



Supporting decision-making for prioritizing  
resource allocation to achieve a dynamic  
and effective CGIAR research portfolio

ISPC Workshop 9 May 2017 Amsterdam



Independent  
Science and  
Partnership  
Council

# Objective of workshop

The objective is to build consensus on the way forward for resource allocation to support a dynamic and effective CGIAR research portfolio

# Prioritization vs resource allocation

- Prioritization over the long term: (e.g. updating of the SRF to give clear direction on which areas of research - different commodities, different policies and upstream versus downstream).
- Allocation of resources over the medium term, i.e. to the CRP proposals which have been assessed as 'fundable' by the ISPC.
- Within year reallocations in response to funding shortfalls or additional funding.

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# Topics to be covered

- Snapshots of major changes in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century which have impacted on how research is commissioned globally
- Brief history on how the CRPs have evolved and what lessons we have learnt
- Rationale for having a workshop
- Description of program for rest of the afternoon
- First voting opportunity....

# Changes that have impacted on the research environment

## Snapshot of changing societal challenges at turn of millennium

- In the '70s research priorities were to increase food production
- By the '90s society had recognized that agricultural production was having a negative impact on the environment
- Growth in public interest in Fair Trade and animal welfare issues
- The potential impact of climate change became increasingly recognized as a societal challenge
- The MDGs started to articulate societal issues in terms of reducing hunger, poverty etc., but the SDGs 'raised the game' in terms of recognizing the inter-connectedness of the issues

## Snapshot of 20<sup>th</sup> Century global research funding

- Particularly in the early and middle of the 20th century agricultural (and later environmental ) research organizations were established in many countries with a mix of public funding and philanthropy.
- Towards the end of the 20th century decreasing public funding and huge growth of private sector funding into agriculture research.
- In some countries, (e.g. UK) parallel tracks of public sector funding for developed and developing country agriculture research are coming together.



## Snapshot of 20<sup>th</sup> Century scientific advances & consequences

- Breakthrough scientific advances e.g. in terms of genomics, computing power, web connectivity and sensor technology.
- Mathematical modelling and foresight methodologies gained popularity as ways of trying to forecast the future
- The barriers between disciplines became blurred and multi-, then inter- then trans-disciplinarity became popular to step into the vacuum of applied research.
- Definitions of 'quality' as applied to research became confused.

## What did this mean for the research environment?

- Universities responded with more investment in molecular biology and genomics departments and less in the more applied subjects such as agriculture and forestry.
- Long term public funding of research institutes and centers is being rethought in many countries.
- There was an increasing recognition that research needed to cut across organisational boundaries and that large collaborations should be funded over the longer-term than the traditional 3 year project grants and increased emphasis on multi-stakeholder partnerships.

## What does this mean for CGIAR resource allocation?

- Long-term funding of research Centers is less popular with funding decision-makers than funding competitive research calls, where funders feel they can have more influence on how funds are used.
- Yet, having high quality applicants for competitive research calls is dependent on reliable, long-term funding of organisational costs

## Prioritization over longer-term

- In the longer-term radical change is needed.
- There has been a huge investment in developing the research proposals for CRP Phase II, now the System needs to see some return on that investment. But, given the dynamic nature of the research environment globally, the opportunity for responsiveness needs to be built in.

## Snapshot from recent ISPC Foresight workshop

- Advances in genomics and molecular biology targeted towards enhancing the nutritive value of crops, particularly the less commonly researched crops, such as millets, as well as innovations in food processing, and the use of modern communication technologies for enhancing consumer demand are some of the interventions that ought to be examined.
- The challenge with use of modern tools, such as Precision Agriculture, for improved efficiency and sustainability of smallholder systems is that they are often not designed for smallholder use. Adaptation to smaller scales is a major challenge for research and technology design targeted for developing country agriculture.

