

# **High-level Advisory Panel Report to CGIAR System Board**

On Improving One CGIAR's Strategic Engagement with Partners

January 11, 2023



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**Abbreviations**

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| AARINENA | Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East & North Africa |
| ABC      | Alliance Bioversity International and CIAT  |
| AfDB     | African Development Bank  |
| AGRA     | Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa   |
| APAARI   | Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions                    |
| AUC      | African Union Commission  |
| CACAARI  | Central Asia and the Caucasus Association of Agricultural Research Institutions   |
| CIAT     | International Center for Tropical Agriculture                                     |
| CRPs     | CGIAR Research Programs   |
| FAO      | Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations                          |
| FARA     | Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa   |
| FORAGRO  | Forum of the Americas for Agricultural Research and Technological Development     |
| GCARD    | Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development                        |
| GFAR     | Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation                              |
| HLAP     | High-level Advisory Panel   |
| ICAR     | Indian Council of Agricultural Research   |
| IEA      | Independent Evaluation Arrangement  |
| IPR      | Intellectual Property Rights  |
| ISPC     | Independent Science and Partnership Council                                       |
| MSP      | Multi-stakeholder platform  |
| NARES    | National Agricultural Research and Extension Systems                              |
| NARIs    | National Agricultural Research Institutes   |
| NARIS    | National Agricultural Research and Innovation System                              |
| NARS     | National Agricultural Research Systems  |
| NGO      | Nongovernmental Organization  |
| PPP      | Public–Private Partnership  |
| R&D      | Research and Development  |
| SLO      | System Level Outcome  |

|     |                                  |
|-----|----------------------------------|
| SRF | Strategy and Results Framework   |
| ToR | Terms of Reference               |
| WUR | Wageningen University & Research |



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## **Executive Summary**

CGIAR has had a strong record of returns on investments and substantial impacts on productivity growth since its formation in 1971. However, the global architecture for agricultural research and development (R&D) has changed substantially since that time. CGIAR's share of global agricultural R&D expenditures has diminished substantially, and emerging countries' national agricultural research systems (NARS), such as those of China, India, Brazil, and South Africa, have grown relative to CGIAR and now have substantial R&D programs of their own. The private sector has also increased its role. The previous North–South and donor/grantee dichotomies have become less relevant for many issues on the global agricultural R&D agenda. These changes have strategic implications and need to be recognized and responded to accordingly.

Furthermore, given the very clear and significant diversity among the regions, countries, institutions, and stakeholders, with which CGIAR engages, there cannot be a “one-size-fits-all approach” to that engagement. A clear understanding of this diversity is a critical underpinning for CGIAR's work, both strategically and operationally.

Successive reforms of CGIAR over the last several decades have attempted to sustain its record of impacts. The latest One CGIAR transition is another reformulation of CGIAR's partnerships, knowledge, assets, and global presence—aiming for greater integration and impact in the face of interconnected food, land, water, and climate crises. Conscious of the need for CGIAR to improve the effectiveness of its engagement with partners in the Global South and to enhance the voice and participation of the Global South in the course of CGIAR's latest reforms, the CGIAR System Board appointed an independent High-level Advisory Panel (HLAP) to guide CGIAR in improving its strategic engagement with partners during its transition to One CGIAR. The Panel has been tasked to “advise on fostering ownership of reforms and mechanisms for joint learning and engagement...” with partners across the regions in which CGIAR works.

Although the HLAP's terms of reference (ToR) directed the Panel to focus on engagement and partnership practices, the HLAP noted that the broader transformation to One CGIAR—its objectives, and how CGIAR has pursued them—all have had, and will have, impacts on engagement and partnerships, ultimately impacting the quality of science and innovation that the System is able to deliver. Therefore, the HLAP concluded that partnerships cannot be isolated from the rest of CGIAR's “business” and how it is being transformed, thus making a strong case for engagement to be properly embedded in the One CGIAR process.

CGIAR has undertaken numerous evaluations, assessments, and processes over the years to examine and identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in a number of thematic areas, including a specific evaluation on partnerships in 2017. However, there is insufficient evidence that the information generated, or the recommendations provided, have been systematically taken up over time, their implementation monitored, or lessons learned. This evidence points to a larger issue of the learning and accountability of CGIAR. The HLAP notes that some of the recommendations made in the 2017 evaluation continue to be pertinent, and yet, have not been acted upon. (See Annex IV for the recommendations from the 2017 Partnerships Evaluation.)

CGIAR, and notably, the System Board in its leadership role, should ensure that the recommendations in this report are seriously considered, with actions taken in a timely manner and implementation monitored accordingly. Without a specific, appropriate position/unit tasked with mapping out an action plan and timetable, and perhaps to further develop actionable mechanisms, that can provide a roadmap and a way to track progress, these recommendations (and others also pointed out by the HLAP from previous assessments) will likely “fall between the cracks.” A partnership innovation and evaluation framework could be a useful bridge between the overarching conceptual nature of the Engagement

Framework and a more operational nature of the suggested Partnership Strategy, with a theory of change being the starting point to provide direction.

During its deliberations, the HLAP noted that *“the attempt to reform CGIAR in the mid-90s was instrumental in the birth of GFAR [Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation]—with the original idea of bringing stakeholders from the Global South and especially from the National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) to complement the planning and implementation of the research agenda of CGIAR.”*<sup>1</sup> GFAR’s networks have helped to inform the decisions of CGIAR from the perspectives of a wide range of partners, including by capturing and consolidating NARS’ inputs, toward transforming global agriculture and food systems. Despite a “lull” in the active engagement between GFAR and CGIAR in recent years (with each undergoing its own challenges and transformations), GFAR and, in particular, the Regional Fora offer a potentially useful role in supporting CGIAR in its engagement with various partners by serving as valuable partnership platforms, and could provide space for multi-actor dialogues for seeking congruent solutions up to the “last mile” of engagement. These relationships should be revisited, as an essential part of the One CGIAR transformation, recognizing its comparative advantage and embarking on partnerships also aimed at strengthening its engagement with the Global South.

Three Global Conferences on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD) were organized by GFAR in association with the previous reform of the CGIAR.<sup>2</sup> The initial promise of the GCARD process to transform the global architecture of agricultural research did not materialize as envisioned.<sup>3</sup> The reasons why the promise did not materialize are worth pursuing by the CGIAR. They are consistent with our critique on insufficient implementation and follow-up of previous decisions and evaluation recommendations.

The recommendations here have been formulated from a collective process of the HLAP that included analyzing and synthesizing data and information collected via discussions among HLAP members, a stakeholder survey, in-depth interviews, and review of key documents, including the *CGIAR Engagement Framework for Partnerships & Advocacy – Toward Greater Impact*. The recommendations were refined based on a session with the System Board during their retreat on December 9, 2022, in which the HLAP presented its preliminary recommendations and had an in-depth discussion with the Board. A number of questions and ideas emerged from the interaction with the Board, which were taken into account in finalizing the recommendations. Where some suggestions were considered outside the current remit of the HLAP to fulfill, advice has been provided on how CGIAR could take these forward.

The HLAP members will continue to champion and support the key principles and opportunities for active partnership and engagement of CGIAR with stakeholders through their various networks.

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<sup>1</sup> The source is a report developed by GFAR (not yet published online), entitled “CGIAR & GFAR – Past, Present and Future,” Hildegard Lingnau, Alessandro Meschinelli, and Charles Plummer, 2022.

<sup>2</sup> GCARD (2010). *Transforming Agricultural Research for Development*. Report of the Global Author Team: U. Lele, J. Pretty, E. Terry, E. Trigo, M. Klousia, and S. Goswami. Global Forum on International Agricultural Research (GFAR). (<https://www.gfar.net/news/transforming-agricultural-research-development-report-gcard-2010-global-author-team>)

<sup>3</sup> GFAR (2011). *The GCARD Roadmap: Transforming Agricultural Research for Development (AR4D) Systems for Global Impact*. Global Forum on International Agricultural Research (GFAR). (<https://www.gfar.net/documents/gcard-road-map-transforming-agricultural-research-development-ar4d-systems-global-impact>)

## Recommendations

### **Section A: Top THREE priority recommendations with associated actions**

- 1. CGIAR needs to better orient the new One CGIAR model and, in particular, the institutional arrangements being put into place toward improved engagement and partnership with key stakeholders.**

Effective engagement with partners using a new modality is crucial to the success of One CGIAR, and requires commitment from CGIAR and its donors. It calls for rethinking about how CGIAR engages partners at all levels, in a way that is truly embedded into the culture, institutional architecture, roles, responsibilities, and operations of One CGIAR. The One CGIAR transformation needs to provide an opportunity for the Global South to be at CGIAR's "tables" and contribute to and participate in a structured way.

