N. Palmer/CIAT

CGIAR | Advisory Services

Excellence in Breeding Platform Evaluation: Drop-in

**Strategic Impact Monitoring & Evaluation Committee
CGIAR Advisory Service Shared Secretariat
Representative of CGIAR Management**

Drop-in Sessions for System Council members, with System Board members invited

- Monday 18 July – 10:00-11:00 DC time (16:00-17:00 Paris time)
- Tuesday 19 July – 03:00-04:00 DC time (09:00-10:00 Paris time)

Agenda

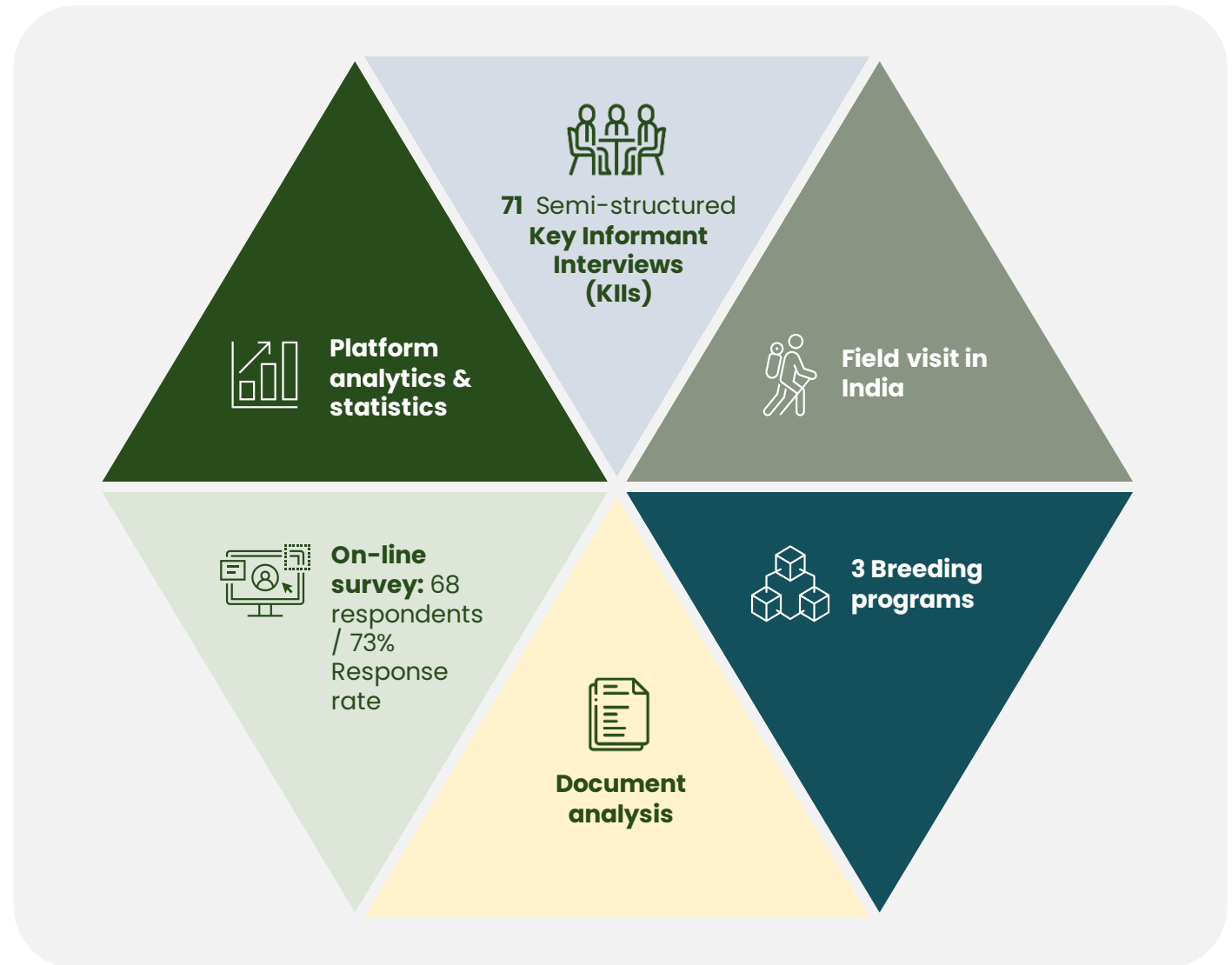|	
o **Introductory remarks**	Alan Tollervey, SIMEC Chair (interim), FCDO
o **Framing**	Allison Grove Smith, Director, Shared Secretariat, CGIAR Advisory Services
o **Evaluation & Validation**	Svetlana Negroustoueva, Lead, Evaluation Function, Shared Secretariat, CGIAR Advisory Services David Coombs, co-Lead, EiB Platform Evaluation Validation Team (Day 1 only)
o **Management Response**	Sonja Vermeulen, Global Science Director, Genetic Innovation, a.i.
o **Discussion**	Moderated by Director, Shared Secretariat Inviting all System Council and System Board participation

