

Resource for the 2nd General Assembly of the Centers:

Recommendations to the System Management Board on improved implementation of CGIAR Country Collaboration

Background:

This document sets out the recommendations of the Working Group on CGIAR Country Collaboration for improving the implementation of CGIAR Country Collaboration (formerly known as site integration) presented to the System Management Board at its 7th meeting.

Purpose for the General Assembly:

This document is provided in support of discussions in 'Agenda item 6. Aligning on a vision for optimal resource-mobilization efforts' and specifically:

6.2b Innovative approaches (e.g. what does CGIAR Country Collaboration offer? How can Resource Mobilization Community of Practice be leveraged better- and if so, for what, and how?).

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Prepared by: Chair of Working Group 5 on CGIAR Country Collaboration

Working Document on improved implementation of CGIAR Country Collaboration (“CCC”)

Purpose

This working document sets out background information on the efforts of the Working Group on CGIAR Country Collaboration as well as a further set of recommendations (6) being developed for improving the implementation of CGIAR Country Collaboration (formerly known as site integration).

Action Requested

The System Management Board is asked to consider the working document and provide endorsement for the direction this supplies for the improved implementation of CGIAR Country Collaboration.

Distribution Notice:

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Prepared by: Chair of Working Group 5 on CGIAR Country Collaboration

Background

1. Working Group Purpose: to review and make a proposal for improving the implementation of the site/ country integration process.
2. Working Group membership and roles:
 - a. **Chair**: Matthew Morell
 - b. **Members**: Barbara Wells, Tony Simons, David Bergvinson, Ylva Hillbur (until March 2017)
 - c. **Additional Resources**: Siboniso Moyo (ILRI) and Tom Randolph (Livestock)
 - d. **Secretariat**: Nadia Manning-Thomas (System Management Office)
3. The working group considered the nomenclature options of the naming of the CGIAR objective under discussion and considered that the term site integration did not convey the strategic intent desired. The Working Group recommended to the Board at its 5th meeting in March 2017 the use of the term **CGIAR Country Collaboration** to more clearly communicate the strategic intent of the approach.
4. The working group developed a vision for Country Collaboration for the CGIAR: *“The CGIAR, through a Country Collaboration approach, will catalyze the development of a collective CGIAR role and impact scenario in countries in which the CGIAR has a significant presence based on meaningful synergies across CGIAR entities, national Governments, NARES, and other partners to develop strategies and deliver programs directly aligned to key country priorities”*.
5. CGIAR Country Collaboration will achieve this vision by:
 - a. Building on Center investment and the programmatic focus of the CGIAR Research Programs to provide a mechanism for realizing the additional value of a collective CGIAR contribution at country level.
 - b. Facilitating the Centers working together to find opportunities for synergy and alignment in a country where many of them operate, without losing their own individual identity, opportunities and relationships in that country.
 - c. Encouraging CGIAR staff, as an important part of their job, to ensure that CGIAR is the preferred go-to partner for agricultural research for development in countries.
6. The objectives of CGIAR Country Collaboration were defined as follows:
 - a. To assist the CGIAR, Centers, CRPs and Platforms to be more accountable to and aligned with host country governments and institutions.
 - b. To encourage programmatic synergy (esp. around IDOs and SDGs)
 - c. To improve efficiency in collective operations (incl. co-location, co-design, co-reporting)
 - d. To harness new resource mobilization opportunities
 - e. To enable sharper narratives and more compelling picture to investors of System
 - f. level achievements at country and global levels

7. The working group noted that while the objectives of CGIAR Country Collaboration focused primarily on encouraging collaboration with and within countries, there are important regional and global collaboration dimensions to the work of the CGIAR, such that in addition to meeting the needs of specific countries, the CGIAR must retain its identity and mission as a developer of international public goods.