However, improving partnerships and engagement requires more than institutional and operational adjustments. One CGIAR needs a new and forward-looking partnership strategy, which considers the changing global science and innovation landscape, as well as the practice and lessons learned from past decades of CGIAR work. Based on this new partnership strategy, new institutional and operational arrangements should be developed, taking care not to increase levels of administration and bureaucracy, and importantly, a culture of engagement needs to be cultivated.

As One CGIAR is planned to be a more integrated model, careful consideration needs to be given to how this integration can efficiently work in practice and become tightly woven into the fabric of how the whole system operates. A vital part will be the bridging of science and partnerships to ensure that these work in an integrated and balanced way to achieve the goals. The right entry points need to be established at various levels and segments of partnerships. At an operational level, the question of how the global units will be coordinated with each other (for example, science with partnerships) needs to be addressed, including consideration of factors, such as size, resourcing, and decision-making processes, in relation to regional/country offices and the existing Centers, and taking into account outreach and scaling out of CGIAR impact.

CGIAR is not the only, or primary, actor in today's agricultural innovation systems. Therefore, the One CGIAR transformation should strengthen existing partnerships, or create new partnership platforms, as needed, and align them with its operational arrangements to better support a partnership approach.

The HLAP, therefore, recommends the following actions:

- 1.1 CGIAR should *adopt the Engagement Framework as a central driver for improved engagement and partnership as part of its core business*, not as an add-on or parallel track. CGIAR should *fully operationalize* the Engagement Framework by developing the appropriate policies, guidelines, procedures, partnership principles,<sup>4</sup> institutional**

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<sup>4</sup> See Section B of recommendations for a complementary proposed action around strengthening partnership principles through harmonizing with others. The HLAP, particularly, takes note of the GFAR Partnership Principles: <https://www.gfar.net/documents/gfar-partnership-principles> and those included in the recently signed Abidjan II Communiqué (Annex IX), "The High-Level Consultative Forum on Strengthening Africa's Agricultural Research and

arrangements, roles/responsibilities, monitoring, evaluation, and learning activities to support its effective, sustainable, and impactful implementation. The Engagement Framework should be used to cultivate a strong culture of engagement with practical actions included to raise awareness, instill ownership, and promote responsibility across all parts of the System. (See section on Review of CGIAR's Engagement Framework)

- 1.2 CGIAR should *prepare a new partnership strategy* with proactive, transparent, and effective consultation and dialogue with partners and stakeholders established as critical conditions. This partnership strategy should be strongly linked to the Engagement Framework, both conceptually and operationally, using an innovative tracking mechanism to ensure continuous alignment and progress.
- 1.3 CGIAR should *define its comparative advantage within the new landscape*, recognizing its own transformation and the dynamic nature of other actors within the sector; agree on appropriate engagement modalities with its diverse partners; and communicate the unique space it now occupies in the international agricultural R&D sector. CGIAR should strengthen the theory of change and impact pathways, which it has already articulated through the Engagement Framework, to indicate even more clearly, and in a more compelling way, how CGIAR will engage differently and more effectively with partners in this new era and landscape.
- 1.4 CGIAR should *establish or strengthen existing, appropriately integrated institutional mechanisms to effectively coordinate the activities related to One CGIAR's partnerships and engagement*, as part of the agricultural research and innovation systems where it operates. Any mechanism used or developed needs to have clearly agreed upon roles that are linked to the rest of the System and to the Centers; it should be adequately resourced financially and with respect to capacity; it should be empowered to foster necessary relationships, facilitate communication and visibility, and ensure that the engagement is productive; and it needs to be widely communicated to partners. The HLAP sees good scope for this to be operationalized at a regional level as partnership and engagement hubs but cautions against creating unnecessary and costly administrative layers, which require additional management and distract from the key mandate activities. However, in countries in which several CGIAR Centers are active, and in which important initiatives are being implemented with an increased focus on delivery, some form of country-level coordination may be needed. Establishing such a mechanism should be decided in close coordination with the countries' governments.
- 1.5 CGIAR should *develop and define the CGIAR matrix management structure further to clearly show the most effective roles and responsibilities, and how these are linked, for supporting effective partnership and engagement activities* across Science Groups, Action Areas, Initiatives, Centers, and Regions and Partnerships groups. The identified roles and responsibilities should be matched with appropriate budgets, decision-making authority, and intra-institutional connections, particularly the bridge between science and partnership roles, to help facilitate and streamline a strong partnership approach.

1.6 Accounting for regional specificities, CGIAR should *map out a more robust and innovative partner typology (improving on what is found in the Engagement Framework) onto the new CGIAR institutional arrangements and its programmatic life cycle. The mapping needs to identify clearly and transparently the major partners in contrast to additional collaborators of CGIAR. The mapping also needs to include new partnerships to be sought; and the varying roles, rights, and duties of different stakeholders, as they engage and partner with CGIAR, as mutual beneficiaries. This typology should also draw on a taxonomy of the various countries and regions that CGIAR interacts with, or should interact with, to further help provide better definition of the nature of that engagement.*

**2. Recognizing that engagement with stakeholders from the onset of and continuing throughout programs is key to a collaborative and impactful way of doing business, CGIAR should develop and implement a visible process for inclusive agenda-setting, co-design, and co-ownership of all aspects of One CGIAR's programmatic efforts.**

CGIAR's research programs, including the resource mobilization efforts for these, should be co-created with strong stakeholder involvement to ensure co-ownership, which will both strengthen partnerships as well as their impact. It is essential to bring partners to the table at the outset on agenda-setting, project design, and creation, and to embed them into all phases of research and delivery. The weak link and capacity have often been the last mile—the delivery and the translation of research results into the innovation cycle. Therefore, projects that are to be implemented in the Global South should be designed and implemented to respond to the needs of the countries in the Global South, complementing their own development plans and institutions, and any regional/subregional priorities with which they are aligned, especially where CGIAR experience can strengthen the capacities at the last mile.

The involvement of stakeholders, particularly those from the Global South, is needed in project development to ensure co-ownership of the research portfolio, enhance knowledge sharing, and enable eventual capacity strengthening and delivery. CGIAR needs to identify and implement ways to strengthen engagement of stakeholders from the Global South at multiple levels and, as appropriate, multiple types of research collaboration—from global to local—through representation and participation in various CGIAR bodies and processes. There is a need to elevate Global South ownership of the overall agenda and priority-setting as a strategic goal.

To achieve this crucial role of engagement in programmatic activities of One CGIAR, institutional arrangements need to support strong bridging between science and partnership roles. A roadmap for bridging science and partnership needs to come in the programmatic life cycle, in which engagement starts at the onset of priority-setting and runs through the whole gamut of programmatic activities of co-design and implementation to delivery.

The HLAP, therefore, recommends the following actions:

2.1 CGIAR should *revisit governance arrangements, and the related funding contribution strategies as needed, to better recognize and support inclusion of major Country players in agricultural R&D in appropriate CGIAR strategy-setting and decision-making bodies (for example, the System Council, System Board, etc.). Note, for example, that China, India, Brazil, and South Africa play major and quite significant roles in global science and innovation, and CGIAR would be enriched and strengthened if these countries were recognized and engaged individually as core partners and contributors. Other such major*

countries may be additionally identified. (See Box 1 for current System Council arrangements, for context).

- 2.2 CGIAR should *examine how to strengthen and elevate the participation of key representation of other "Global South stakeholders" as groups in its global bodies (System Council, System Board, etc.)*, through preexisting organizations/networks, such as, but not limited to GFAR, to ensure effective representation without having to create new structures.<sup>5</sup>
- 2.3 CGIAR should *design and establish a systematic, innovative, and regular dialogue and consultation process* that could serve as a "partnership platform" and *engage partners using a consistent methodology for supporting inclusive agenda-setting, planning, implementation, knowledge sharing, and delivery*. In addition to its own efforts, CGIAR should explore appropriate partnerships with those that can help to bring together a range of stakeholders in ways that can achieve these aims, such as but not limited to GFAR and the Regional Fora; and CGIAR should also seek opportunities to participate in partnership platforms of the South, where possible, to deepen dialogue and partnerships.
- 2.4 CGIAR should *elaborate, in a detailed, transparent way, the modalities and opportunities for co-design of future CGIAR Initiatives*, which will be put in place for the next programmatic cycle. This requires specific attention for the Regional Initiatives. The responsibility for designing and implementing the modalities needs to be clearly established across science and engagement/partnership units.
- 2.5 CGIAR should *strengthen collaboration with National Agricultural Research and Innovation Systems (NARIS) in particular geographical areas, to be identified through careful plans for redefining the basis of those collaborations based on countries' needs, own development plans, and capacities* (for example, co-designing, co-leading projects, capacity sharing, providing support, etc.). An ecosystem-based taxonomy of different countries' NARIS in terms of needs, capacity, and other relevant criteria would be a useful tool to support a more strategic and targeted approach.