CGIAR Excellence in Breeding Platform
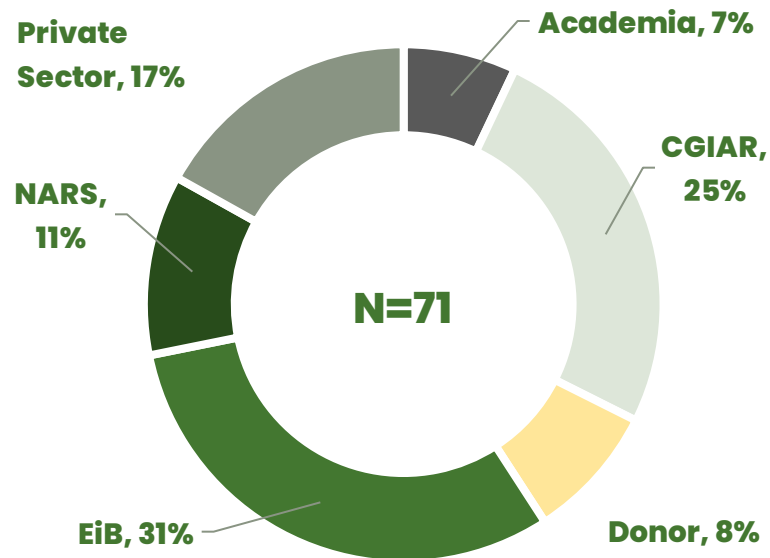## Evaluation Objectives (per endorsed TOR)

1. Assess the **relevance and coherence** of the Platform **design, theory of change (ToC)** and the **Platform's role** in Tools and services that create synergies and accelerate genetic gains of breeding programs targeting the developing world in support of its mission.

2. Assess the **effectiveness, efficiency** of EiB Platform design and implementation, and its contribution towards CGIAR objectives.

3. Identify the **supporting factors and constraints** behind achievements of the EiB Platform and each of its modules in light of the results achieved: **governance and management, MEL, and other related implementation processes.**

4. Provide **recommendations** relevant **to the future development and implementation** aligned with priorities of Action Area 3 on Genetic Innovation and Genebanks and related ways of working and, if applicable, other system-wide recommendations.

5. Assess **sustainability** of the EiB platform to One CGIAR and future strategic direction and positioning in the breeding sector.

EiB Platform Evaluation:

Overall Approach
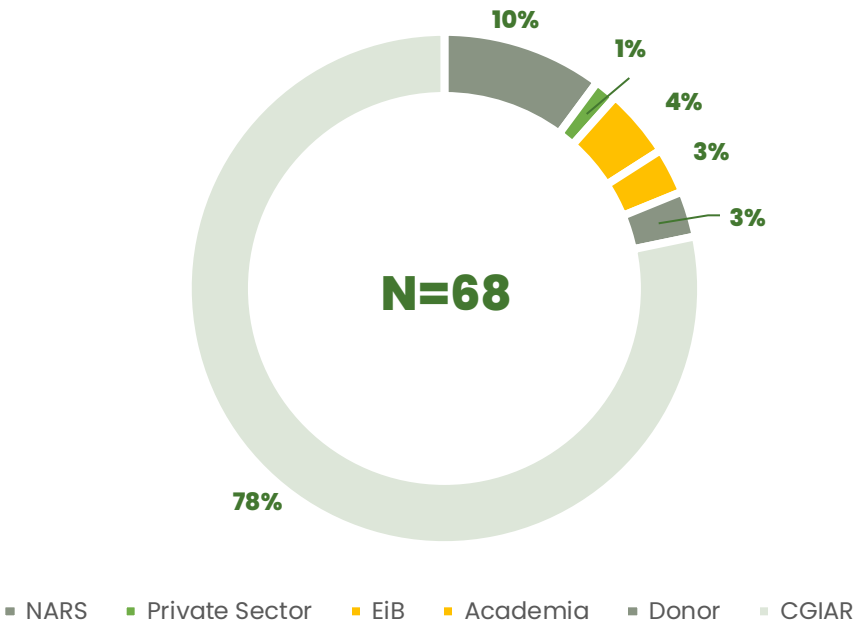Mixed Methods
Design

Platform analytics & statistics

71 Semi-structured **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)**

Field visit in India

On-line survey: 68 respondents / 73% Response rate

Document analysis

3 Breeding programs

EiB Evaluation: Primary data collection

All: Interviews by Categories

- Private Sector, 17%
- Academia, 7%
- CGIAR, 25%
- NARS, 11%
- N=71
- EiB, 31%
- Donor, 8%

