



TOWARD GREATER IMPACT:

A CGIAR Engagement Framework for Partnerships & Advocacy

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Acronyms

A4I	Advocacy for Impact
CoP	Community of Practice
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GE&I	Global Engagement and Innovation
IF&RM	Innovative Finance and Resource Mobilization
IS&S	Institutional Strategy and Systems
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MELIA	Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Impact Assessment
NARES	National Agricultural Research and Extension Systems
NARIS	National Agricultural Research and Innovation Systems
P&C	People and Culture
PAGG	Partnerships & Advocacy Global Group
PP4I	Private Partnerships for Impact
SG	Science Groups

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CGIAR's Engagement Framework for Partnerships and Advocacy builds on the recommendations of the CGIAR System Council that for greater impact towards the transformation of food, land, and water systems in a climate crisis, a consistent approach to partnerships and advocacy is required. While CGIAR has always relied on engagement with an extensive and diverse network of partners around the world to deliver solutions that benefit millions of people, the One CGIAR reform has highlighted the need for collaboration to become more systemic to better capture strategic opportunities and synergies across the organization.

To this end, the Engagement Framework was developed following extensive consultations with stakeholders and staff. It sets out guiding principles and transformative approaches including capacity sharing for development, private sector cooperation, and advocacy, that create new and transformational opportunities for CGIAR and its partners to co-develop research and share and scale knowledge, innovations, and technologies toward greater impact. It lays out an indicative partner typology and segmentation structure, stewardship mechanisms, and the overarching support systems and services that guide and enable CGIAR to deliver effective and meaningful partnerships and purposeful advocacy.

It is intended as a high-level framework that will be operationalized through policies, procedures and guidelines. These will include the distribution of roles and responsibilities across the organization, as well as how engagement and its impact will be delivered, monitored, and evaluated (see the Annex for more detail on operationalizing the Framework).

1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

1.1 Partnerships and Advocacy for Sustainable Development Outcomes

Today the world faces unprecedented and interconnected global challenges including food and nutritional security, poverty alleviation, gender equality, and social inclusion, natural resource degradation, biodiversity loss, and the climate emergency. It is clear that addressing these challenges requires a unified global effort between national governments, academic institutions, global policy bodies, private companies, and civil society, which must be underpinned by effective partnerships and purposeful advocacy.

To align with this unified global effort, CGIAR as part of its most [ambitious reform](#) in its 50-year history, and in consultation with its stakeholders, has fully integrated partnerships and advocacy into its mission to deliver science and innovation that advances the transformation of food, land and water systems in a climate crisis.

Effective partnerships create opportunities to co-create solutions, leverage synergies, share assets and resources, and create spaces for new and diverse voices to emerge and exchange knowledge. Indeed, partnerships built on trust, shared visions, and common goals are so vital to achieving planetary and human well-being that they are the foundations of, and integrated into, the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (hereinafter Agenda 2030).

Purposeful advocacy creates the enabling conditions for knowledge and evidence to inform and influence impactful policy, investments, and practices. It also opens spaces for dialogue and innovation. Advocacy yields true impact when it reflects the needs of local people, or those who are affected directly by issues, and elevates their voice; when it addresses the underlying causes of problems and not superficial symptoms; when it ensures project-level success is supported by higher-level policy or investment decisions; and when it results in real change, beyond awareness and interest.

1.2 Purpose of the Engagement Framework

The Engagement Framework for Partnerships and Advocacy (hereinafter the Engagement Framework) enables CGIAR, along with its portfolio of initiatives, to harness the power of its many and varied partnerships across its geographies and beyond. CGIAR currently has operations spanning more than 70 countries, primarily in the Global South, and 2,000+ partners around the world¹.

It supports CGIAR and its partners to broaden their base of resources, expertise, and experience to co-create, deliver and scale research, innovations, and technologies toward greater impact. To this end, it pays special attention to approaches, support systems, and services required for engagement. These include three fundamental and transformative approaches for effective engagement, namely capacity sharing for development, advocacy engagement, and private sector cooperation.

¹ As reported in the 2020 Annual Performance Report. <https://www.cgiar.org/food-security-impact/results-dashboard/>

Policies, procedures and guidelines will detail how the Engagement Framework will be operationalized. This will require a whole-of-organization approach, with a clear distribution of roles and responsibilities that draws capacities from Science, Regions and Support Functions (see the Annex for more detail on operationalizing the Framework).

1.3 Building the Engagement Framework

Delivering on CGIAR’s mission requires a fully integrated approach to engaging with partners. CGIAR’s partners expect this. In setting out the ambition of One CGIAR², the CGIAR System Council envisioned the Partnership and Advocacy function acting as “...the *guardian of the CGIAR engagement model to support staff*” ensuring a consistent approach to partnerships that captures “*strategic opportunities and synergies across the organization*”³.