### **3. Recognizing the vital role of Host Countries, CGIAR should prioritize the establishment and urgent implementation of appropriate engagement modalities with Host Country Governments, as key partners in the One CGIAR transformation.**

Host Countries<sup>6</sup> are critical as key partners of the CGIAR System, due to the vital role they play in providing the enabling environment for CGIAR Centers (for example, Host Country agreements, including freedom to operate, immunities, and privileges provided)—and through them One CGIAR. However, the HLAP discovered that, in the One CGIAR transformation, there was a sense that these voices had been diminished, their contribution was not sufficiently appreciated, and their concerns not taken seriously. Urgent attention should be paid to rectify this situation, to

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<sup>5</sup> Note: GFAR currently participates in the CGIAR System Council as an Active Observer (non-voting role) only: <https://www.cgiar.org/how-we-work/governance/system-council/sc-composition/>

<sup>6</sup> There was no clear definition that the HLAP could work from on "Host Countries," but it was generally accepted to be those countries with which CGIAR entities have formal agreements that allow for its presence and operation. A clear definition may be helpful moving forward.

bring Host Countries to the table, and to see how their concerns can be addressed in the ongoing restructuring and transformation.

The HLAP, therefore, recommends the following actions:

- 3.1 CGIAR should *develop a clear strategy and mechanism for dedicated and direct, regular engagement and partnership with Host Country Governments*, including through periodic (for example, annual) consultations at the ministerial level, making use of any existing modality for high-level policy dialogue and engagement with *decision-makers* (for example, the African Union and its regional/continental initiatives, including the African Union–European Union High Level Policy Dialogue [HLPD] for Science Technology and Innovation; or the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme [CAADP]),<sup>7</sup> or designing its own modality for dialogue and engagement.
- 3.2 CGIAR should *put into place a representation mechanism for Host Countries, as a group, in key CGIAR governance and decision-making bodies* (for example, the System Council, System Board, etc.).
- 3.3 CGIAR should *engage with Host Country Governments to better understand the Country's development goals and plans. CGIAR should seek to align and partner with the Host Country Governments in One CGIAR's programmatic planning and delivery*, including through appropriate regional and subregional mechanisms that are already in place.

## **Section B: Complementary proposed actions**

The HLAP also proposes that, complementary to the priority recommendations previously articulated, CGIAR plan for and implement several actions in the following two areas:

### **1. CGIAR should be more strategic with engagement and partnerships through:**

- Undertaking a reflection and diagnosis of its current and recent collaborations, and making use of past evaluations and assessments, to examine and carefully identify what changes need to occur to strengthen future engagement and partnerships.
- Strengthening and streamlining Partnership Principles for engaging and empowering all stakeholders as a global standard,<sup>8</sup> harmonizing with other partnership principles where possible, and making use of the principles in partnership agreements and contracts.
- Designing clear partnership identification criteria and processes, including a set of partnership selection criteria, which would underpin and drive the engagement of partners from the outset.

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<sup>7</sup> A recent side event of the 18th CAADAP Partnership Platform, attended by an HLAP member, entitled "Forging collaborative engagement between CGIAR and CAADAP," looked at the CAADAP partnership with CGIAR and how to encourage stronger participation of CGIAR in the CAADAP program and strengthen the ability of CGIAR to identify entry points at regional and country levels, since CAADAP is a platform for the Ministers of Agriculture in Africa.

<sup>8</sup> Note, for example, as previously referenced, the Partnership Principles of GFAR and others have developed and would like to establish as a global standard. See, "Selected Criteria for Assessing Quality of Research Partnerships": <https://www.gfar.net/sites/default/files/GFAR%20Partnership%20Principles.pdf>



The criteria should use, but also go beyond, the principles of making partnerships more effective generally, as outlined in the Engagement Framework—to help bring attention to stakeholders that are currently not well represented in CGIAR processes,<sup>9</sup> and to enable the identification of new partners at regional and national levels and support the mapping of how partners can be integrated into CGIAR programs. The criteria, therefore, should define CGIAR’s comparative advantage and provide a clear understanding of what partners can bring to the table through their roles/capacities.

- Reviewing the role of the “private sector” is critical, as a partner for CGIAR, the ways in which it can be beneficial to engage with it, and the modalities to do so—making use of key experts in this area and developing a sub-strategy of the Engagement Framework.

**2. CGIAR should strengthen the operation of engagement and partnerships through:**

- Undertaking comprehensive and holistic communication efforts to increase the visibility and awareness of stakeholders about the objectives, functionality, and processes of the One CGIAR transformation, including its intentions and direction for improved partnerships. This undertaking should include a communications work plan and committed resourcing. A practical suggestion would be to publish an “annual report” on partnerships and engagement or include a key section in current annual reporting.
- Creating a capacity-strengthening coalition, with key actors to help innovate and implement the capacity-sharing work, as outlined in the Engagement Framework.

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<sup>9</sup> For example, farmers; GFAR; Regional Fora and subregional organizations; NARIS in various regions; the Caribbean; regional networks of regional or science partners; subregional bodies; other UN agencies, such as the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP).

## Background

CGIAR has had a strong record of returns on investments and substantial impacts on productivity growth since its formation in 1971.<sup>10</sup> However, the global architecture for agricultural research and development (R&D) has changed substantially since that time. CGIAR's share of global agricultural R&D expenditures has diminished substantially. Emerging countries' national agricultural research systems (NARS), such as those of China, India, Brazil, and South Africa have grown relative to CGIAR and now have substantial R&D programs of their own, including collaborations among themselves and with less developed countries. The private sector has increased its role. The previous North–South and donor/grantee dichotomies have become less relevant for many issues on the agenda. These changes have strategic implications and need to be recognized and responded to accordingly. Further, given the very clear and significant diversity among the regions, countries, institutions, and stakeholders with whom CGIAR engages, there cannot be a “one-size-fits-all approach” to that engagement. An understanding of this diversity must be a critical underpinning for CGIAR's work, both strategically and operationally. In this report, we explore the implications for partnerships in the changed global architecture.

Successive reforms of CGIAR over the last several decades have attempted to sustain this record of impacts. The latest One CGIAR transition is another reformulation of CGIAR's partnerships, knowledge, assets, and global presence—aiming for greater integration and impact in the face of interconnected food, land, water, and climate crises. Conscious of the need for CGIAR to improve the effectiveness of its engagement with partners in the Global South and to enhance the voice and participation of the Global South in the course of CGIAR's latest reforms, the CGIAR System Board appointed an independent High-level Advisory Panel (HLAP) to guide CGIAR in improving its strategic engagement with partners during its transition to One CGIAR.<sup>11</sup> The Panel has been tasked to “advise on fostering ownership of reforms and mechanisms for joint learning and engagement...” with partners across the regions in which CGIAR works.<sup>12</sup> (See the HLAP's full Terms of Reference [ToR] in Annex I.)

The HLAP is led by two Co-conveners, Uma Lele and Namanga Ngongi, and consists of 10 members (see Annex III for the full HLAP membership). The Panel was appointed in July 2022, and held its inaugural meeting on July 25, 2022, meeting virtually several times over the subsequent months.

A previous, and perhaps, the only study of CGIAR partnerships, was undertaken in 2017. The *Evaluation of Partnerships in CGIAR* was published by the CGIAR Independent Evaluation Arrangement.<sup>13</sup> The purpose of the evaluation was to assess “the extent to which the CGIAR reform of 2008 was successful

<sup>10</sup> See *The Payoff to Investing in CGIAR Research* (2020), co-authored by Julian M. Alston at the University of California, Davis; Philip G. Pardey at the University of Minnesota; and Xudong Rao at North Dakota State University [https://supportagresearch.org/assets/pdf/Payoff to Investing in CGIAR Research final October 2020.pdf](https://supportagresearch.org/assets/pdf/Payoff_to_Investing_in_CGIAR_Research_final_October_2020.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> As noted in the Terms of Reference for the HLAP (Annex I): The Global South is understood here “to refer to low- and middle-income countries across Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean, representing key regions where CGIAR works.”

<sup>12</sup> “CGIAR System Board Names High-Level Advisory Panel Members to Guide Leadership in Strengthening Engagement with Partners”: <https://www.cgiar.org/news-events/news/cgiar-system-board-names-high-level-advisory-panel-members-to-guide-leadership-in-strengthening-engagement-with-partners/>

<sup>13</sup> CGIAR–Independent Evaluation Arrangement (IEA). 2017. *Evaluation of Partnerships in CGIAR*. Rome, Italy: Independent Evaluation Arrangement of CGIAR. [https://iaes.cgiar.org/sites/default/files/pdf/IEA-Evaluation-of-partnerships\\_Report.pdf](https://iaes.cgiar.org/sites/default/files/pdf/IEA-Evaluation-of-partnerships_Report.pdf)

in strengthening partnerships and advancing achievement of CGIAR goals.” The evaluation is valuable as a baseline study, because the 2008 reforms were centered on implementation of large, multi-partner programs, known as the CGIAR Research Programs (CRPs). CGIAR Centers were expected to align their research with the CRPs and to engage with a broad range of partners on activities from program planning and design to implementation.