Online Survey: Category

- 10%
- 1%
- 4%
- 3%
- 3%
- N=68
- 78%

Legend: NARS | Private Sector | EiB | Academia | Donor | CGIAR

Mitigation and Limitations

Mitigation:

Extensive peer-reviews and CAS Quality Assurance

Validation exercise

Extended deadline as agreed with SIMEC

The purpose and nature of the performance evaluation misunderstood by the evaluand.

Partial and incomplete nature of the information.

Tight deadlines due to need for timely evidence. Limited engagement from evaluand due to the timing of the evaluation/initiatives.

Grouped interview notes from the initial evaluation.

Validation limited to areas of contention to first draft.

Key Findings: **Evaluation Criteria**

Sustainability	○ EiB work strongly reflected in new Initiatives under the **Genetic Innovation** Area: "Market Intelligence"- Module 1, "Accelerated Breeding - Module 2; & "Enabling Tools, Technologies, and Shared Services" - Modules 3, 4, and 5.
	○ A shift in reporting in One CGIAR is not likely to make non-technical challenges in bringing about change disappear

Relevance	○ Solid rationale aligned with Centers' needs - to modernize/improve Breeding Programs
	○ Internal and external EiB stakeholders lacked a common understanding of the Platform objectives
	○ The EiB Platform's alignment with end users reflects shift in plant breeding from a research-driven endeavor to a demand-driven one
	○ The early IP did not generate adequate collaborative engagement, were not sufficiently holistic, and did not resolve limiting factors- change at the Centers

Coherence	○ Coherence with several other CG entities: selected CRPs the Gender and Breeding Initiative (GBI)
	○ The relationship with the private sector exemplified both cooperation and complementarity, however without clarity on comparative advantage of CGIAR
	○ Weak interaction among modules

Key Findings: **Evaluation Criteria**

| **Efficiency** | o The technical expertise and motivation - one of the best aspects, however limited peoples skills |
| | o Funding mechanisms and practices: frustrating to EiB and donors i.e. grant awarding process. |

Effectiveness	o EiB contributed to modernizing some breeding programs, though progress was patchy and limited, with the different modules delivering at different speeds
	o Particularly effective - recent work by the NARES outreach team
	o Lack of robust MEL system to track results
	o Limited evidence of EiB leadership accountability to governance (i.e. Platform Steering Committee)

Lessons Learned: EiB Platform implementation

Clarify lines of **responsibility & accountability**

Tailor **guides and tools** to **user needs**

Value **face-to-face interactions**

Investments require **high-quality, detailed product profiles**

Engage NARES early to reduce sense of patronization

People skills and engagement processes lead to changed mindsets

Combining **breeding operation assessments** with improvement benefits recipient programs

The overall cost of setting up and maintaining several **data management systems** by CGIAR (and others) is high

Module 2 suffered from insufficient e**nd-to-end** linkages in **product development chain**.

Module 4 showed how **good leadership** results in good delivery.

Genotyping services urgently needed, but single service hampers access

Component study:
Governance, the use of people as a valuable resource & change management
(Annex 4)

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Organizational development (OD)

- People
- Technology & operations
- Strategy & structure

Change management

All approaches to prepare, support, and help individuals, teams, and organizations to bring about organizational change

Methodology:

- Online Survey designed by OD expert *(68 respondents)- Annex 7*
- Key Informant Interviews *(23)*
- Document review *(incl BP assessments + Improvement Plans)*

Conclusion:

Whilst scientific expertise is valuable, **effective people skills are equally critical** to drive the performance of the organization, and implement and sustain change (L&D program addressing interpersonal skills for situational leadership, change and performance management)

Component study: selected recommendations (annex 4)

Process/approach

- Develop best-practice OD/CM approach for One CGIAR purposes (for project / initiative level)

- Include all aspects driving operations, not only science (consider the **Mckinsey 7-S model, Balanced Score Card**)