1.3.1 Consultation and Collaboration

The development of this Engagement Framework follows significant consultation with CGIAR stakeholders. In 2018, the CGIAR Systems Reference Group, established by the CGIAR Systems Council, recommended that for greater impact towards the transformation of food, land, and water in a climate crisis, a consistent approach to partnerships and advocacy is required. Following these recommendations, the CGIAR Transition Advisory Group on Country and Regional Engagement—a multi-stakeholder group comprising internal and external experts—developed proposals for the conditions and means for effective engagement⁴.

Building upon the aforementioned recommendations and proposals, the Partnerships and Advocacy Transition Task Team, established to guide the operationalization of this new CGIAR function, undertook an assessment of partnership and advocacy practices. This included a desk review of publicly available partnership evaluations at CGIAR, accompanied by consultation with stakeholders and a series of surveys and in-depth interviews with 46 specialists and senior staff working on partnerships and advocacy.

This collaborative and consultative effort—incorporating further feedback in subsequent consultation processes with internal and external stakeholders⁵—confirmed the need for a more systemic and systematic approach to engagement, that sets out a clear value proposition, scope, guiding principles, approaches, services, processes, and robust monitoring, evaluation, and learning systems⁶.

² One CGIAR refers to the process to transform CGIAR carried out from 2020-2022.

³ [One CGIAR: A bold set of recommendations to the System Council as endorsed by the CGIAR System Council’s 9th meeting on 13 November 2019 \(Decision reference: SC/M9/DP3\)](https://storage.googleapis.com/cgiarorg/2019/11/SC9-02_SRG-Recommendations-OneCGIAR.pdf). https://storage.googleapis.com/cgiarorg/2019/11/SC9-02_SRG-Recommendations-OneCGIAR.pdf

⁴ CGIAR Transition Advisory Group 5, 2020. TAG5-Country and regional engagement: Presentation of process, outcomes, and ideas. Submitted to the CGIAR Executive Management Team in September 2020. CGIAR: unpublished.

⁵ Draft 0 of this document was shared with senior leadership and specialists across a range of functions, as well as with 20 senior experts in advocacy and partnerships from across the world. Much of their feedback has been incorporated into this version of the Framework.

⁶These findings are corroborated by two recent independent reports: the [2019 Mopan CGIAR Performance Assessment](#) and the [2017 Independent Evaluation Arrangement Evaluation of Partnerships in CGIAR](#) which also highlight the need to inform policy and investment decisions at national, regional and international levels, and for a systematic focus on private partnerships and capacity sharing.

1.4 The Enabling Environment

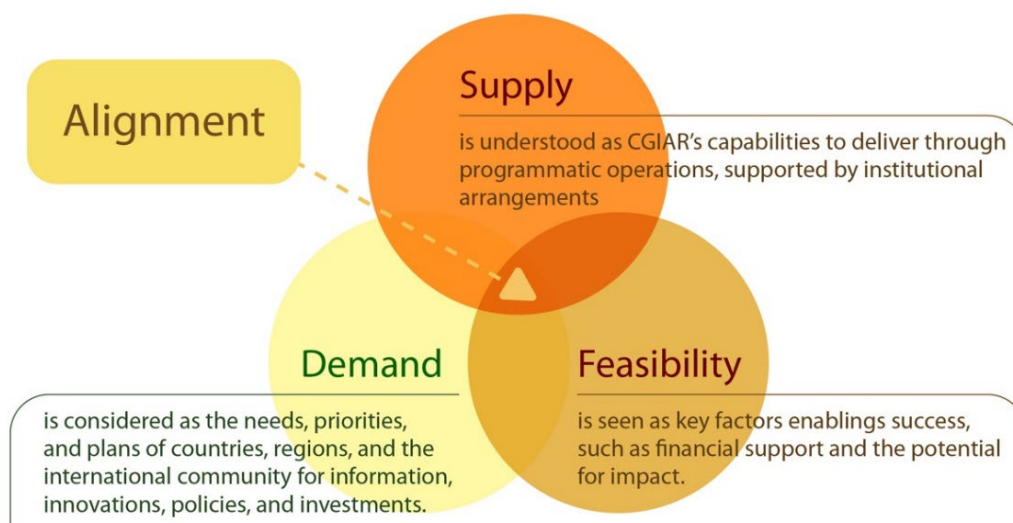
1.4.1 Conditions of Engagement

The operationalization of effective institutional engagement requires the creation of an **enabling environment** throughout CGIAR, at local, regional and global levels.