The evaluation cited areas in which CGIAR had improved partnership and stakeholder outreach as a result of implementation of the CRPs, and it provided six recommendations on how the System should enhance partnership development and integrate it into CGIAR’s research (see Annex IV). CRPs have since been phased out. Yet, many of the recommendations that emanated from the evaluation are still relevant today and share similarities with the findings of the HLAP. This raises the question of whether follow-up and monitoring of implementation of the previous recommendations were adequately undertaken. A strong emphasis of this report is on implementation and monitoring of recommendations with the objective of learning lessons on partnerships, and the resulting impact on quality of science and innovation.

CGIAR, notably the System Board in its leadership role, should ensure that the recommendations in this report are seriously considered, actions taken in a timely manner, and implementation monitored accordingly. Without a specific, appropriate position/unit tasked with mapping out an action plan and timetable that can provide a roadmap for this and a way to track progress, the recommendations will likely “fall between the cracks.” A partnership innovation and evaluation framework could be a useful bridge between the overarching conceptual nature of the Engagement Framework and a more operational nature of the suggested Partnership Strategy, with a theory of change being the starting point to provide direction.

## **Scope**

The ToR of the HLAP states that it will “advise on partnerships for impact, and mechanisms for shared learning and engagement with governments, regional organizations, farmer groups, the private sector, and community organizations across the regions where CGIAR works.” Many elements of implementation of One CGIAR reforms impact partnerships. As will become clear from the rest of this report, many of those consulted during the HLAP’s effort have suggested lines of inquiry which would have been clearly beyond the narrow focus of the HLAP’s ToR. Therefore, the Panel was prescribed and focused on stakeholder engagement and partnerships as mandated, and not on other aspects of the reform. The findings and conclusions note, however, that many of its interlocutors have asked why the HLAP was not looking into other issues that have a direct impact on partnerships—for example, governance, centralization vs. decentralization, and how the reforms were developed and implemented, among others. Although not part of the HLAP recommendations, these other issues that were raised by stakeholders are included for information in this report.

## **Methodology**

In line with the ToR, the HLAP undertook the investigation of stakeholder perceptions by employing the following methods: (1) an online survey questionnaire; (2) one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders; and (3) a review of *Toward Greater Impact: CGIAR Engagement Framework for Partnerships & Advocacy*, which included providing suggestions and recommendations for how it could be strengthened and improved as it is operationalized. The findings from all three elements contributed to the HLAP’s conclusions and recommendations. In addition, some HLAP members suggested inclusion of other recommendations, based on feedback from their constituencies. Thus, due to its role as a “network of networks,” the Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation (GFAR), and the Regional Fora

that are its members,<sup>14</sup> shared with the HLAP additional ideas on strengthening stakeholder engagement and partnerships, which have also contributed to the final conclusions and recommendations.

### **Online survey**

The online survey questionnaire was developed collectively by the HLAP, with input from several sources within and outside the CGIAR System, including, particularly, survey experts to ensure that the survey covered relevant issues and that respondents would have ample opportunity to report their views (see Annex V). It also drew upon public communications and statements made by various CGIAR stakeholders (See Annexes VI, VII, and VIII for examples). The near final draft was reviewed by external experts in survey design to ensure quality assurance and technical soundness.

### **One-on-one interviews**

Following deployment of the survey, several HLAP members conducted one-on-one, in-depth interviews with a number of CGIAR stakeholders from the following stakeholder groups: academia, research and other collaborators, government policymakers, NARS leaders, funders, and current and former CGIAR leadership. Interviewees were asked a standard set of questions to seek their feedback.

### **HLAP review and advice on *Toward Greater Impact: CGIAR Engagement Framework for Partnerships & Advocacy***

As envisioned in the ToR, the HLAP spent considerable time reviewing *Toward Greater Impact: CGIAR Engagement Framework for Partnerships & Advocacy*<sup>15</sup> (hereafter referred to as the “Engagement Framework”), which “sets out guiding principles ... to co-develop research and share and scale knowledge, innovations, and technologies toward greater impact.”<sup>16</sup> Specific suggestions and recommendations to strengthen the document, as well as for its operationalization, are included in the recommendations included herein.

### **Context and Setting**

CGIAR currently has operations spanning more than 70 countries, primarily in the Global South, and 2,000+ partners around the world.<sup>17</sup>

A partnership in the CGIAR Engagement Framework is defined as “an intentional relationship with private sector, public sector, academia, or civil society organizations at national, regional, and/or international levels to achieve common aims towards transforming land, water, and food systems in a climate crisis. CGIAR’s intentional relationships are forged through a range of informal and formal agreements and based on shared visions, common goals, combined resources, and joint efforts.” (p. 9)

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<sup>14</sup> The Regional Fora include the Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East & North Africa (AARINENA); the Asia–Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI); Central Asia and the Caucasus Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (CACAARI); the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA); and the Forum of the Americas for Agricultural Research and Technological Development (FORAGRO).

<sup>15</sup> The Engagement Framework is available at: <https://storage.googleapis.com/cgiarg/2022/03/CGIAR-Engagement-Framework-29-March-2022.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> CGIAR—Global Director, Partnerships and Advocacy; Partnerships and Advocacy Transition Task Team. *Toward Greater Impact: CGIAR Engagement Framework for Partnerships & Advocacy*. March 29, 2022, p. 4.

<sup>17</sup> As reported in the 2020 Annual Performance Report: <https://www.cgiar.org/food-security-impact/results-dashboard/>

The Engagement Framework goes on to illustrate a set of Seven Guiding Principles for Partnerships (Annex X):

1. Complementarity for Impact
2. Shared Ownership
3. Focus on Results
4. Transparency and Accountability
5. Integrity
6. Calculated Risk
7. Learning Culture

A partnership typology has also been developed, broadly defining partnership types as (1) demand partners, (2) innovation partners, and (3) scaling partners. Partners may cut across these categories, and partners within the typology are further segmented based on geographic scale, reach, projected impacts, and potential risk. (Annex XI)

A fuller discussion on partnership selection criteria, typology, and other aspects is included in the section on the HLAP's review of the CGIAR Engagement Framework in this report. Of note is how partners are represented in the CGIAR System Council (Box 1), which is also addressed in the HLAP Recommendations.

#### **BOX 1**

##### **Current CGIAR System Council composition arrangements**

*Extracts from: <https://www.cgiar.org/how-we-work/governance/system-council/>*

- The CGIAR System Framework, approved by the Centers and Funders in June 2016, provides for a System Council to serve as the strategic decision-making body of the CGIAR System.
- The Council is to consist of, among others, 20 voting members:<sup>a</sup>
  - up to 15 representatives of funders; and
  - 5 developing country representatives, who are either funders, or countries hosting a Center, or countries with significant national agricultural systems.

*Note: The current allocation of Funders is based on consultations undertaken in 2016.*

- Every three years, each of the two categories of voting members are to consult and agree upon their constituencies, which may be comprised of one or more governments or organizations.
- Each constituency is to agree upon its process to select its voting member and alternate and to decide upon the rules and procedures that will guide how the members of the constituency will relate to each other.

##### **Funder seats**

- Funders agreed that the overarching criterion for allocation of funder seats on the Council is the level of contributions. They confirmed the Fund Council agreement that to be eligible for a seat on the inaugural System Council, a funder must contribute an average weighted annual minimum contribution of US\$10 million to the CGIAR System, to be calculated as follows:

- contributions to Window 1 of the CGIAR Fund will be weighted at three times their nominal amount,
  - contributions to Window 2 to the CGIAR Fund will be weighted at twice their nominal amount,
  - contributions to Window 3 and bilateral contributions to the System will be counted at their nominal amount.
- The funders agreed that the funder seats on the System Council should be accorded to the top 15 funders. However, it was recognized that a funder may decide to join a constituency rather than take a seat, may seek to fill a seat through the developing country group, or may decline to take an active role on the Council, in which case the seat would be allocated to the next eligible funder.

**Developing country representative seats**

- At the 13th meeting of the Fund Council, held in Bogor, Indonesia, it was agreed that balance among the following regions should be considered in allocating the developing country seats on the System Council:
  - East Asia and Pacific,
  - Latin America and Caribbean,
  - South Asia,
  - Sub-Saharan Africa, and
  - West Asia and North Africa.
- Consultations were held for each region to discuss and agree upon: (a) whether they would collaborate in a constituency arrangement; (b) the countries that would name the member and alternate to represent the constituency; and (c) any agreements or understandings as to how the constituency could operate.