# Brief history of Phase II CRP reviews

## Summary of how we have got to where we are

### Pre-proposals

- 13 CRP pre-proposals submitted incorporating 69 FPs – down from 87 in Phase I
- Scoring of CRPs 8 Bs, 4 Cs and 1 not scored
- 9 Eols for 4 Cross-cutting platforms submitted
- Scoring of Platforms 2 As, 1 C and 6 Ds

### Full Proposals

- 12 CRP full proposals submitted incorporating 52 FPs + 3 Platforms
- Scoring of CRPs 4 A, 4 A-, 3 B+ and 1 no score
- Scoring of FPs 31 Strong, 15 Moderate and 6 Weak
- Scoring of Platforms 2 As and 1 A-

## What happened next?

- No action taken on **CRP level** scores
- **At FP level:**
  - 2 FPs not accepted into portfolio in 2017
  - 5 FPs accepted with no w1/2 budget in 2017
  - 12 FPs accepted with reduced w1/2 budget
  - 33 FPs accepted at full w1/2 budget
- **Platforms:** all 3 were accepted at full w1/2 budget
- The CRP which wasn't scored was not submitted by the SMB in 2016 but discussion on resubmission during 2017



## Lessons learned

- Positive feedback from a number of CRPs that ISPC reviews had enhanced the quality of the research proposal
- Feedback from those less successful that they still value an ISPC endorsement of their research
- Feedback from that the process was too lengthy and cumbersome
- Overall, quality was improved.

# Why a workshop led by ISPC?

## Why a workshop - the imminent challenge

- 2016: insufficient W1/2 funding pledged to meet 2017 budgets.
- 2017: W1/2 funding for 2018 looks more likely to decrease (relative to 2017) than to increase.
- 2018: budget requests for W1/2 will increase with resubmission of 5FPs plus a proposal on dryland cereals and grain legumes.
- We need a consensus now on the principles to underpin a strategic approach to allocating funding between CRPs/FPs in November.

## Why led by ISPC?

- ISPC is independent – we are neither involved in providing funds nor implementing the research
- ISPC is not a decision maker so can ask questions without the answers committing anyone to any particular action
- ISPC Council members are involved in designing, reviewing and advising on other funds of a similar nature
- Through the knowledge of the SPIA team we have some evidence of what has worked in the past in terms of development impact

## SC members have different priorities - examples

- Preserve CGIAR 'core' skills/System
- Algorithm to allocate between commodities
- Achieve greatest progress in target development outcomes
- Fund research of highest 'quality' only
- Focus on International Public Goods
- Political/geographic considerations
- Links with research expertise in SC member country

# Program for the afternoon

## Workshop Agenda

### Now -15:45: Medium term prioritization

- Panel discussion: implications of varying priorities on resource allocation (14:30-15:15)
- Update on cross-system thinking on Quality of Research and voting on its use for prioritization (15:15-15:45)

### 15:45 – 16:15 Coffee

### 16:15 - 16:45 Short term prioritization

- Presentation and discussion on principles for short/medium term resource allocation

### 16:45-17:00 Wrap up

## Panel:

**Tim Wheeler** Professor of Agriculture, University of Reading

**Hans-Joerg Lutzeyer** Research Program Officer, DG Research and Innovation of European Commission

**Leslie Lipper** Executive Director of ISPC and one of the co-initiators of an informal consortium of Rome-based multilateral funders



## Update on cross-System definition of Quality of Research for Development followed by voting

- ISPC will provide an update on cross-System thinking on how to define 'quality' in the context of research for development/transdisciplinary research (the third criteria)
- All participants will have the opportunity to express their views (those from funding agencies first followed by all) on a rating from 1 to 5 on specified criteria

## Short-term resource allocation – the imminent challenge

- Presentation by Elwyn Grainger-Jones on within-year allocation of funding
- Group discussions on the principles that should inform resource allocation

## Caveat - Chatham House rules applies

- We consider that ISPC provides a safe space and that we will advance faster towards mutual understanding if everyone feels free to speak openly without worrying that it will be held against them or be quoted
- This embargo on attributing points to individuals includes not referencing Panel members as well as colleagues in discussion groups.
- **Please observe Chatham House Rule and do not repeat what you hear in the workshop as attributable to any individual or organization**