



C. de Bode/CGIAR

Questions and Answers ON THE TRANSITION TO ONE CGIAR

This document sets out key questions and answers on the transition to 'One CGIAR'. It will be updated regularly as a core resource for internal and external communications on One CGIAR. Questions and feedback can be addressed to transition@cgiar.org and up-to-date reference materials can be found on <https://www.cgiar.org/impact/one-cgiar>.

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1. What is One CGIAR?

One CGIAR is a dynamic reformulation of CGIAR's partnerships, knowledge, assets, and global presence, aiming for greater integration in the face of the interdependent challenges facing today's world. It comprises (i) a sharper mission statement and impact focus to 2030, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG2 – Zero Hunger; (ii) unified governance; (iii) institutional integration, including a One CGIAR Executive Management Team, common policies and services, and a unified country and regional presence; (iv) a new research modality; as well as (v) more, and pooled, funding. Further information and reference documents can be found [here](#).

One CGIAR presents an opportunity for CGIAR to become a truly global organization and leader in research and innovation to transform our food, land, and water systems in a climate crisis; a partner of choice locally and globally; and a more dynamic and stimulating place to work.

2. Why does CGIAR need this reform?

As CGIAR, we have an incredible 50-year track record of working with partners to translate groundbreaking research on agriculture, food, land, and water systems into tangible development outcomes on the ground. In the 21st century, however, we face a very different set of more complex and more interconnected challenges, evolving faster than before.

Climate change, biodiversity loss, and – recently – COVID-19 are just some examples of global threats that are inextricably linked with an unsustainable food system; and they pose immediate risks to our ability to end hunger and achieve or safeguard key development outcomes. Ultimately, we need to completely transform our food, land, and water systems to feed a growing population healthy diets without risking the stability of the natural processes that sustain our existence.

In the face of these momentous challenges, CGIAR's offer to the world is more relevant than ever. Yet – to maximize our added value given the pace, scale, and complexity of the challenges we face – we need to come together as One CGIAR.

One CGIAR is based on the premise that CGIAR's excellent leaders, scientists, and staff can deliver more when brought together under fewer institutional boundaries, supported by more unified systems, services, management, and governance.

More coherent decision-making and a streamlined operational structure will unlock opportunities for greater integration and collaboration within CGIAR and with partners.

For our people, this will be an opportunity to work for a truly global organization and leader in research and innovation, with greater interactions across disciplines and regions.

For our partners, One CGIAR will be more accessible and easier to work with both locally and globally, providing a one-stop shop to access all of our global capabilities.

One CGIAR will also mean more stable and predictable funding, given the strong commitment to and support for One CGIAR by all of our largest Funders. In the long term, this will be an opportunity to diversify and significantly increase the overall volume of funding and make funding more stable and predictable, allowing us to focus on delivering impactful research.

3. What does One CGIAR mean for CGIAR’s people?

One CGIAR is about better harnessing the skills and passion of CGIAR’s excellent people. This was confirmed in the [System Council members’ message to staff in November 2019](#):

“The greatest assets of CGIAR – and a key reason for our support – are its talented people, its partnerships, its global presence, and its record of impact. If CGIAR comes together as one, we believe our work can have even greater value.”

As part of One CGIAR, staff will work for a global leader in research and innovation on food, land, and water systems. For CGIAR’s world-class scientists, One CGIAR aims to enhance collaboration across disciplines and regions, unlock more stable and predictable funding, and foster more effective partnerships. For CGIAR’s corporate services and functions, One CGIAR is an opportunity for staff to help build and operate best-practice common policies, services, and systems. For all staff, One CGIAR can open up new avenues for professional growth and development.

a. What does One CGIAR mean for my job/ role?

One CGIAR builds on the excellent collective capabilities and people of CGIAR’s Centers/ Alliances, and the System Organization. The transition is about finding better ways for us to work together, to harness our skills and passion for higher impact.

As part of the transition, all roles will become part of a more integrated, global operational structure that spans all the CGIAR Centers/ Alliances that join One CGIAR, as well as the System Organization. By June 2021, all staff in the Centers and Alliances that have joined One CGIAR unified governance will be affiliated to the Global Groups and Regional Groups of the [integrated operational structure](#) approved by the System Board in January 2021 and endorsed by the System Council in March 2021.

The affiliation to Global Groups and Regional Groups does not directly impact staff reporting lines. Reporting lines will be transitioned in a separate process over 2021 and into 2022, where required, led by the relevant Global Directors and Regional Directors. The affiliation is also not intended to set out a final or permanent destination for all staff. Some, but likely a small minority, may over time be affiliated with a different Division and/ or Global Group, based on further consultations and more detailed information.