Recommendations

8. The Working group considered the identification of countries in which CGIAR Country Collaboration programs would operate. The benefits and downsides of generating lists of countries were debated and the consensus view was that CGIAR Country Collaboration programs should be driven by the Centers/CRPS present in each country, rather than there being any centrally mandated list of countries.
9. **Recommendation 1: Distributed “Bottom Up” CCC to drive where CCC takes place** - The Working Group recommends that CGIAR Country Collaboration programs be defined by the Centers/CRPs operating in specific countries in collaboration with their Government partners, donors and other actors, and that there is no centrally mandated list of target countries for CCC.
10. The Working Group did note that it would be important for the CGIAR System to be able to articulate the scale and intensity of CCC and the status of CCC in individual countries. Such information is important to the System in communicating with key stakeholders on the degree to which the System operates as “more than the sum of the parts” and presents compelling opportunities for further collaboration and investment in the CGIAR mission and objectives.
11. The Working Group has been conducting and compiling the results of a survey on CGIAR Country Collaboration status across the CGIAR in 2017. The outcomes of the survey of CCC status in 2017 will allow the Working Group 5 to map out the various models of collaboration currently taking place, using the categories laid out and described in the CCC Framework in Annex I.
12. **Recommendation 2: Organizing CCC in CGIAR** - The Survey would support the identification of the CGIAR Centers involved in each Country. The Directors General and Science Leaders will be provided with the outcomes of the survey with a provisional characterization of the status of CCC in each country. It is expected that the relevant DGs will come together to discuss the status of CCC in each country and agree on an appropriate process to take the CCC program forward, either maintaining the status quo, or taking the CCC process to a higher level. Based on the results of the CCC survey, one DG per country could be nominated to pull together the conversation (so we can share the burden around) and their role would be to broker the necessary conversation. This would not be nomination of that Center to take the leading role necessarily, the group would have to agreed who takes leadership.

13. With a fundamental question on the funding of CCC activities, the Working Group recognizes that in an environment where funding is under pressure and there is a strong need to reduce transaction costs, CCC costs much be kept to a minimum and any additional administrative or information collecting or reporting obligations must be minimized. Recommendation 4 suggests mechanisms for funding Country collaboration.

14. **Recommendation 3: Funding of CCC** - Depending on the model or stage of CGIAR Country Collaboration, funding would be organized in a way appropriate to that. The ways in which funding could be organized at the various stages are outlined in the CCC Framework in Annex I. Additionally, maintenance of a “light” secretariat to coordinate central CCC processes (surveys, reporting, communication) will be required and is recommended to be defined and incorporated into the budget of the System Management Office by the Executive Director.

15. With regards to reporting and communication, it will be key to be able to communicate to a variety of internal and external stakeholders what is happening in the various CGIAR Country Collaboration efforts as well as an overview across the whole initiative. The Working Group is conscious of not creating additional and heavy reporting requirements but would like to see existing mechanisms adapted where necessary to be able to capture, synthesize and make available the information from country-level collaborative efforts.

16. **Recommendation 4: Reporting on and communication of CCC** - The Working Group recommends that the adoption of the following channels will allow for an overall picture of what is happening across CGIAR Country Collaboration efforts to be formed and made use of as necessary:
 - a. The **CCC survey** is repeated every year/every two years, as appropriate, to be able to determine what models are currently taking place and any changes in CCC across the System and across various countries, and to identify opportunities for the further development and intensification of CCC programs.
 - b. A section on CCC activities to be included in the template for **CRP annual reporting**
 - c. Exploring opportunities to incorporate reporting on CCC activities through the **Performance-Based Management framework** currently being developed. In making such a determination, it is important that the reporting modality capture the full CGIAR involvement in countries through all activities, CRP and non-CRP.
 - d. As part of the annual CCC survey the “lead Center” for each Country with a CCC process (ie either consultative, established or intensive) would be asked to also submit a short (no more than one page) proforma report on the nature of the CCC activity and any achievements (with evidence).
 - e. The **CGIAR Annual Report** to include a short annual statement of CCC
 - f. The CCC initiative and specific examples of effective CCC to be actively incorporated into the **narratives and communication materials of CGIAR**.