- Separate Program Management team; specialists in change and program management (focusing on delivery of larger scale projects, supporting those working on smaller projects) (Sub-rec 2b)
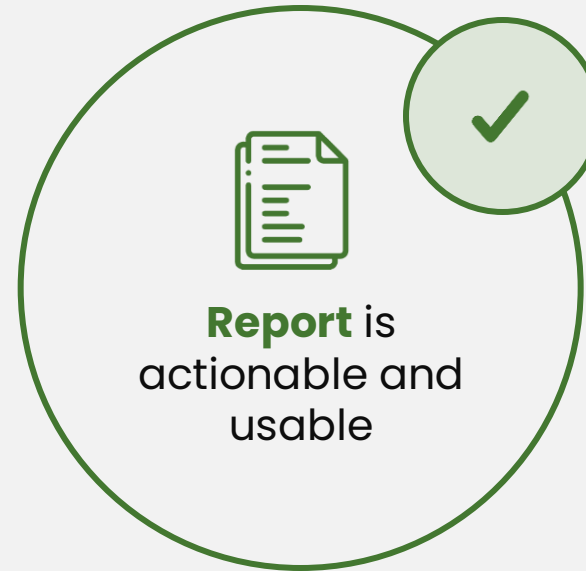
People

- Ensure that **SMART targets and interlocking objectives** with deliverables (also non-scientific aspects), are in place for each team and individual (based on One CG results frameworks and associated behavioural competency frameworks) (Sub-rec 3c)

- **Learning & Dev't plans** for key skills (e.g. situational leadership / intervention, feedback and challenging conversations, influencing, people management) (Sub-rec 1c)

Sustainability

- The recommendations **equally applicable** to EiB direct successor(s) and wider CGIAR.

- **Hand-over meeting and knowledge management:** between evaluators, CAS/Evaluation and One CGIAR to effectively share insights, ideas and discuss best ways forward.

Evaluation and Validation Exercise: **Results**

Report is actionable and usable

Enriched **recommendations**: adapted to today's needs, technical and about science

7 Recommendations Fully Accepted

2 Recommendations Partially Accepted

No Recommendation Rejected

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Management Response to Recommendations

The Management Response (MR) was prepared through a 3-week structured participatory exercise with relevant leadership and staff across CGIAR's Divisions and Centers, under the overall leadership of the Global Director for Genetic Innovation and applying the following principles:

1. We fully accept the validity of the Evaluation and we thank the Advisory Services and the Evaluation teams for their work.

2. CGIAR is a learning organization and we respond in a spirit of openness, engagement, self-reflection, and respect for each other.

3. We focus on the recommendations and our shared future, rather than spending time re-examining or querying the findings.

4. We are producing a collective MR, as it's not only specific Initiatives or teams that need to carry forward the actions and changes – it is all of us in C[GI]AR.

5. We keep this process fully internal to CGIAR until we co-deliver the MR alongside the Evaluation to the System Board & Council.

6. We are agile, not heavy handed, and deliver the MR in under a month.

7. We are committed to delivering the MR going forward – and our Portfolio Performance Unit will keep track of how we are doing.

Key Findings: **Evaluation Criteria**

MR	Recommendation
Fully Accepted	**1. At the system level, One CGIAR must address issues of "end-to-end" thinking and ensure that the career development of all staff is well managed.** *(3 sub-recommendations)*
Partially Accepted	**2. One CGIAR units must set and meet high standards of governance and project management, with clear roles, responsibilities, decision-making, and accountability systems. This should include their independent steering committees, mechanisms to ensure collaboration and teamwork, deliberate change management, and transparency regarding grant-awarding processes.** *(3 sub-recommendations)*
Fully Accepted	**3. Successful project planning and management depends on clarity of goals and purpose, a comprehensive results framework based on a theory of change, and integrated monitoring, evaluation, with learning (MEL) mechanisms.** *(5 sub-recommendations)*
Fully Accepted	**4. Ensure the new One CGIAR structure encourages and enables strong links between initiatives to ensure that programs and goals reflect all the needs of the pathway from gene discovery to sustainable production systems and food consumption.** *(6 sub-recommendations)*
Fully Accepted	**5. ABI should play a crucial role in further modernizing CGIAR and NARS breeding programs by being the link between upstream disciplines and breeding programs and knowing both in detail.** *(6 sub-recommendations)*

Key Findings: **Evaluation Criteria**

MR	Recommendation
Fully Accepted	**6. One CGIAR should support breeders with information and tools to allow them to determine priorities and traits.** *(5 sub-recommendations)*
Fully Accepted	**7. Highly technical facilities with resources and skilled staff are required for many modern breeding operations and services.** *(4 sub-recommendations)*
Fully Accepted	**8. Seed Equal and ABI initiatives should continue to build long-term relationships with NARS and other partners** *(3 sub-recommendations)*
Partially Accepted	**9. Commit to developing informatics systems for a diverse range of breeding programs, even though the effort is complex, expensive, and long-term.** *(5 sub-recommendations)*

Thank you

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