As of March 2021, the Transition Program Management Unit (TPMU), overseen by the Executive Management Team (EMT), was working closely with Center/ Alliance Directors General and Center/ Alliance focal points to begin consultations and collect key information on staff and teams as a basis for the affiliation exercise. Staff will receive regular updates on progress, and will have opportunities to ask questions and seek clarification on the affiliations proposed.

One CGIAR is not a cost-cutting or downsizing exercise. Ultimately, global integration of CGIAR’s capabilities will create opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness through economies of scale and reduced duplication, while enabling staff development and specialization. As we grow in line with our Funder-endorsed ambition for more, and pooled, funding; the transition to One CGIAR will help us increase the proportion of funding dedicated to research and innovation delivery.

b. What does One CGIAR mean for my research/ project?

In line with the [endorsed One CGIAR recommendations](#), the process will be designed to ensure continued delivery of research/ projects against existing commitments, and an orderly transition from the current generation of CGIAR Research Programs (CRP) to a new portfolio in line with the [2030 Research and Innovation Strategy](#) and forthcoming 2022—24 Investment Plan (see [March 2021 process update to the System Council](#)).

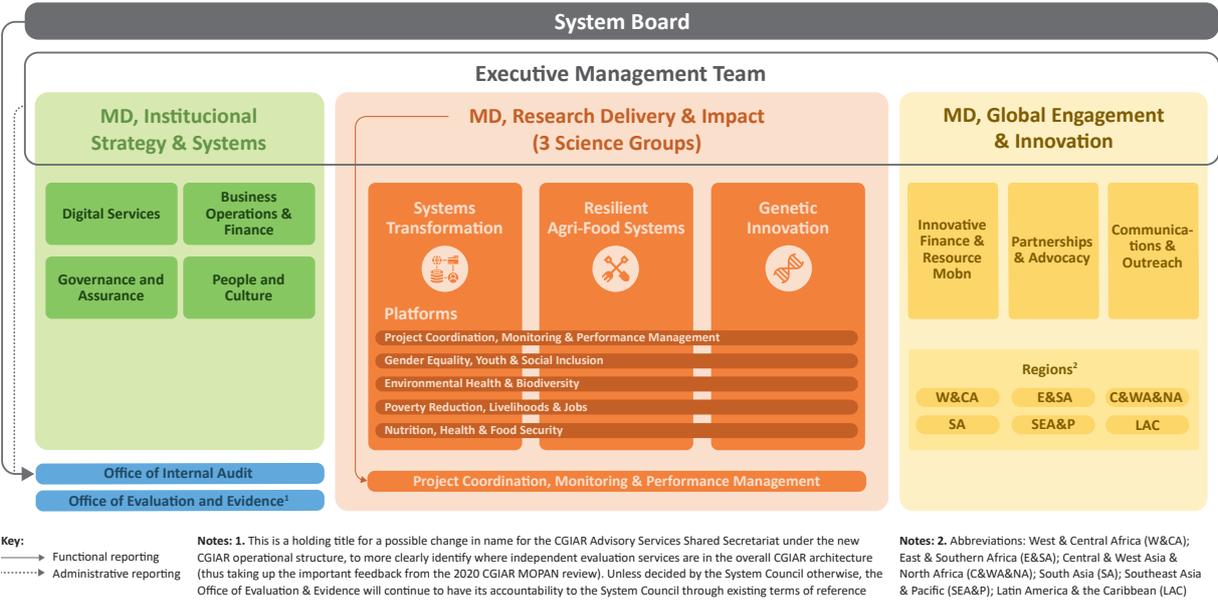
Alongside the Investment Plan, which will articulate CGIAR’s research and innovation for pooled funding via the CGIAR Trust Fund, CGIAR will continue to pursue bilateral funding opportunities with existing and new partners. Throughout the transition, CGIAR will ensure continued delivery against all existing commitments.

4. What does One CGIAR mean for CGIAR’s Centers and Alliances?

One CGIAR builds on the brands, people, partnerships, knowledge, assets, global presence, and track record of CGIAR’s Centers and Alliances. It is based on the premise that these can and must be configured differently to allow for greater integration, synergies, collaboration, and – ultimately – impact in the face of today’s complex global challenges.