<sup>a</sup> Additional non-voting members are outlined at: <https://www.cgiar.org/how-we-work/governance/system-council/sc-composition/>

Against this backdrop, the HLAP undertook its investigation of stakeholder views, using the tools described here. Synopses of each are presented next.

## Investigations of the HLAP: Observations and Findings

### Questionnaire on One CGIAR Engagement and Partnerships: Summary of Results

#### Introduction

An online survey, “Questionnaire on One CGIAR Engagement and Partnerships,” was launched on September 26, 2022, in English, French, Russian, and Spanish, and remained open until October 14, 2022. Approximately 1,000 people received the survey, including a large array of groups with varying knowledge and experience with CGIAR. There were almost 250 responses to the questionnaire, a response rate of approximately 25%, a respectable response rate by general standards of responses to survey questionnaires.

The survey listed 19 stakeholder categories from which respondents could choose to identify. This summary has grouped those categories into five groups for reporting purposes, as shown in Table 1. Responses from those stakeholders who could be classified broadly as “Partners” (current or potential) are analyzed in two distinct groups. Respondents who self-identified as either a *current* collaborator/partner in CGIAR research or a CGIAR Center Host Country policymaker are grouped together as “Partners.” Respondents who self-identified as a member of other categories that could *potentially* be a partner—either currently or in the future—are grouped together as “Potential Partners.” These include stakeholders from academia, advisory/extension service, consumer organization, farmer organization, national/regional organization, NARS leader, nongovernmental organization (NGO)/civil society, and private sector.

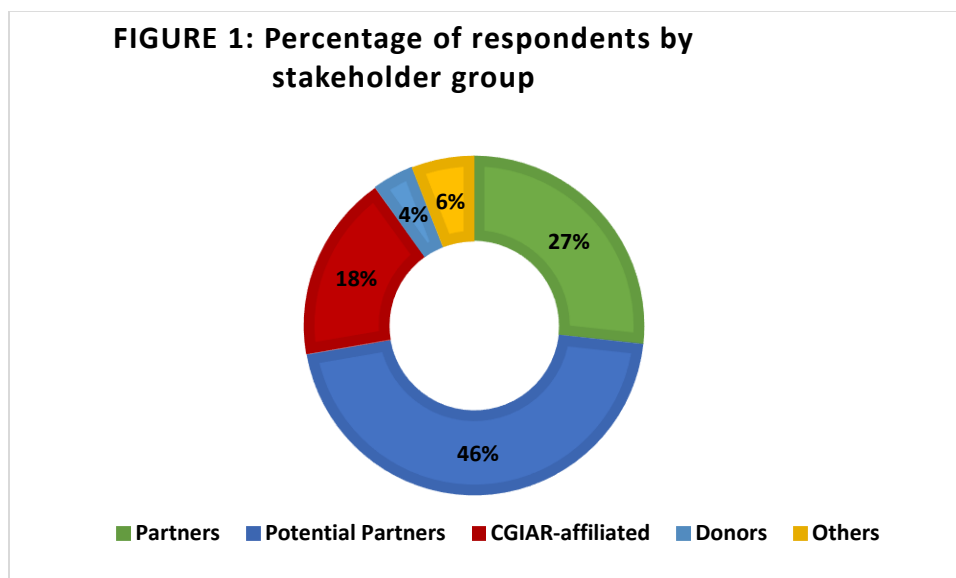
**TABLE 1: Survey respondent groups**

| Partners   | Potential Partners             | CGIAR-affiliated              | Donors             | Others                 |
|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Collaborator/Partner in CGIAR Research (university, national/regional institute, etc.) | Academia                       | CGIAR Center Director         | CGIAR Donor/Funder | Other (please specify) |
| CGIAR Center Host Country policymaker  | Advisory/Extension service     | CGIAR Center Board Member     |                    |                        |
|  | Consumer organization          | CGIAR Center Scientific Staff |                    |                        |
|  | Farmer organization            | CGIAR Regional Director       |                    |                        |
|  | National/Regional organization | CGIAR System Board Member     |                    |                        |
|  | NARS leader                    | CGIAR Senior Leadership Team  |                    |                        |
|  | NGO/Civil society              | Other CGIAR Staff             |                    |                        |
|  | Private sector                 |                               |                    |                        |

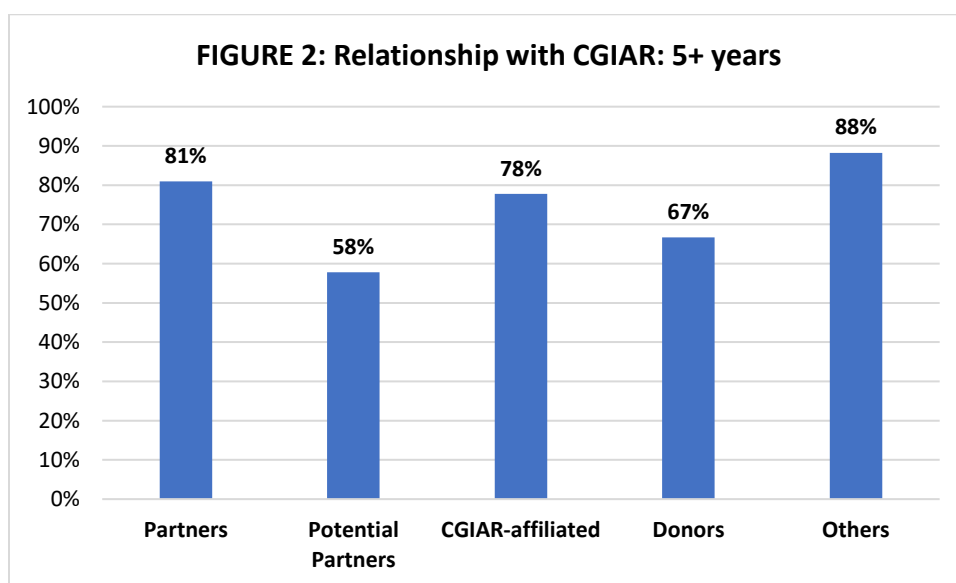
Note: See Figure 13 for full breakdown of self-reported stakeholder categories.

Respondents identified themselves as follows (Figure 1):

- Current Partners: 27%
- Potential Partners: 46%
- CGIAR-affiliated: 18%
- Donors: 4%
- Others: 6%

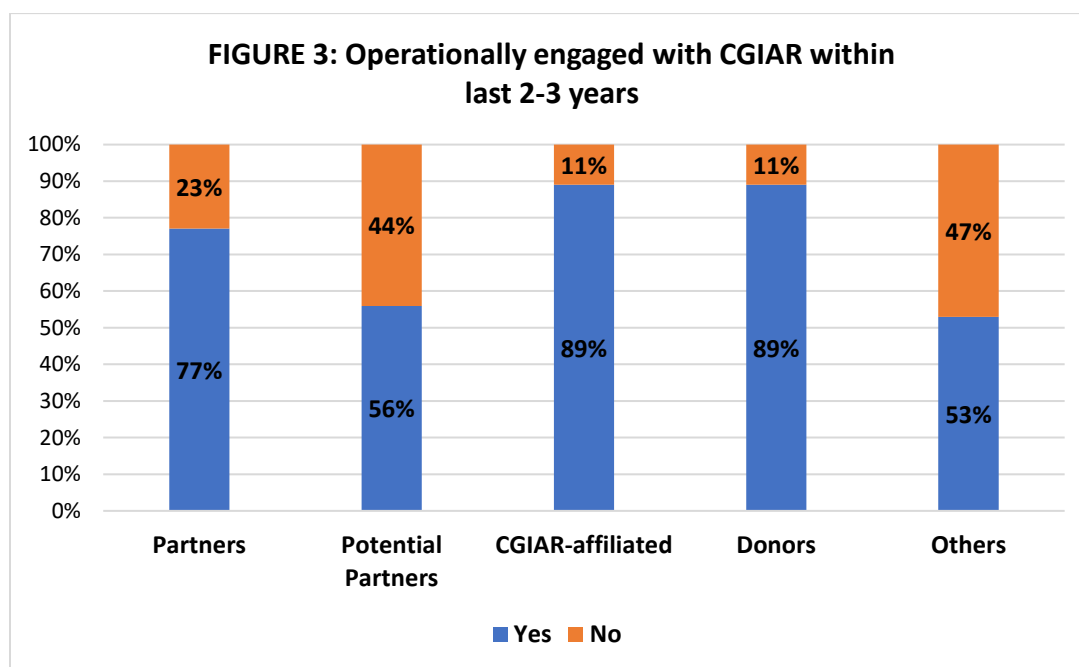


A preponderance of survey respondents had some form of relationship with CGIAR for several years. Figure 2 shows the percentage within each group that had some form of relationship with CGIAR for five years or longer.





