

IEA commissioned evaluations: process for feedback, finalization & decision-making

Background

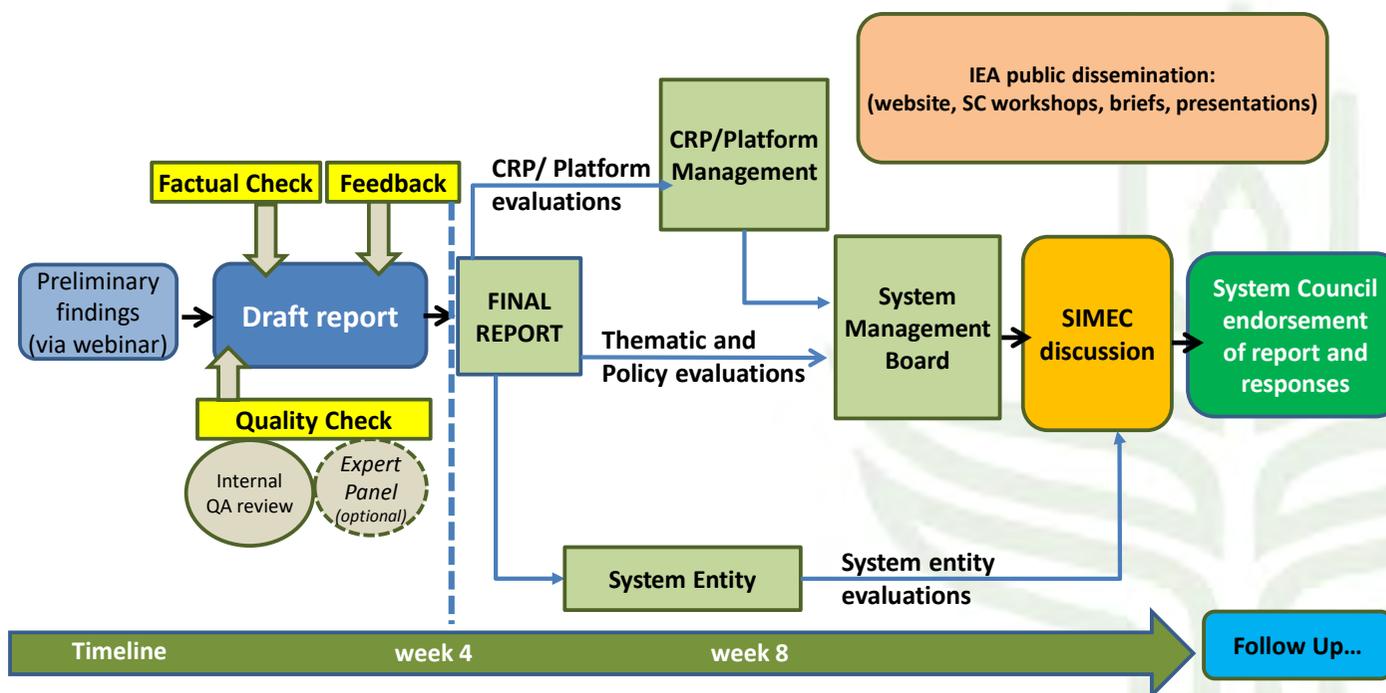
The Independent Evaluation Arrangement (IEA) is guided by the CGIAR Policy for Independent External Evaluations, which provides the principles, framework and foundation for the IEA and the evaluations in CGIAR as a whole. As defined in the Policy and in the CGIAR System Framework, IEA is responsible for “providing accountability, contributing to learning and supporting decision-making through the conduct of independent, external evaluations in order to provide the CGIAR System with objective, contemporary and cost-effective information on the overall performance of CGIAR Research and the functions and structures of the CGIAR System”.

IEA evaluations are designed to provide both learning and accountability to program management and funders. They are consultative, with opportunities for feedback from management, focal points, and stakeholders, including an opportunity to provide comments to the draft evaluation report prior to its finalization. Stakeholders therefore have been able to learn from the evaluation already during the evaluation process, and share their perspectives.

With the recent changes in the CGIAR governance structure, it is essential to clearly define the process for which final evaluations are submitted, formally responded to, recommendations agreed, lessons learned captured, and follow-up actions are monitored. The process aims to increase the usefulness and effectiveness of the evaluation and increase credibility in the CGIAR evaluation system as a whole. A summary of the process is described below, which reflects the roles and responsibilities of the various governance and management bodies as described in the CGIAR System Framework and Charter. As per the international evaluation standards, in all cases, the final report is first submitted to the evaluand (that is expected for delivery of results) for a management response, and then (when applicable) to the CGIAR oversight body of the evaluand for commentary on the response.

This document builds on the process for finalization of a CRP evaluation approved by Fund Council members in May 2014. It retains all the features of the approved process, especially in terms of consultations, feedback, and responses.

IEA Evaluations: Process for Finalization, Feedback and Decision-making



CGIAR is a global research partnership for a food secure future



Summary Table: Evaluation report review, finalization, and approval – process and responsibilities