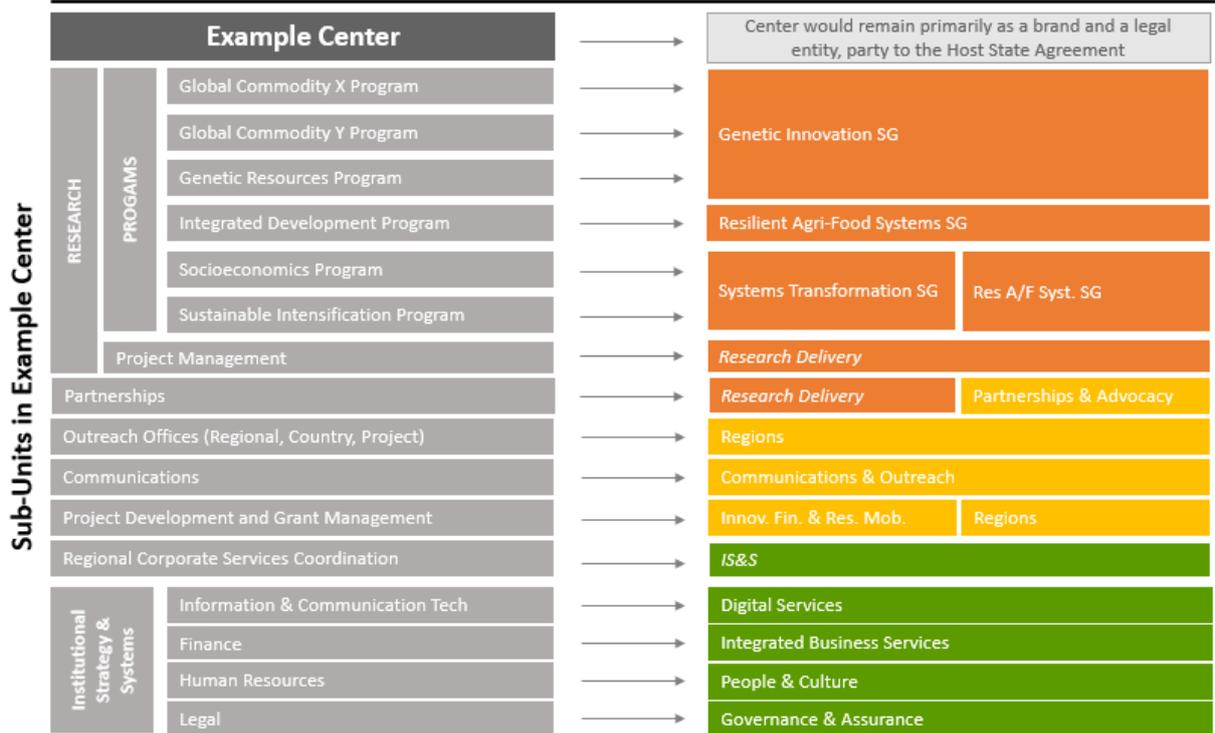
The [inaugural CGIAR Executive Management Team \(EMT\)](#), which took up its role on 1 September 2020, has worked closely with Center/ Alliance leadership and staff to develop an integrated operational structure for One CGIAR. That [operational structure](#) was approved by the CGIAR System Board in January 2021, followed by a strong endorsement by the System Council in March 2021 ([Chair’s Summary, 12th meeting of the CGIAR System Council](#)).

The One CGIAR operational structure is formed of three divisions, sub-divided into ten Global Groups and six Regional Groups, with Global and Regional Directors reporting directly to the EMT, who in turn are accountable for institutional performance to the System Board.



In this structure, CGIAR’s Centers and Alliances will transition from self-standing institutions to the foundation and building blocks of a broader, dynamic, and more integrated One CGIAR that maintains and enhances their key assets. The structure aims to ensure that CGIAR is strategically and operationally best placed to fully leverage Center brands, capabilities, and other assets for increased impact.

How the capabilities of an Example Center could be mapped into the new structure



5. What does One CGIAR mean for CGIAR’s funding?

The System Council, comprising CGIAR’s largest Funders, unanimously endorsed in November 2019 the [One CGIAR recommendations set out by the System Reference Group \(SRG\)](#). Those recommendations include an ambition to double overall investment in CGIAR research from 2018 levels, and the achievement of at least 50% pooled funding by 2022 and at least 70% by 2024. In addition, the Funders endorsed adopting a more effective and universally applied approach to cost recovery, as well as a shift to multi-year funding commitments and approvals.

Taken together, these measures would translate into much greater and more predictable funding for CGIAR research and – conversely – reduced fragmentation and unproductive competition.

The [CGIAR Resource Mobilization, Communications and Advocacy Strategy](#), released in June 2020, sets out in greater detail the pathways to mobilizing US\$2 billion/ year – on a sustainable basis – towards CGIAR research for development, by 2030 or sooner.