A large share of respondents turned out to have been operationally engaged with CGIAR within the last two to three years, although they were not intentionally chosen for the survey (Figure 3). The views of those who are or have been recently operationally engaged with CGIAR, especially among partners, were given special attention, as these respondents were expected to have very relevant interactions or experience with the CGIAR System.



The questionnaire sought respondents' views on a number of topics, including (1) the One CGIAR reform consultation process; (2) the degree to which the voice and ownership of the Global South is reflected in the CGIAR agenda and the priority-setting process; and (3) the impact that One CGIAR reforms have had on engagement and partnerships with stakeholders, among others. The survey also asked respondents for suggestions and recommendations on how to improve and strengthen areas where they believe reform is needed, and thus contributed to the recommendations of this report.

## Observations and Findings

### a. General

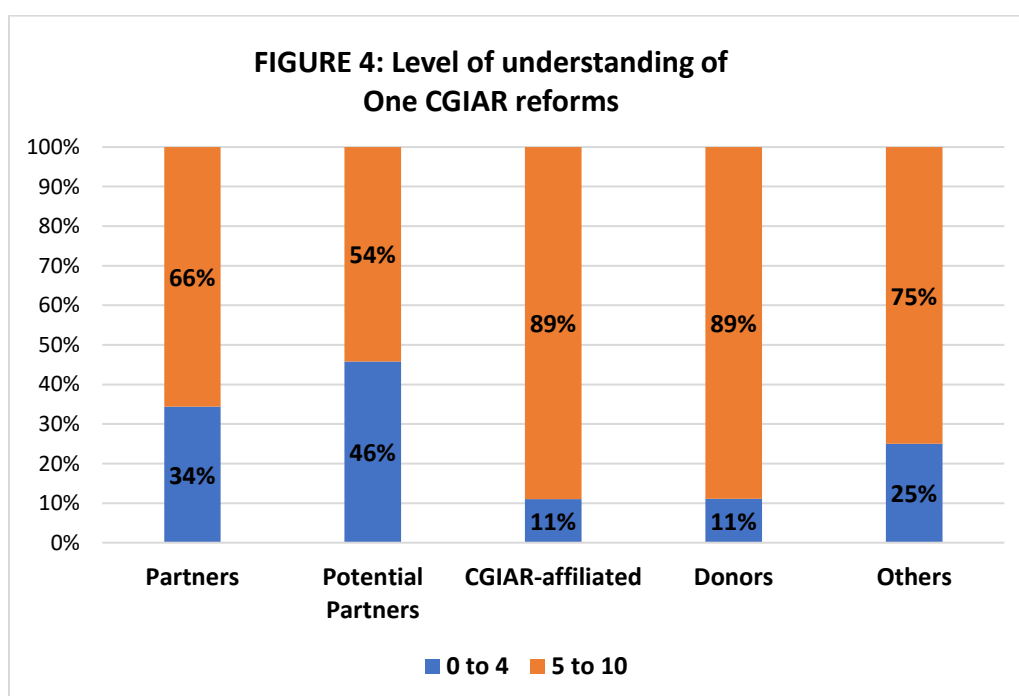
- Partners and Potential Partners were generally informed about One CGIAR reforms, but at lower reported rates than those affiliated with CGIAR, or its Donors and Others. With few exceptions, both Partners and Potential Partners also generally reported "Do not know" at higher levels on many topic areas in the survey, which appears to confirm a lower level of knowledge of the subject matter.
- Partners, Potential Partners, and Others also reported that they were approached at much lower rates to provide advice and inputs into One CGIAR reforms than did the CGIAR-affiliated and Donor groups.
- On several questions, self-identified Partners (Collaborator/Partner in CGIAR research and CGIAR Center Host Country policymaker) reported more satisfaction (that is, "Very satisfied or

satisfied”) than less (that is, “Somewhat satisfied or not satisfied”). At the same time, this group also reported relatively high levels of “Do not know” on many questions.

- All other groups—Potential Partners, the CGIAR-affiliated, Donors, and Others—reported less satisfaction (that is, “Somewhat satisfied or not satisfied”) than more (that is, “Very satisfied or satisfied”) to all questions, with varying rates of “Do not know.” Interestingly, CGIAR-affiliated respondents reported lower levels of satisfaction to many of the questions than did other groups.

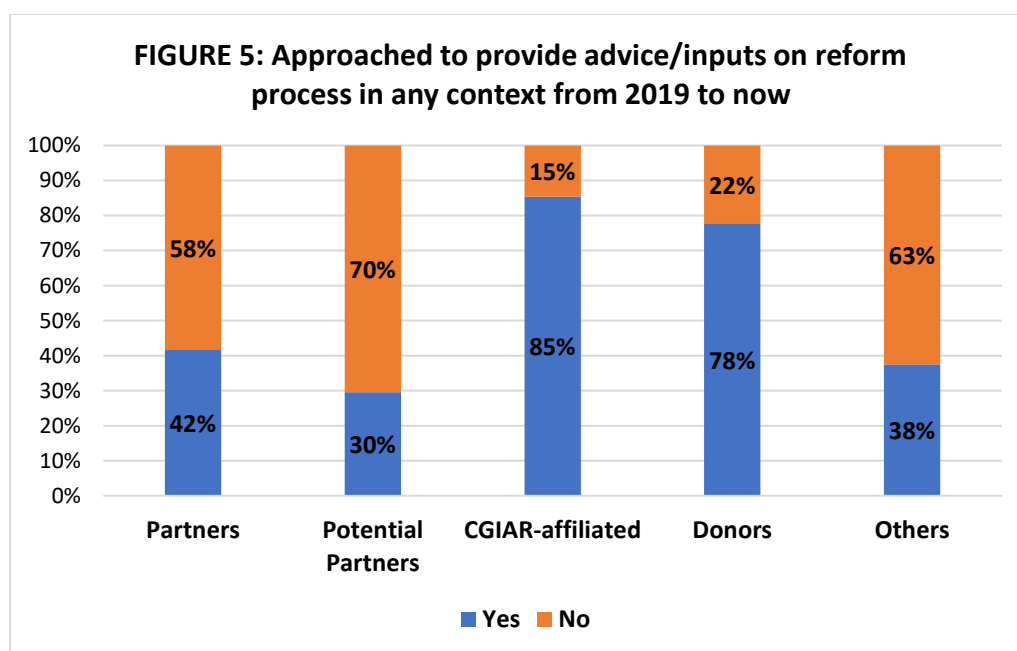
#### b. Familiarity with reforms

Respondents from all groups were generally familiar with One CGIAR reforms (Figure 4). On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the greatest understanding, 66% of Partners and 54% of Potential Partners reported a level of understanding that ranged from 5 to 10. Eighty-nine percent of CGIAR-affiliated respondents reported a level of understanding from 5 to 10. Donors reported a similar level of understanding, at 89%, and the Others category reported 75%.



*c. Advice or input into the reform process from respondents*

Respondents affiliated with CGIAR and Donors were approached for their advice and input on the reform process at much higher rates than Partners, Potential Partners and Others (Figure 5). Partners indicated that 42% had been approached to provide advice or inputs; Potential Partners, 30%; and the Others category, 38%. Notably, 85% of respondents affiliated with CGIAR and 78% of Donors reported being approached.



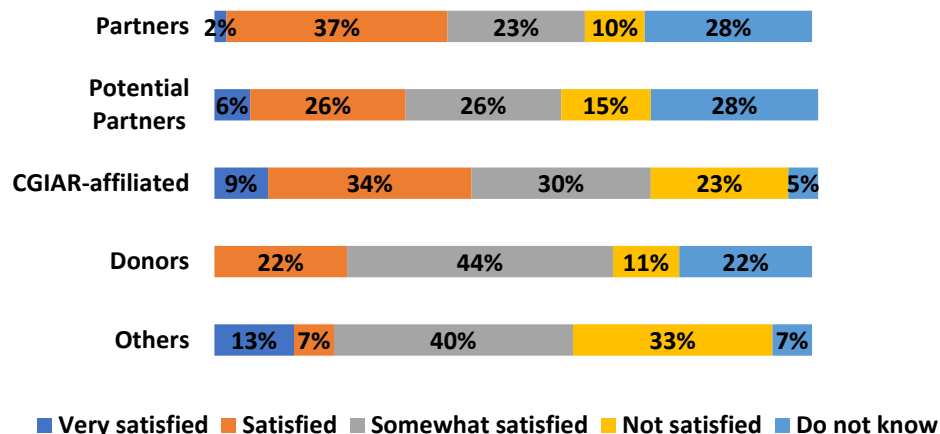
*d. Satisfaction with One CGIAR consultative process*

Table 2 and Figure 6 show the overall satisfaction of respondents with the One CGIAR consultative process:

**TABLE 2: How satisfied are you with the One CGIAR consultative process? (Q.11)**

|                    | Partners | Potential Partners | CGIAR-affiliated | Donors | Others |
|--------------------|----------|--------------------|------------------|--------|--------|
| Very satisfied     | 2%       | 6%                 | 9%               | 0%     | 13%    |
| Satisfied          | 37%      | 26%                | 34%              | 22%    | 7%     |
| Somewhat satisfied | 23%      | 26%                | 30%              | 44%    | 40%    |
| Not satisfied      | 10%      | 15%                | 23%              | 11%    | 33%    |
| Do not know        | 28%      | 28%                | 5%               | 22%    | 7%     |

**FIGURE 6: Satisfaction with One CGIAR consultative process**



Although CGIAR-affiliated respondents reported a greater level of overall satisfaction (“very satisfied” or “satisfied”) with the process, they also reported much higher levels of dissatisfaction (“somewhat satisfied” or “not satisfied”) along with Donors and Others.

