will be invited to an interactive training workshop organized by the World Bank and ECFS, where they will be able to update themselves regarding the methodology and the specifics of implementation for their chosen research project. The training will be organized online.

IV. Outputs

The final outputs of each case study will be a report (see outline below) and a presentation at the annual ECFS Conference. These outputs will be peer reviewed by distinguished food policy experts to ensure the quality and excellence of presentation of the research and its findings.

V. Doing the case study

The following eight steps are suggested as a guide for structuring the case study research. However, they are not exhaustive or mandatory, and can be modified to suit the purposes of individual research teams.

1. Identify and decide on an issue amenable to the short case study approach:

   Select a food security or nutrition-related issue for which more evidence is needed to guide policy action, which might be expected to result in improved and sustainable food security and nutrition. Consider the likelihood that policy action will be taken on this issue. Assess if the lack of evidence is the main reason why action has not been taken and whether food security goals are compatible with other prevailing policy goals. A political economy assessment of the feasibility of improving food security and nutrition is critically important before the issue is selected. Failure to understand the policy process and related goals have resulted in much applied policy research of limited value and a very large number of evidence-based recommendations that have not been implemented.

2. Develop a conceptual model or framework:

   This should help identify the potential and actual impact pathways and possible connections between the issue or topic to be studied and effects on impact variables such as food security, nutrition, environment and human health. The model should be sufficiently detailed to identify the variables and relationships for which data are needed. Potential policy intervention points should be identified, and a tentative list of policy options should be hypothesized for subsequent review and modification.

3. Extend the conceptual model into an analytical model:

   This step will help to further refine what data are required and in what form they could be collected. The analytical model should specify which components of the study will be descriptive qualitative analysis and which parts will be quantitative analysis. Every effort should be made to develop an analytical framework that helps establish the strength of different associations between potential policy interventions and the desired outcomes.

4. Collect the qualitative and quantitative data/information needed to apply the analytical model:

   The data and information sources may include primary sources such as open-ended or structured interviews based on a sample of key informants from focus groups, as well as secondary sources such as existing research reports, policy documents and the like. The choice of data sources will be influenced by the time and money available.

5. Apply the above analytical model to the data collected and suggest policy options:

   This step is aimed at testing the hypotheses related to possible policy intervention points. It will also help to refine the list of relevant stakeholder groups, their prevailing goals and how they will be affected by policy options proposed.

6. Complete the final version of the report:

Using the suggested layout and maximum number of pages per section (see below) the report can be finalized with policy recommendations (chosen from the list of policy options) and clear justifications for the recommendations.

7. Specify an assignment to students to be used for training purposes:

The assignment could be to discuss the pros and cons of each policy option from the perspectives of each stakeholder group and attempt to arrive at a consensus about the most appropriate policy action to follow.

8. Submit the report for peer review and subsequent revision and finalization. It is expected that the authors will work with the peer reviewers and will incorporate the proposed revisions.

VI. Content and structure of a case study report

Each case study, which should be of a length of 6,000 words (English), should focus on a specific and real situation requiring policy action to improve food security and nutrition and for which policy options exist. Each case study reports should be organized in the following sections:

1. Title and author(s).
2. Executive Summary. This should be limited to 300 words or roughly one page and include a brief presentation of the background of the issue to be discussed, the objective of the case study, policy options and key stakeholder groups.
3. Background information. This should be no more than 1,300 words or approximately 5 pages and include an analytical description of the context for the study, including results from data collection and analysis. Students who wish to get additional background information can consult the additional readings listed below.
4. Policy Issues. This section, which should not exceed 1,000 words or approximately 4 pages, should identify the policy-related issues and the possible policy intervention points, resulting from the background information.
5. Stakeholder Groups. This section, which should not exceed 800 words or approximately 3 pages, should identify and describe each of the stakeholder groups of interest to this study and their main agendas, interests, and expected relative power and influence in the policy-making process.
6. Policy Options. This section is the most important section of the report and should provide a list of the most important policy options identified by the authors and the justification for each of the options as well as an analysis of the likely impact on food security and nutrition as well as the impact on other public policy goals such as national incomes, government expenditures and sustainable natural resource management. Although quantitative cost-benefit analysis is unlikely to be possible within the short time frame for the case study, any available information about relative costs and benefits of the various policy options should be included. The length of this section will depend on the particular case study but should not exceed 2,200 words or approximately 8 pages.
7. Assignment. This section, which should be a short paragraph. It should be addressed to students, who intend to use the case study for educational purposes. It specifies that the students should analyze each policy option and assess the pros and cons of each policy

option from the perspectives of the stakeholder group to which each student is assigned and look for opportunities to arrive at a consensus about action to be recommended.

8. Policy Recommendation(s). This section, which should be included only in the version providing policy advice, should make a clear recommendation for action, identify the stakeholder group(s) for which it is aimed, and provide the main justification for why that policy option was chosen. The section should be no more than 300 words or approximately one page.

9. Additional Readings. This section should consist of a list of 2-3 additional readings recommended for the students to get additional information about the description of the background for the case.