6. Will bilateral funding remain part of CGIAR’s funding mix?

Yes, bilateral funding will remain and will play a critical role in One CGIAR’s funding mix. Under the integrated operational structure for One CGIAR, there will be a more coherent and coordinated approach to bilateral funding, aiming for greater impact, relevance, and efficiency.

Going forward, the Innovative Finance and Resource Mobilization Global Group will coordinate bilateral resource mobilization, with shared responsibilities across the three Science Groups and six

Regional Groups. Staff across these groups will be empowered and incentivized to pursue bilateral opportunities, which – once materialized – will be delivered by the Science Groups. In line with One CGIAR's mission statement and impact focus to 2030, bilateral opportunities will need to contribute to the five Impact Areas for One CGIAR: nutrition, poverty, gender, climate and environment.

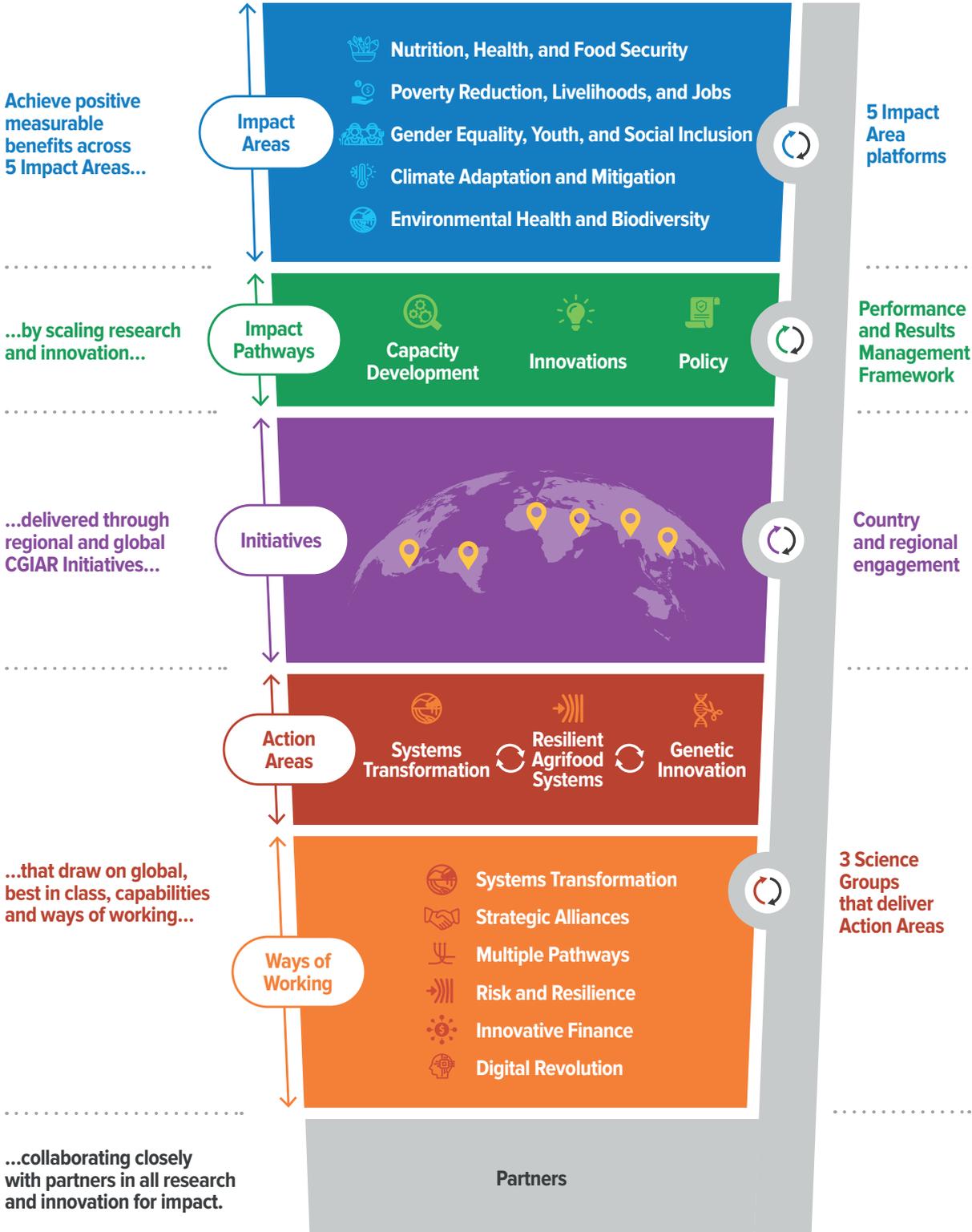
7. What is new and different about the 2030 Research and Innovation Strategy?