17. Looking at the roles in CCC, clearly, the CRP is one significant mechanism through which the CGIAR leverages its collective capacity to seek to deliver at scale against System level goals. However, the CRP's being programmatic in nature and not responsible for many of the elements required for effective collaboration in countries (use of infrastructure, leveraging of host country agreements, co-location, and bilateral research outside CRPs) require that Centers are also central actors in the CCC endeavor.
18. **Recommendation 5: Roles and responsibility of CCC** - CCC should be seen as a collective responsibility of Centers, CRPS and the System Organization. In order to reduce transaction costs and enhance system coherence, representatives to CCC processes should be selected on the basis that they can represent both Centers and CRPs, and that they take a "whole of system" approach to developing CCC opportunities.
19. During the process of engagement with various CGIAR entities, governments, other research for development partners, and investors in the CGIAR system, it is clear that there is a broadly-based expectation that a defining characteristic of the CGIAR is that "it is more than the sum of the parts". CGIAR Country Collaboration provides a further opportunity for the CGIAR, at a deeper programmatic scale, albeit more geographically defined scale, to demonstrate that there is currently, and will be in future, a profound opportunity to bring together diverse and comprehensive capacity to address major challenges such as those articulated in the SDGs.
20. The CCC process also provides an opportunity for the CGIAR to give life to a "System Identity" when dealing with countries and partners, while not detracting from the capacity of individual parts of the System for leveraging their brand recognition to promote the agenda and resource mobilization needs of the total system.
21. At this stage of the development of the CGIAR System, and given the funding challenges being experienced, it is not realistic to propose that CCC be actively encouraged through direct financial incentives from W1 or W2 resources given the competition for the use of these funds. However, encouraging the System to see CCC as an integral part of the process of building the trust with Governments that provides the freedom and right to operate in countries, that builds the case for countries to invest grant and loan funds in the CGIAR, and provides a vehicle for donors to invest in the CGIAR and partners at scale in support of SDG level objectives are all compelling reasons to develop CCC as an embedded feature of the CGIAR and a part of its overall identity and value proposition.
22. **Recommendation 6: Future Development of CCC** - The System Management Board should consider reviewing the status and opportunity for CCC in 2019 with a view to exploring whether more concerted policies and financial support for CCC be considered as an integral element of the CGIAR System.
23. If agreed by the Board, the Working Group will continue to work on finalizing the results of the survey and using these, plus the endorsement recommendations, to support the initial implementation of CGIAR Country Collaboration efforts in the countries where models have been identified.

Annex I: Framework for CGIAR Country Collaboration

Category	Characteristics	Opportunity	Funding
No CCC	Countries in which CGIAR entities operate essentially independently with few drivers for enhanced collaboration (for example they work in different agrifood systems, different agro-climatic zones, or with little potential programmatic interface or synergy).	Where CGIAR entities and national partners do work in adjacent systems, zones or with potential for programmatic touch points, but have not collaborated for historical reasons, there is an opportunity upgrade the collaborations status.	n/a
Consultative CCC	CGIAR entities meet with Government representatives, national institutions and other actors on a yearly (or occasionally more regular basis) to provide updates on activities and strategies ensuring there is clear information flow, visibility on respective activities and the opportunity to explore synergies or collaboration on a bilateral or multilateral basis.	Where the CGIAR entities involved, generally in consultation with Government, consider that the collaborative opportunity has a critical mass of activity and clear synergistic opportunities emerge, the CCC effort can be formalized through the establishment of an oversight committee that meets on a regular basis as part of an Established CCC program.	System entities pay their own costs in relation to the staff and travel time of all contributors to Consultative CCC processes. Where there are additional costs of organizing a consultative CCC process, the CGIAR entities present may be asked to contribute on a pro-rate basis to the direct costs of the consultation meeting (hire of facilities outside a CGIAR Center campus, catering etc). Centers may wish to rotate the leadership of the process in order to share the organizational burden.
Established CCC	CGIAR entities, representatives of Government and national institutions and other aligned actors establish a formal and regular collaboration convening process, generally an oversight committee, with a Chair and communication and consultation processes to actively explore and develop concerted collaborative programs in addition to the basis consultation functionality typical of a Consultative CCC effort. The group will develop concepts for aligning existing investments but will also explore avenues for attracting additional investment given the programmatic synergies against national priorities (typically aligned to one or more SDGs) articulated by that country.	An Established CCC process may gain sufficient momentum and critical mass to make a case to funders to invest on the basis of the added value that can be derived from a concerted programmatic level investment against high level and large scale objectives, particularly where drawing together a network of involved actors would be critical to impact at scale.	Each of the CGIAR System Entities contributing to the process would be expected to pay the salaries and travel costs of the CCC process. Where a secretariat is required to progress the agenda, costs could be met by (a) rotating provision of the secretariat among entities to share the costs (b) where one entity will provide the secretariat on an ongoing basis, other contributing entities may be asked to contribute on a pro-rata basis
Intensive CCC	The CCC program within a country has attracted strong investor support and is now a vehicle for active alignment of research for development programs, drawing additional investment on the basis of impact at scale that can be generated through the collective action of parties who bring different but synergistic capacities to address key objectives of the country.	An Intensive CCC program has the opportunity to continue to attract further investors and collaboration partners, and to deepen its capacity for generating impact through delivery of programs, policy advice, information services and capacity building activities at a scale not capable of being reached by individual Centers, CRPs or indeed the CGIAR acting alone without other R4D or development partners.	It would be expected that investors supporting an intensive CCC process would directly provide funding to support the leadership and secretariat for the process. Any costs not met in this way would be handled as for the Established CCC process.