



Draft 0: Transition to One CGIAR:
Initial Indicative Assessment
of Implementation Risks

Circulation: This is an initial draft working document of the System Council.

Introduction

1. This document provides initial, indicative input on potential implementation risks for the SRG's One CGIAR recommendations.
2. This document can be viewed as a companion to the document entitled *Initial Steps and Transition Support to One CGIAR*. Recognizing that the key opportunities are explored in the SRG's recommendations, the focus of this material is on potential downside risks. Nevertheless, emerging opportunities as CGIAR moves through a transition process should equally be continually assessed.
3. The document is intended as a contribution in support of a robust transition, by recognizing and being realistic about associated challenges faced by the System and its wide range of stakeholders, including funders, other partners, management and staff across the Centers and the System Organization.
4. The document has been informed by input from different sources, including a joint workshop of the members of the Assurance Oversight Committee of the System Council and the System Management Board's Audit and Risk Committee, held on 23 October 2019.
5. The contents of this document are indicative and non-exhaustive and are in no way intended to provide any degree of assurance in relation to the matters it covers. A comprehensive risk evaluation analysis will form part of detailed One CGIAR transition and implementation planning on an ongoing and iterative basis.

Transition to One CGIAR: Initial Indicative Assessment of Implementation Risks

Table 1: Potential implementation risks and recommendations to manage and mitigate

This table is an initial collation of implementation risks that accepts it cannot be exhaustive until an implementation plan is designed, and a risk assessment can be undertaken on the details of that plan.

The numbering in the recommendations does not directly correspond to the numbering of risks; rather, each section represents a collation in a non-prioritized order, and some recommendations address more than one risk.

Risks	Recommendations
Cross-cutting	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poorly executed integration (ref. challenges for CGIAR as collection of international organizations). 2. Failure to deal with the ‘classic’ challenges: fear, uncertainty, doubt, distrust, hostility. 3. Insufficient resources to support implementation across all modalities (People, Process, Technology, Change Management/Communication) and enable effective pace to allow for maximum impact/success. 4. Insufficient change management expertise and experience for planning/rigorous project management of the transition and transformation. 5. Insufficient/unrealistic timeframe to get buy-in from all key parties and/or deliver the major changes envisaged. 6. Resistance/lack of buy-in and support from key stakeholders, e.g.: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Funders (e.g. support will evaporate if reforms do not produce tangible/demonstrable proof of progress with results that are measurable and communicated effectively in short term). b) Centers (e.g. failure to secure participation of Centers in the preparatory work; potential withdrawal, or threat of withdrawal, from one or more Centers, with resultant damage to System reputation due to ‘contagion’). c) Staff (e.g. departures due to uncertainty, reduced level of influence and sense of being unsettled arising from the changes). d) Other partners (e.g. National Agricultural Research Systems, Departments of Agriculture, collaborators etc.) 7. Unclear/disputed decision-making during change process. 8. Getting the timeline right: potential harmful disruption of moving too quickly and loss of support, momentum and ultimately relevance if moving too slowly. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure proactive management of complex change process, including possibly through identification/establishment of: (a) formal project sponsor at SMB level; (b) project steering group; and (c) dedicated project/change management function (e.g. CGIAR staff + external firm whose embedded personnel bring tried and tested methodology and weight of specialist experience to the role). 2. Carefully consider transition and steady state staffing requirements, recruiting/using external resources to support/backfill as required. 3. Systematically work through transition requirements relating to policy, process and organizational architecture in a professional and transparent way. 4. Develop more structure around communication, including need for cascading and sequencing of messaging, tailored for different audiences. 5. Introduce mechanism to capture feedback from stakeholders, to better understand what tangible success actually means. 6. Develop some kind of rapid adaptation process to address incoming risks (e.g. as part of a Program Management Office function). 7. Determine tolerance levels for potential disruptive events involving key stakeholders related to the transition process and establish appropriate contingency plans. 8. Develop broader HR plan to build capacity and move people to a new way of working.