The [2030 Research and Innovation Strategy](#), approved by the CGIAR System Council on 17 December, introduces important changes both in terms of CGIAR's research focus and impact ambition, as well as how CGIAR will deliver research for development working with partners. These new directions can be summarized as follows:

- **Innovation focus:** Understanding that research done strategically within innovation systems provides the key route for knowledge to drive systems transformation;
- **Impact Areas:** Seeking multiple benefits across five SDG-relevant Impact Areas through a systems transformation approach;
- **Action Areas:** Deploying the full range of CGIAR's capabilities, integrated into three broad Action Areas that are interlinked and reinforce each other through global cross-cutting CGIAR Initiatives, which will draw on the capabilities of multiple Science Groups;
- **Seven key ways of working:** Adding up to a forward-thinking approach to how we work;
- **One CGIAR:** Unified governance and management to enable much more streamlined and effective ways of working at scale.

The CGIAR 2030 Research and Innovation Strategy in a nutshell

CGIAR research and innovation will:



8. How will unified governance be provided?

An essential component of One CGIAR is a unified governance arrangement that provides coherent strategic direction and oversight of CGIAR's operations.

To bring about this arrangement, the General Assembly of the Centers decided on 31 July on the appointment of eight persons who will serve as the voting members of the CGIAR [System Board](#) for a three-year term from 1 September 2020. As of December, the Boards of 12 CGIAR Centers (10 Centers and one Alliance) have appointed those eight persons as a 2/3 voting majority on their respective Boards to enable unified governance of One CGIAR.

As part of that arrangement, each Center and Alliance will thus retain their Board, consisting of the eight voting members of the System Board, up to four Center/ Alliance-specific voting members, and a small number of Center/ Alliance-specific non-voting members.

The eight common Board members have been identified through a transparent and inclusive nominations process, led by a Nominations Committee appointed by the General Assembly of the Centers. Collectively, those members hold the breadth of skills, backgrounds, and perspectives required to ensure effective, high-level strategic direction and oversight to ensure a successful transition to and operations of One CGIAR.

9. Why does CGIAR need an integrated operational structure?

With a view to aligning form and function, the [integrated operational structure](#) for One CGIAR aims to optimize CGIAR's capabilities for the delivery of the [2030 Research and Innovation Strategy](#). The structure will simplify decision making at all levels; enable greater collaboration across functions, disciplines, and geographies; further strengthen the diversity of CGIAR's people, skills, and ideas; make CGIAR more accessible to global, regional, and local partners; and improve efficiency of CGIAR to maximize impact per unit of funding.

This operational structure is expected to deliver significant benefits to all key stakeholders. It will maximize CGIAR's end-impact and position it to grow funding and deliver the highest possible value for investment. Coordinated engagement at the regional and country levels will ensure that CGIAR is responsive to local needs, while streamlining collaboration with our partners. The integrated operational structure will provide new and improved professional development opportunities for all staff, whilst regional operations will maintain a safe and efficient working environment.

10. What is different from previous CGIAR reforms?

One CGIAR builds on and goes beyond previous reforms in its ambition. It aims to elevate and fully harness CGIAR's talented people, inter-disciplinary capabilities, strong partnerships for impact, and global presence by putting in place a truly unified and integrated governance and management structure.