Respondents who reported they were “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the reform process highlighted the following points to support their responses:

- Broad consultations that took place among Global South stakeholders;
- Significant input received from various stakeholders from the Global South;
- Global South representation in the reforms process; and
- Global South seats on various CGIAR bodies and the opportunity to participate in the process and implementation of the reforms.

The main reasons expressed by those who indicated they were only “somewhat satisfied” or “not satisfied” with the process were:

- Inadequate consultation with various stakeholder groups, especially Centers, Host Countries, NARS, and local stakeholders;
- Lack of transparency and poor communication, and therefore, lack of understanding, of the process;
- Non-inclusive, top-down centralized process and decision-making that did not truly consider opinions and feedback received from stakeholders;
- Disconnect between “consultations” of partners and stakeholders, and the decision-making process on the reforms, that is, partner and stakeholder concerns were not included in many aspects of the reform;

- Complex, top-heavy CGIAR structure that has emerged as a result of One CGIAR without clear explanation of how it is going to impact partners and their interactions and entry points with CGIAR;
- Complex and large numbers of new research initiatives;
- Process and communication channeled through the System Board with little interaction between Centers/NARs/Host Countries and Donors/System Council Members;
- Overreliance on a System Board with the power to make decisions without the need to consult with, listen to, or consider the concerns of others—especially, Centers', Host Countries', and NARS' concerns.

These areas are easily rectified through further action, but as previously indicated in the only previous evaluation of CGIAR partnerships, many of the recommendations appear not to have been followed, nor was there any monitoring of the effort to confirm that recommendations were implemented. We are hoping that it will be different this time.

*e. Voice of the Global South, ownership of the agenda, and influence on priority-setting*

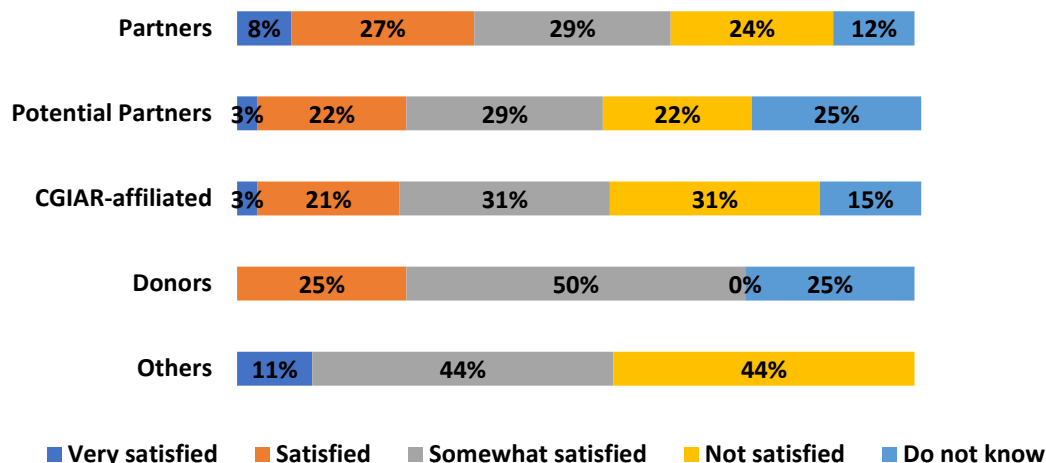
Variations of the themes, discussed here, were also heard in the areas of voice of the Global South, ownership of the agenda, and influence on priority-setting. Those respondents, who reported being “very satisfied” or “satisfied,” noted that consultations have taken place to ensure that the voice, ownership, and influence of the Global South were part of the reform process, development of the agenda and research initiatives, and priority-setting. Those who responded, “somewhat satisfied” or “not satisfied,” cited a disconnect between consultation and decision-making; inadequate representation of the Global South at the decision-making table; the perception that Centers, Host Countries, NARS, and other partners have not been adequately included in the process; and the perception that the new One CGIAR structure is overbearing and top-heavy, without an optimal impact on stakeholder engagement and partnerships.

e.(i) Satisfaction that voices and concerns of the Global South have been considered and reflected in the One CGIAR reform process (Table 3 and Figure 7)

**TABLE 3: Are you satisfied that the voices and concerns of the Global South (including your Stakeholder group's) have been adequately taken into consideration and reflected in the One CGIAR reform process? (Q.15)**

|                    | Partners | Potential Partners | CGIAR-affiliated | Donors | Others |
|--------------------|----------|--------------------|------------------|--------|--------|
| Very satisfied     | 8%       | 3%                 | 3%               | 0%     | 11%    |
| Satisfied          | 27%      | 22%                | 21%              | 25%    | 0%     |
| Somewhat satisfied | 29%      | 29%                | 31%              | 50%    | 44%    |
| Not satisfied      | 24%      | 22%                | 31%              | 0%     | 44%    |
| Do not know        | 12%      | 25%                | 15%              | 25%    | 0%     |

**FIGURE 7: Satisfaction that voices and concerns of Global South adequately taken into consideration and reflected in the One CGIAR reform proces**

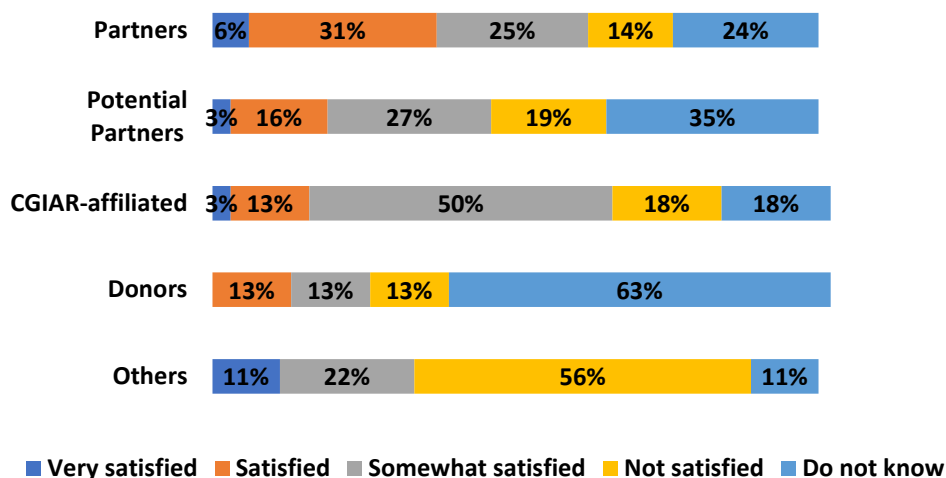


Respondents in all groups reported much higher levels of “somewhat satisfied” or “not satisfied” than “very satisfied” and satisfied.”

e.(ii) Satisfaction with the level of the Global South’s ownership of the One CGIAR agenda (Table 4 and Figure 8)

**TABLE 4: Are you satisfied with the level of the Global South’s ownership of the One CGIAR agenda? (Q.20)**

|                    | Partners | Potential Partners | CGIAR-affiliated | Donors | Others |
|--------------------|----------|--------------------|------------------|--------|--------|
| Very satisfied     | 6%       | 3%                 | 3%               | 0%     | 11%    |
| Satisfied          | 31%      | 16%                | 13%              | 13%    | 0%     |
| Somewhat satisfied | 25%      | 27%                | 50%              | 13%    | 22%    |
| Not satisfied      | 14%      | 19%                | 18%              | 13%    | 56%    |
| Do not know        | 24%      | 35%                | 18%              | 63%    | 11%    |

**FIGURE 8: Satisfaction with level of Global South ownership of One CGIAR agenda**

All groups reported higher, in some cases significantly higher, levels of “somewhat satisfied” and “not satisfied” than “very satisfied” and “satisfied.”