These conditions⁷ include:

- **Institutionalization:** a strong mandate and clear objectives for partnerships and advocacy
- **Resources:** adequate financial means and human capacity
- **Co-design:** support of activities, processes, and plans with a range of stakeholders
- **Collaboration:** opportunities for multi-dimensional engagement in support of agendas and plans for research, delivery, and engagement
- **Contribution:** work towards a continuous cycle of impact
- **Alignment:** Based on careful stakeholder consultation, effective institutional engagement happens in the space where demand, supply, and feasibility align (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Alignment for effective engagement



These conditions serve as the basis for systematic partnerships and advocacy at the global level and have been integrated across CGIAR. However, by themselves, they are insufficient without 'means of engagement'.

⁷ CGIAR Transition Advisory Group 5, 2020. TAG5-Country and regional engagement: Presentation of process, outcomes, and ideas. Submitted to the CGIAR Executive Management Team in September 2020. CGIAR: unpublished.

enhance their and CGIAR's staff's technical, analytical, and dissemination skills, as well as open up new spaces for collaboration.

Innovation and MELIA Lab: This learning and innovation Community of Practice (CoP) is facilitated by PAGG and constituted by members of Science Groups, MELIA experts, Regions, GE&I, and partners. Its focus is to co-create, explore, prototype, pilot, and assess the benefits, risks, and potential and real outcomes/impacts of new partnerships models, or variants of existing models, that amplify CGIAR and its partners' reach and impact. Best practices are garnered from formal partnership evaluations conducted by CGIAR impact assessment experts (based on KPIs defined with the CoP) and recommendations shared broadly across CGIAR.

Partnerships and Advocacy Lifecycle Hubs: a collective support service facilitated by the PAGG, and involving CGIAR Global and Regional Groups (e.g. Business Operation & Finance, People & Culture, Legal Services, Research Coordination & Performance, and Innovative Finance and Resource Mobilization), established to support CGIAR staff and partners to navigate through the Partnerships and Advocacy Lifecycles. Strategic guidance and operational support for the origination, implementation, and closure or renewal of partnerships, and purposeful advocacy, will be provided to partners and CGIAR units to maximize the benefits of partnerships, mitigate risks, and lower transaction costs.

6. IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The implementation of the Engagement Framework will involve establishing structures for its operationalization. Detailed guidelines and policies will determine the precise scope of these structures, clearly delineating the responsibilities involved and how they relate to other functions of CGIAR. The guidelines and policies will also determine the related processes, services, and approaches, for the execution of the Engagement Framework across the organization.

Specific attention will be paid to how engagement, including this framework, will be delivered, monitored, and evaluated, and how its impact will be assessed. Precise results-based indicators for global, regional, country, and initiative-level partnership and advocacy strategies and plans will be defined in subsequent operational guidelines, including for this Framework²³. This work will be led by the CGIAR Research Coordination & Performance Department and will ensure alignment to CGIAR Impact Pathways and theories of change and guide the mix of tools, e.g. internal and external evaluations, performance management, etc., employed to guarantee the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of this work²⁴.

²³ This process, as well as its implementation, will be undertaken in close collaboration with partners and other stakeholders.

²⁴ United Nations Peace and Development Sub-Fund. 2020. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund. Evaluation Framework. Annex 2. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Accessed on 14 January 2022.

7. ANNEX

7.1 The Engagement Framework across the CGIAR Organizational Structure

The Engagement Framework for Partnerships and Advocacy enables CGIAR, along with its portfolio of initiatives, to harness the power of its many and varied partnerships across its geographies and beyond. It supports CGIAR and its partners to broaden their base of resources, expertise, and experience to co-create, deliver and scale research, innovations, and technologies toward greater impact. To this end, it pays special attention to approaches, support systems, and services required for engagement.

Importantly, the Engagement Framework involves all actors from across whole organization as contributors (C) and/or beneficiaries (B). Below is an indicative table that outlines the principal type of interaction of all parts of the System with the framework. Although partners play a fundamental role in the operationalization of the Engagement Framework, their role is not reflected explicitly here.

Table 4. Staff involvement in the operationalization of the Engagement Framework

		Guiding Principles	Approaches	Support Systems	Services
Governance	System Council	C & B	C	---	---
	System Board	C & B	C	---	---
Executive Management Team		C & B	C & B	C & B	C & B
Institutional Systems & Strategy	All Global Groups	C & B	C & B	C	C
Research Delivery & Impact	Global Science Groups	C & B	C & B	B	B
	Impact Platforms	C & B	C	B	C & B
Global Engagement & Innovation	Regions	C & B	C & B	B	C & B
	Innovative Finance & Resource Mobilization	C & B	B	C & B	B
	Communications & Outreach	C & B	B	C & B	C & B
	Partnerships & Advocacy	C & B	C	C	C