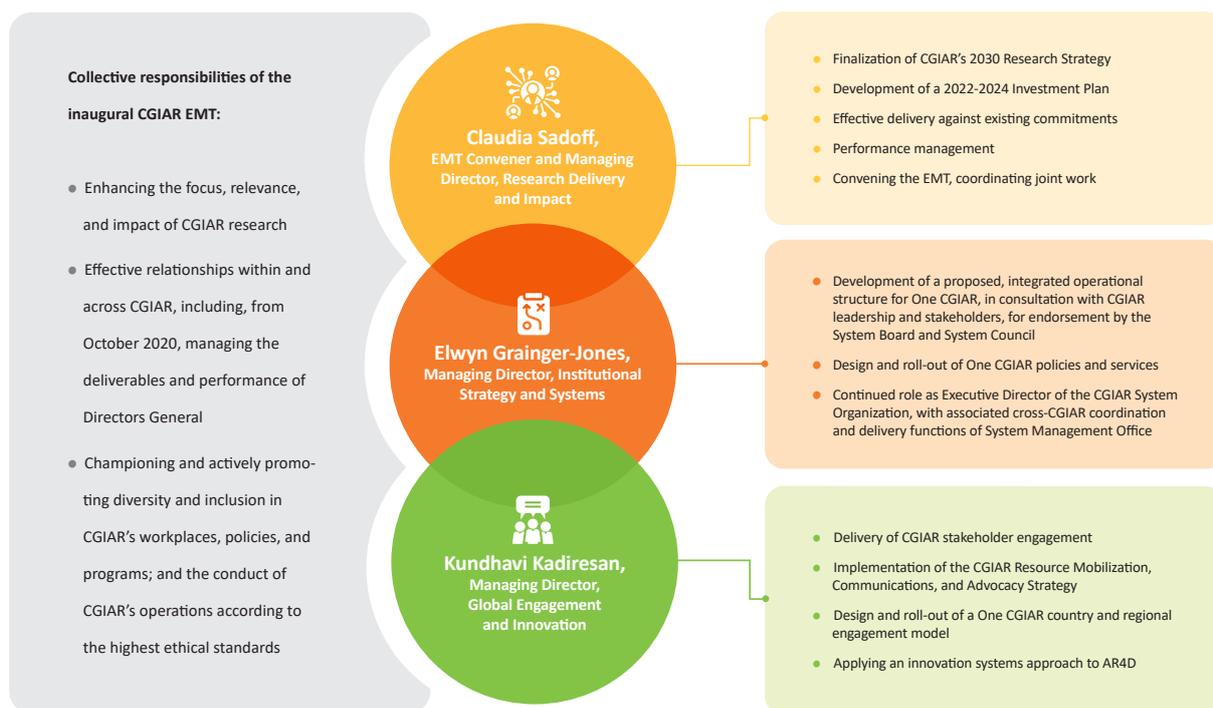
11. How will the transition to One CGIAR be implemented?

The guiding principles, timeline, roles and responsibilities, and resourcing of the transition have been set out in the endorsed [One CGIAR recommendations](#) and subsequent decision-making by the CGIAR System Management Board (SMB) at its 16th meeting in January 2020¹, taking into account proposals made by the December 2019 Extraordinary General Assembly of the Centers². As these evolve, updates will be provided on the CGIAR website, [here](#).

From February to September 2020, the Transition Consultation Forum (TCF) and six Transition Advisory Groups (TAG) brought together multi-stakeholder input and advice from across CGIAR, Funders, and partners to define in greater detail the One CGIAR destination and the pathways to reach it. From September, the process has been led by the [EMT](#), overseen by the [System Board](#).

While providing collective, coordinated leadership of the transition process as a whole, the three Managing Directors of the inaugural EMT each have specific focus areas within the broader transition process, as shown below. The EMT will be supported in their efforts by dedicated teams from across CGIAR and the Transition Program Management Unit (TPMU), as well as ad hoc advisory groups and working groups to enable co-creation with broader internal and external constituencies.

The inaugural CGIAR Executive Management Team (EMT)



Following System Council endorsement of the integrated operational structure for One CGIAR in March 2021, the EMT has launched the process to fill key managerial positions in the structure, including Global Directors, Regional Directors, as well as Senior Directors and other roles reporting directly to Global Directors. These appointment processes will be carried out in a phased manner over March—June 2021. Once on board, the Global Directors, Regional Directors, and Senior Directors will all play key roles in driving the implementation of the One CGIAR transition in their respective areas.

¹ Chair's Summary, 16th System Management Board Meeting, 28—29 January 2020, Amsterdam, The Netherlands (https://storage.googleapis.com/cgiarorg/2020/02/SMB16-10_ChairsSummary-Final.pdf)

² Co-chairs' Summary, Extraordinary General Assembly of the Centers, 12—13 December 2019, Rome, Italy (https://storage.googleapis.com/cgiarorg/2019/12/Ex-GA_Co-ChairsSummary_Dec2019.pdf)