Shared Evaluation Output	Purpose and resulting output	Timing	Action By
Preliminary Findings	Exchange views on the areas where the likely conclusions and recommendations will focus for improving factual accuracy and addressing potential misunderstandings. Preliminary results validated, and Evaluation Team Leader proceeds with drafting report	Towards the end of the inquiry phase	IEA and Team Leader in an open discussion with stakeholders (always including management and focal points) as well as ISPC, GFAR and System Office
Early draft report	Fact checking by management body of the evaluand, and quality assurance review by IEA to ensure a factually correct high quality report	One week	IEA and management body of evaluand (CRP management/entity being evaluated)
<i>Early draft report (optional)</i>	<i>Review and feedback of evaluation report for external expert focus.</i>	<i>Two weeks (overlaps factual check)</i>	<i>Expert Panel or Resource Group (optional)</i>
Final Draft Report	Provide comments and feedback prior to finalization of report. Comments and feedback are compiled by IEA and shared with Team Leader for action/response. The final comments matrix, including the response to each comment may be shared with the stakeholder groups.	Three weeks	CRP and Platform Evaluation: CRP/Platform: Management; Researchers; Governance; Lead Center Management & Governance, Participating Center Management, Selected Stakeholders, & System Management Office
			Thematic/ System-wide Policy Evaluations: Nominated Center/CRP Focal Points , System Management Office
			System Entity Evaluations System Entity Management, Center Management, CRP Management, selected stakeholders
Final report	Management Response: Management responds to the evaluation findings and recommendations and provides action proposals, specifically stating if they reject any recommendation (and propose no action) and if they are proposing actions additional to those indicated in the report	Three weeks	CRP and Platform Evaluations: CRP/Platform Management (including oversight and approval from CRP/Platform and lead Center governance)
			Thematic/ System-wide Policy Evaluations: System Management Board (consolidating Center responses)
			System Entity Evaluations System Entity Management (including oversight and approval from System Entity governance, if applicable)
Management Response (and Final Report)	System Organization Commentary: Provide commentary to the management response and evaluation report from the System-level/ System Organization perspective. Commentary responds to evaluation report recommendations related to system-level issues, and include action	Two weeks	CRP and Platform Evaluations: System Management Board considers both evaluation report and CRP Management Response and provides commentary on management response. For system-level recommendations, and those addressed to System Organization, commentary to include response & action plan

	plan to recommendations addressed to System Management Board or Office		Thematic/ System-wide Policy Evaluations: <i>Not applicable</i>
			System Entity Evaluations <i>Not applicable</i>
Final Report + Management response+ (System Organization Commentary)	System Council Committee (SIMEC) statement: SIMEC to discuss evaluation report, management response, (commentary) and action plan(s), and provide guidance to the System Council on a position regarding the evaluation recommendations and response(s). SIMEC to draft a statement/report to submit to System Council on evaluation recommendations and follow up	In advance of System Council meeting	System Council Committee (SIMEC) and ISPC
Final Report + Management response + (System Organization Commentary)+ SIMEC statement	For System Council consideration of the final evaluation report and endorsement of Management response and (commentary). To formally submit the evaluation package (all documents) to the System Council	In advance of System Council meeting	System Council

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

The final evaluation report will be submitted to the management team for formal response and action plan on evaluation report and, specifically, the resulting recommendations. This will ensure that there is a transparent record of how management has considered the recommendations and findings and intends to implement them through a clear action plan. Furthermore, the management response allows highlighting how lessons from the evaluation findings will be addressed and whether there are any financial implications.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN

Who:

<i>CRP/Platform evaluation</i>	<i>CRP/Platform Management body</i>
<i>Thematic/Policy evaluations</i>	<i>System Management Board (consolidating feedback from Center senior management)</i>
<i>System entity</i>	<i>System entity management</i>

One of the most important mechanisms to ensure that the findings and recommendations of the evaluation are being addressed is to request a formal management response and action plan to the evaluation report. As such, the management response is considered one of the essential components for an effective, and complete, evaluation.

IEA will submit the final report to the management body of the evaluand who will draft a management response to the evaluation. The management response will comment on the utility of the report and illustrate management’s position on the evaluation. It will also include an action plan in response to the recommendations. For CRP/Platform Evaluations, the management response and action plan are to be reviewed and approved by CRP/Platform Governance and Lead Center Governance prior to finalization and submission.

The management response will contain both an overall response to the evaluation as well as responses by recommendation, addressing each recommendation in the order presented in the evaluation report. In the case of a partially accepted or rejected recommendation, reasons need to be indicated. The response will include information on (1) expected actions to be taken, (2) responsible party or unit for follow-up action, and (3) the time-frame for implementation. It will also indicate whether proposed action has any financial implications.

In providing the management response, management will complete the following **Management Response Matrix/Action Plan**.

Evaluation Recommendation (numbered)	Management Response to the Recommendation	Management Follow up			
		Action to be taken (each action should have a reference number)	Who is Responsible for Action	Timeframe	Is additional funding required to implement recommendation?
Recommendation # – copied from evaluation report, abbreviated if necessary	(Selecting one of following) Accepted in full, Partially accepted or Rejected Provide brief explanatory comment for partial or complete rejection	List action(s) Insert	Insert (institutional not a person)	Insert	Yes or No If further funding required – how much and what is to be done if no funds available?

Purpose: Timing: Upon receipt of final report, the CRP management response will be due within three weeks.

FOLLOW-UP IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

Management should produce a follow-up report, in coordination with the System Office on an annual basis to include a matrix on progress in the implementation of the action plan until the progress is complete (see table below). In the case of CRP/*Platform* evaluations, it should be reviewed and approved by CRP Governance, Lead Center Governance, and any other unit or component responsible for the actions in the action plan.

Progress reports will then become a component of the CRP annual progress reports, with a copy of the matrix sent to IEA. IEA will keep a central tracking matrix of the recommendations made by various evaluations and their implementation.

Progress in Implementation of Action Plan Response to the Evaluation (Title)			Date of Action Plan		Date of Report
Number Given to Action in the Management Action Plan	Action to be taken (as originally described)	Who Responsible for Action	Original timeframe (start-finish)	Revised timeframe (start-finish)	Progress on Action
1	Action 1 – Copied from original Action Plan	Copy from original or insert if revised	Copied from original Action Plan	Insert	Insert brief summary of progress including comments/ explanations on very good or poor progress