10. List of References. This section should list all the references used to prepare the case study report.

SECTION 3. TIMELINE

The timeline of the case studies project is presented below:

1. May 31, 2020: Deadline for submission of proposals.
2. June 15, 2020: Proposal selection and notification.
3. June 22-26, 2020: Online training sessions on the case study methodology will be organized for the selected case study authors. During this five-day session, the case study authors will participate in mandatory online sessions 2 hours per day. The objective of the online training sessions is to provide in-depth training to the case study authors on the methodology and process of developing a successful case study. On the final day of the online training, the participants will be required to present a detailed case study outline for their topic. The outline will be reviewed by the review panel and the peer. If the review is successful, the case study authors will be expected to produce a case study within three months.
4. August 3, 2020: Participation in a mid-project progress review (via videoconference).
5. September 30, 2020: Submission of the first draft of the case study to The World Bank in English.
6. October 1 – October 15, 2020: Peer review of case studies.
7. October 31, 2020: Submission of the revised case study based on feedback provided by peer reviewers.
8. November 19, 2020: Submission of the final version of the case study and case study PPT.
9. Exact dates to be announced: Presentation of the completed case study at the Annual Eurasian Food Security Conference or other face-to-face or online broader discussion. In case of face-to-face event, travel assistance provided.

In order to be eligible for publication of the case and for remuneration, the case study authors shall:
1. Participate in Case Study Methodology online training sessions on June 22-26 and submit the case study outline for peer review.
2. Participate in the midterm progress review via video conference on August 3.
3. Develop the case study based on the methodology (Section 2) and incorporate appropriate comments and recommendations in a timely manner, according to the reviewers' feedback.
4. Strictly follow the timeline described in Section 3.

e. Participate in the Annual Eurasian Food Security Conference or other face-to-face or online broader discussion.

SECTION 4. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The selected case study authors should be current full-time or part-time researchers, lecturers or professors working on topics relevant to food policy, food security, nutrition, agricultural development or related field from the Eurasia region. The researchers should have an active research agenda on a range of topics relevant to food and nutrition security.
Language. Knowledge of English and/or Russian language is a requirement.
Team composition. Multi-country or regional proposals are welcome. Collaboration between researchers in two or more countries is highly encouraged.

SECTION 5. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

The proposals should be no longer than one page (A4), and they should be submitted in English or Russian, with English preferred.
Case study proposal should adhere to the following structure:

1. Case title and the country of the case;
2. Corresponding author and affiliation (including email address, telephone);
3. Name of co-author (if any) and affiliation (including email address, telephone);
4. Problem Statement based on the selected topic (200 words or less). Please note the overall topic for 2020 case study competition is "Food Security and Food Policy Implications of COVID-19 Crisis". Only proposals that correspond this overall topic will be accepted;
5. Background Information, including why the case study topic has been selected;
6. Description of stakeholders affected by the existing or proposed food policy;
7. Key policy issues and constraints identified.

All proposals should be accompanied by the CVs of the author(s).

The proposals should be submitted to the following email address: Dariga Chukmaitova, dchukmaitova@worldbank.org and Anna Buyvolova, abuyvolova@worldbank.org.; Subject: Case Study 2020.

SECTION 6. SELECTION CRITERIA AND INTERVIEW

The case studies will be selected from the proposals submitted by **May 31, 2020** based on the following selection criteria: (a) Relevance of the topic (ability to justify the relevance of selected topic); (b) Relevance of education and professional experience of the authors; and (c) Quality of the proposal and its correspondence to the structure and topic mentioned above.

Candidates who have been shortlisted for case study project will be invited for an interview. Interviews will be conducted remotely to get a better understanding of the level of motivation to participate in the project.

SECTION 7. WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

Selected case study authors will be issued Short-term consultant contracts with the World Bank for a period of 20 days. The remuneration rates will depend on consultant qualifications and experience. In order to be eligible for remuneration, the case study authors should follow the methodology and timeline as presented above. All case study authors are expected to have a working email address and are expected to check email on a regular basis, responding in a timely manner to project related inquiries. They are expected to have internet connection and should be able to participate in online trainings and discussions as required. The communication will be in electronic form and in English.

The payments on the Short-term consultant contract will be administered according to the following schedule:

Milestone 1 – equivalent of 5 days, upon delivery of the first draft of case study
Milestone 2 – equivalent of 5 days upon delivery of the revised case study
Milestone 3 – equivalent of 5 days upon delivery of the PPT presentation
Milestone 4 – equivalent of 5 days upon participation in the Annual Eurasian Food Security Conference (or other face-to-face or online event) and delivery of the final version of the case study.

SECTION 8. SELECTION AND REVIEW PANEL

The following distinguished scholars and practitioners comprise the Selection and Review Panel:

- Sergey Shoba, Chair of the Panel, corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of Science (RAS), ECFS Director
- Roman Romashkin, PhD, ECFS Deputy Director
- Pavel Krasilnikov, corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of Science (RAS), ECFS Deputy Director
- Jonathan Wadsworth, PhD, Lead Climate Change Specialist, The World Bank
- Suresh Babu, PhD, IFPRI Senior Research Fellow
- Pavel Sorokin, PhD, Professor, Russian State Agrarian University - Moscow Timiryazev Agricultural Academy
- Derrill Watson, PhD, Associate Professor, Tarleton State University