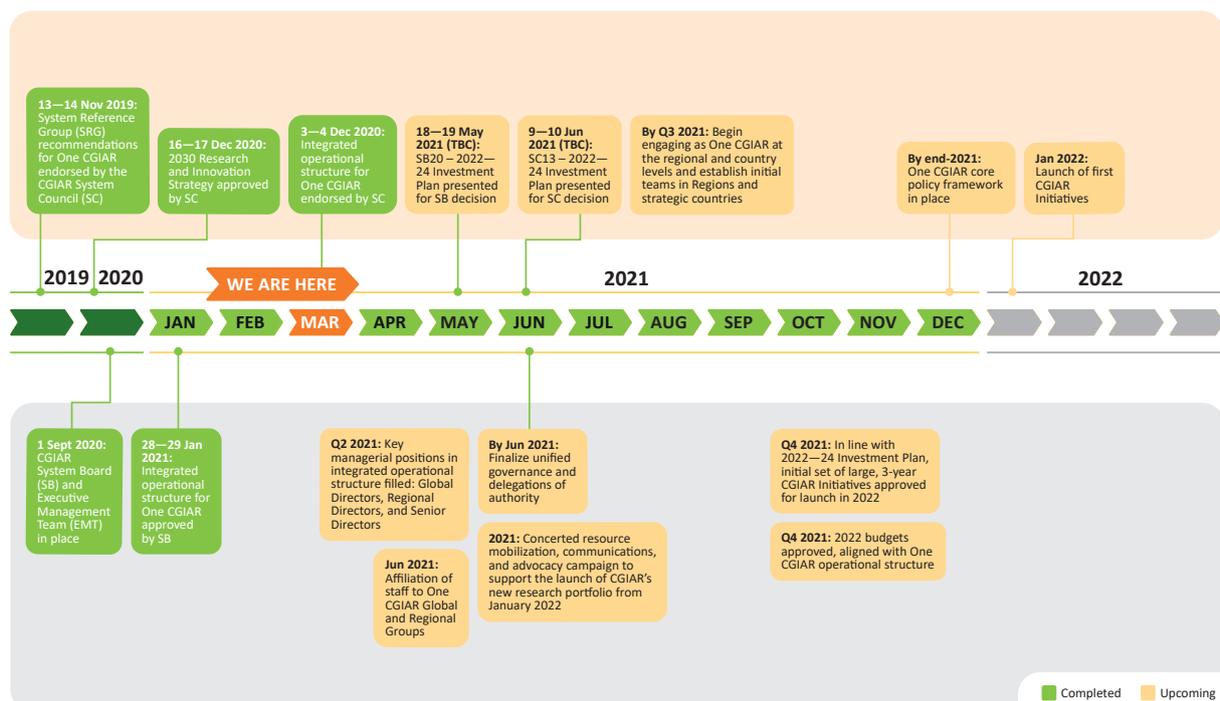
12. How will we ensure that One CGIAR is making progress against the intended outcomes of the change?

For each of the One CGIAR recommendations, the System Reference Group (SRG) articulated expected outcomes and associated impacts. The EMT will monitor progress against these outcomes through a clear results framework for the transition. This results framework will include a set of key performance indicators, for which baselines and targets will be set, and progress monitored at defined intervals.

13. What is the timeline for the transition?

Following the approval of the 2030 Research and Innovation Strategy in December 2020, and the endorsement of the operational structure in March 2021, the One CGIAR transition has entered an intensive implementation phase. In the short term, key areas of focus include the development of the 2022–24 Investment Plan by May 2021, followed by the design of the first CGIAR Initiatives for approval later in the year; the concerted resource mobilization, communications, and advocacy campaign to support the successful delivery of the Investment Plan; as well as the implementation of the operational structure, starting with the crucial key managerial appointments and staff affiliation processes by June 2021. A high-level timeline of key milestones is set out below.

Key 2021 milestones in the transition to One CGIAR



14. How are the risks facing One CGIAR being assessed and mitigated?

A comprehensive risk management framework has been developed to identify, assess and mitigate key risks facing One CGIAR. Risks have been segmented by their ‘threat level’ to ensure that risk ownership and mitigation follow-up are well defined. The EMT will focus on the management and mitigation of critical risks, while low risks will be managed by individual workstreams. TPMU plays a coordinating role to ensure that risks are managed and elevated appropriately.

15. Are there structural or legal obstacles to making One CGIAR happen?

CGIAR contracted Lalive Law, a global law firm, to deliver a comprehensive legal opinion on the proposed governance and management changes. Its summary findings, available on the CGIAR website, conclude that there are no legal impediments for implementing One CGIAR Unified Governance. The detailed legal opinion can be found [here](#).

16. How is the One CGIAR transition being impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic?

The CGIAR System Council, SMB, and Centers all acted quickly to assess and respond to the risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, including its implications for the transition to One CGIAR.

Recognizing the unprecedented nature of the crisis – and the overriding priority to protect the health, safety, and security of staff and partners – there is strong support to continue and to accelerate, where possible, the transition to One CGIAR. As a fully integrated, aligned, and operational One CGIAR we can maximize our contribution to addressing the world’s needs, today and in the future.

Further information on CGIAR’s response is available [here](#).