Transition to One CGIAR: Initial Indicative Assessment of Implementation Risks

Risks	Recommendations
Compelling mission for One CGIAR	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A vision and roadmap that are not clearly articulated - or articulated too slowly, or without conviction or confidence in the value proposition behind it - can impede effective implementation downstream (organization) and upstream (funders) if room is allowed for confusion or mistrust. 2. Brutal facts have not been explicitly addressed 3. Key stakeholders not completely on board with the message and vision, due to lack of socialization and buy-in. 4. Misconception that overall broad alignment with SDGs limits CGIAR's capacity to be responsive to global challenges where it has a comparative advantage. 5. Failure to articulate One CGIAR's sustainable competitive advantage. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a compelling upstream and downstream communications strategy on rationale and ensure appropriate funding for messaging internally and externally. 2. Identify key internal and external sponsors. 3. Ability and openness to confront reality, demonstrate confidence, and craft a vision
Unified governance	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Common Board member role poorly understood and change process mis-managed, resulting in ineffective oversight and loss of knowledge, expertise and wisdom of each Center/Alliance being lost or negatively impacted. 2. Lack of necessary due diligence into impact on Host Country Agreements and potential breach of - or inability to retain privileges and immunities afforded under - Host Country Agreements. 3. A view in the System that the proposal is top down and may inadvertently create a new heavy managerial and technical layer that goes against the current management and technical capacity. 4. Greater clarity in the plan on governance and administrative issues than on strategic and programmatic issues. 5. Movement to One CGIAR Common Board is either too fast or too slow to achieve desired outcomes. 6. Ineffective assessment and treatment of risks at all levels, due to lack of time, priority, expertise, insight and connection with risk appetite etc. 7. Failure to appoint a Board with appropriate skills and experience who commit to spending the time required to do the job required. 8. Failure to articulate compelling rationale for One Board/3 MDs etc. 9. Challenge of managing the conflicts of interest between the best interests of One CGIAR on the one hand and each individual Center on the other. 10. Over-dominant behavior / failure to organize challenge to ensure best possible and appropriately inclusive decision-making. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focus on maintaining developing good One CGIAR relationships with host countries, rather than securing immunities and privileges per se. 2. Use RASCI model to facilitate alignment of authority, responsibility and accountability and ability to make decisions in right place at right time without major clashes. 3. Carefully consider the need for a correct balance of gender, nationality, skills, available time, expertise and insights of Common Board members. 4. Ensure Common Board member roles, responsibilities are defined via an inclusive process that draws on the breadth and wisdom of existing members. 5. Ensure Common Board's roles and responsibilities are defined, and new members appointed, before focusing on which committees are needed and how they are structured. 6. Recruit individuals with strong change driving skills/expertise as initial Managing Directors (e.g. 3-year term), to get the job of transitioning to the integrated operational structure done. 7. Use existing Center leadership and the General Assembly as key mechanisms to monitor and proactively manage transition.

Transition to One CGIAR: Initial Indicative Assessment of Implementation Risks

Risks	Recommendations
<i>Integrated operational structure</i>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Insufficient investment and resources to support implementation across all modalities (People, Process, Technology, Change Management/Communication) and enable effective pace to allow for maximum impact/success. 2. Increased risk of fraud in period of extensive change. 3. Failure to move support systems and science agenda forward in step with each other. 4. Unclear rationale for composition and organization of the business units undermines authority to drive further institutional efficiencies and integration. 5. Underestimating the difficulties in simplifying, standardizing and streamlining policies, processes, IT and procedures across all Centers, including scientific research and support activities. 6. Inadequate attention to developing a new CGIAR culture. 7. Challenges arising from consolidation of HCAs across all Centers. 8. Failure to recognize critical importance of cyber-risk at Board level and throughout the System. 9. Unanticipated consequences of One CGIAR accounting and financial reporting (e.g. Fair Value adjustments, consolidation adjustments.) 10. Failure to consolidate offices/farms/research centers. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define what success looks like and the investments needed for delivery. 2. Be realistic about level of investment and be clear and transparent in tackling issues. 3. Treat transition as a full-scale program, under which a wide range of individual projects sit. 4. Identify leaders at various levels who are aligned and buy in to values to play a role in leading the change, running related projects and initiatives. 5. Highlight importance of diversity and get transition projects to run in way that reflects desired future operating state. 6. Identify suitable performance measures to check progress against outcomes and adapt when required. 7. Actively try to construct a new incentive framework that is centered on diversity and culture. 8. Implement common ERP, based on clear common policy and procedure, and plan shared services agenda based on this assumption, to avoid duplication of effort and change fatigue setting in.
<i>New research modality</i>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sequencing of the establishment of the new modality and the development of the research strategy, being able to articulate research agenda in a coherent and compelling manner. 2. Designing the new modality is overly complex and distracts researchers from delivering on the current portfolio - undermining current and future performance. 3. The proposed project co-design concept creates perception of a lack of independence in CGIAR research. 4. Lack of definition in detail of the One CGIAR research agenda/lack of clarity on the 'how'. 5. Failure to articulate how One CGIAR will deliver. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leverage internal champions, not just for change, but also for One CGIAR vision. 2. Active, focused communication that continues throughout the transition period and into the new One CGIAR. 3. Leverage the collective energy of CGIAR's science teams to design the change management timetable, using this energy to build social capital across other relevant stakeholder groups. 4. Clearly define the project co-design concept with clear conflict of interest rules.

Transition to One CGIAR: Initial Indicative Assessment of Implementation Risks

Risks	Recommendations
<i>More and pooled funding</i>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sudden withdrawal of support for completion of the CRPs (which continue to end 2021). 2. System paralysed into inaction anticipation of One CGIAR. 3. Failure to deliver expected benefits from new One CGIAR proposition (e.g. increased impact, greater scale, reduced cost, breakthrough science etc.) and consequent fallout from funders. 4. Funders look too quickly to the future state and hold back funding until the future state's anticipated benefits and impact are demonstrated. 5. Lack of a clear pathway to reach suggested levels of funding and de minimis cash flow requirements. 6. Potential new funders shying away because of dominance of existing funders. 7. Failure to identify and satisfy the interest of international agricultural research funders (i.e. versus competing interests in other areas). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clear and aligned messaging to funders that continued financing of the current research is critical to CGIAR's reputation and future impacts. 2. Continue to improve clarity and quality of reporting against performance standards.