17. How was the One CGIAR destination defined and agreed?

The One CGIAR recommendations were developed by the multi-stakeholder [System Reference Group \(SRG\)](#) from late 2018 to October 2019, supported by the [CGIAR System Management Board \(SMB\)](#) in October 2019³, and unanimously endorsed by the [CGIAR System Council](#) in November 2019⁴. Detailed aspects of the destination were further defined and the associated target dates adapted by the

³ Chair’s Summary, 15th System Management Board Meeting, 28 October 2019 (https://storage.googleapis.com/cgiarorg/2019/10/bc714624-smb15-05_chairsummary-approved.pdf)

⁴ Meeting Summary, 9th System Council Meeting, 13 and 14 November 2019 (https://storage.googleapis.com/cgiarorg/2020/03/SC9-11_MeetingSummary_APPROVED.pdf)

SMB at its 16th meeting in January 2020⁵, taking into account proposals made by the December 2019 Extraordinary General Assembly of the Centers⁶.

The process

The System Council, at its 6th meeting in Berlin, Germany in May 2018, acknowledged that there was “Funder appetite for an expanded shared agenda with increasing shared agenda/ pooled funding over time” and that “efforts to deliver on these elements are directly linked to the System’s capacity to rationalize itself to remove ongoing fragmentation in effort”⁷.

The System Council agreed to take these conversations forward through a whole-of-system reference group, which was formed in late 2018. The SRG was co-chaired by Tony Cavalieri of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Marco Ferroni, Chair of the SMB, and it comprised **22 members**: ten members of the System Council, including Funders as well as representatives of regional constituencies; all ten members of the SMB, including six Center-affiliated members; and the conveners of Center Board Chairs and Directors General. Representatives of the CRP and Platform Leaders as well as the Independent Science for Development Council (ISDC) also participated in the SRG’s deliberations.

From late 2018 to October 2019, the SRG undertook a highly consultative and collaborative process of co-creation to set out its **One CGIAR recommendations** to the System Council. Apart from intense collaboration within the broad and representative SRG itself – including through three working groups – the SRG co-chairs engaged stakeholders across CGIAR and its key partners, including Center Board Chairs and Directors General, Science Leaders, communities of practice, Funders, the regional constituencies of the System Council, as well as national agricultural research and extension services (NARES) and their networks.

Overall, the SRG process spanned more than 70 group calls and many more bilateral calls in 2019, five in-person SRG meetings and two retreats, and its recommendations benefited from in-person workshops of Science Leaders, on shared services, and of the SMB’s Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) and the System Council’s Assurance and Oversight Committee (AOC) on risk. Draft versions of the SRG’s recommendations were circulated on four occasions before they were posted on the CGIAR website for System Council consideration on 30 October. Written comments were logged and responded to in a comments log that was shared with the SRG as well as all Center Board Chairs and Directors General.

The operational structure, that was endorsed by the System Council in March 2021 after having been approved by the System Board in January 2021, is the result of a process of deep engagement and co-design with senior leaders and staff across CGIAR in 2020. The proposal has been jointly developed with nine Design Working Groups led by Center Directors General and senior Center operational staff with representation from more than 150 staff across CGIAR, and consulted on with Center Boards, Funders, host country partners, and other key stakeholders.

⁵ Chair’s Summary, 16th System Management Board Meeting, 28–29 January 2020, Amsterdam, The Netherlands (https://storage.googleapis.com/cgiarg/2020/02/SMB16-10_ChairsSummary-Final.pdf)

⁶ Co-chairs’ Summary, Extraordinary General Assembly of the Centers, 12–13 December 2019, Rome, Italy (https://storage.googleapis.com/cgiarg/2019/12/Ex-GA_Co-ChairsSummary_Dec2019.pdf)

⁷ Meeting Summary, 6th System Council Meeting, 16 and 17 May 2018 (https://storage.googleapis.com/cgiarg/2018/04/SC6-09_MeetingSummary_APPROVED-1.pdf)

18. What analyses underpinned the SRG's recommendations?

The SRG's recommendations were based on years of cumulative analysis and evaluative evidence of CGIAR. The SRG also formed working groups to carry out deep-dives into research focus, modalities, and institutional arrangements. It commissioned studies on governance options and AR4D modalities, and its recommendations benefited from technical workshops on science, shared services, and risk. The SRG itself encompassed centuries of combined experience of CGIAR, and it systematically reached out to others to benefit from a wider range of ideas and perspectives.



CGIAR

Science for a food-secure future



CGIAR is a global research partnership for a food-secure future. CGIAR science is dedicated to reducing poverty, enhancing food and nutrition security, and improving natural resources and ecosystem services. Its research is carried out by 15 CGIAR Research Centers in close collaboration with hundreds of partners, including national and regional research institutes, civil society organizations, academia, development organizations and the private sector.

CGIAR System Organization

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