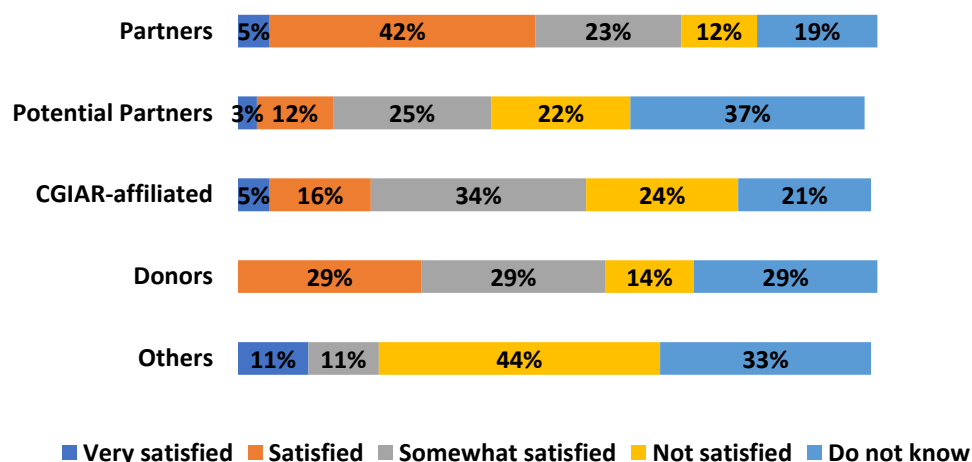
Partners, Potential Partners, and Donors also reported higher rates of “Do not know” than CGIAR-affiliated respondents and Others.

e.(iii) Satisfaction with the level of the Global South engagement and influence on priority-setting in One CGIAR (Table 5 and Figure 9)

**TABLE 5: Are you satisfied with the level of the Global South’s (including your Stakeholder group) engagement and influence on priority-setting in One CGIAR? (Q.31)**

|                    | Partners | Potential Partners | CGIAR-affiliated | Donors | Others |
|--------------------|----------|--------------------|------------------|--------|--------|
| Very satisfied     | 5%       | 3%                 | 5%               | 0%     | 11%    |
| Satisfied          | 42%      | 12%                | 16%              | 29%    | 0%     |
| Somewhat satisfied | 23%      | 25%                | 34%              | 29%    | 11%    |
| Not satisfied      | 12%      | 22%                | 24%              | 14%    | 44%    |
| Do not know        | 19%      | 37%                | 21%              | 29%    | 33%    |

**FIGURE 9: Satisfaction with level of Global South engagement/influence on priority setting in One CGIAR**



Respondents who reported they were “somewhat satisfied” or “not satisfied” were higher for all groups, *except* for Partners. Importantly, all groups also reported relatively high rates of “Do not know.”

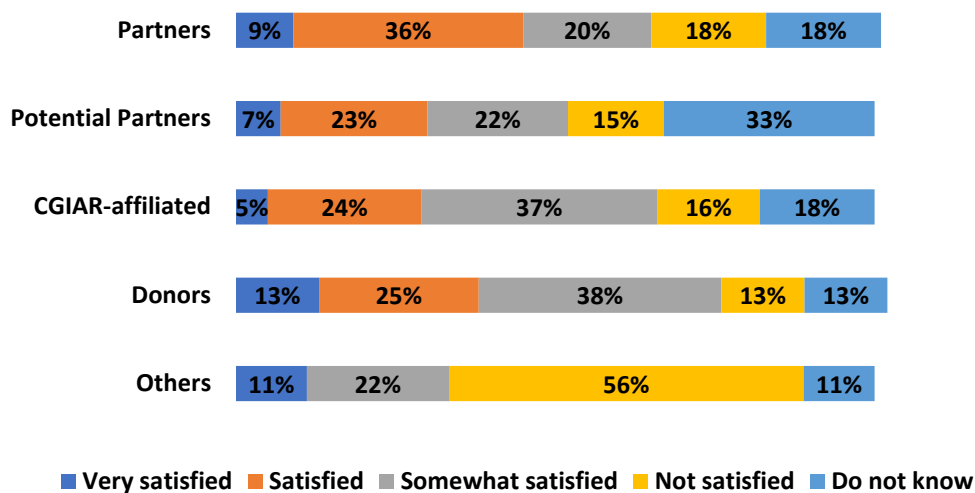
e.(iv) Satisfaction with the level of transparency in priority-setting in One CGIAR (Table 6 and Figure 10)

**TABLE 6: Are you satisfied with the level of transparency in priority-setting in One CGIAR? (Q.27)**

|                    | Partners | Potential Partners | CGIAR-affiliated | Donors | Others |
|--------------------|----------|--------------------|------------------|--------|--------|
| Very satisfied     | 9%       | 7%                 | 5%               | 13%    | 11%    |
| Satisfied          | 36%      | 23%                | 24%              | 25%    | 0%     |
| Somewhat satisfied | 20%      | 22%                | 37%              | 38%    | 22%    |
| Not satisfied      | 18%      | 15%                | 16%              | 13%    | 56%    |
| Do not know        | 18%      | 33%                | 18%              | 13%    | 11%    |



**FIGURE 10: Satisfaction with the level of transparency in priority setting in One CGIAR**



Interestingly, CGIAR-affiliated, Donors, and Others reported significantly higher levels of “somewhat satisfied” or “not satisfied” than did the two Partner groups.

*f. Satisfaction that One CGIAR reforms have improved and enhanced partnerships (or will improve and enhance partnerships) in CGIAR*

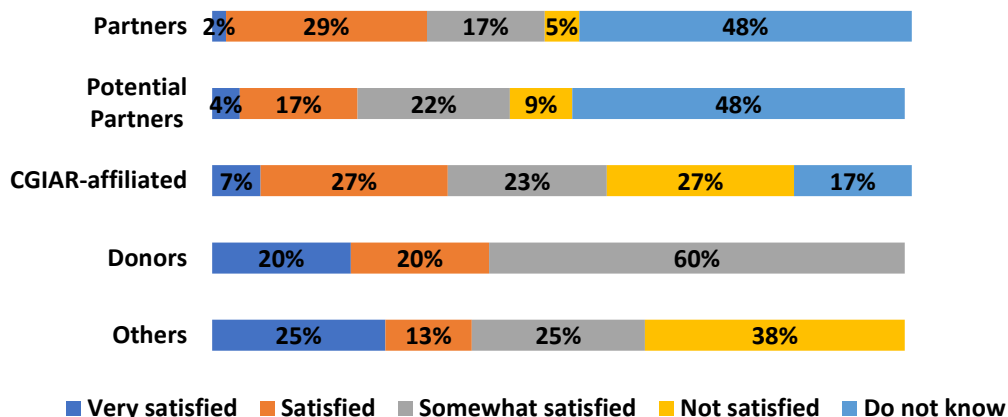
The results on whether One CGIAR reforms have improved and enhanced partnerships, as shown in Table 7 and Figure 11, were mixed. Both Partner groups reported “Do not know” more than any other answer. Although the other three groups reported higher levels of satisfaction than did the Partner groups, they also all reported significantly higher levels of “somewhat satisfied” and “not satisfied.”

Many commented that a more integrated structure had the potential to streamline engagement with CGIAR, and therefore, enhance partnerships. However, strong concerns were expressed about the structure being too top-heavy, bureaucratic, and exercising too much of a “command-and-control” approach, as opposed to bridge-building. Concerns regarding insufficient representation of Host Countries and other Global South stakeholder groups were again raised. These comments were largely in line with comments from the interviews.

**TABLE 7: Are you satisfied that the One CGIAR reforms, including the new management and governance structures, have improved and enhanced partnerships in CGIAR (or will improve and enhance partnerships in CGIAR)? (Q.46)**

|                    | Partners | Potential Partners | CGIAR-affiliated | Donors | Others |
|--------------------|----------|--------------------|------------------|--------|--------|
| Very satisfied     | 2%       | 4%                 | 7%               | 20%    | 25%    |
| Satisfied          | 29%      | 17%                | 27%              | 20%    | 13%    |
| Somewhat satisfied | 17%      | 22%                | 23%              | 60%    | 25%    |
| Not satisfied      | 5%       | 9%                 | 27%              | 0%     | 38%    |
| Do not know        | 48%      | 48%                | 17%              | 0%     | 0%     |

**FIGURE 11: Satisfaction One CGIAR reforms, including the new management and governance structures, have improved and enhanced partnerships [or will improve and enhance partnerships] in the CGIAR**



*g. Satisfaction with the role of national agricultural research systems in the Global South*

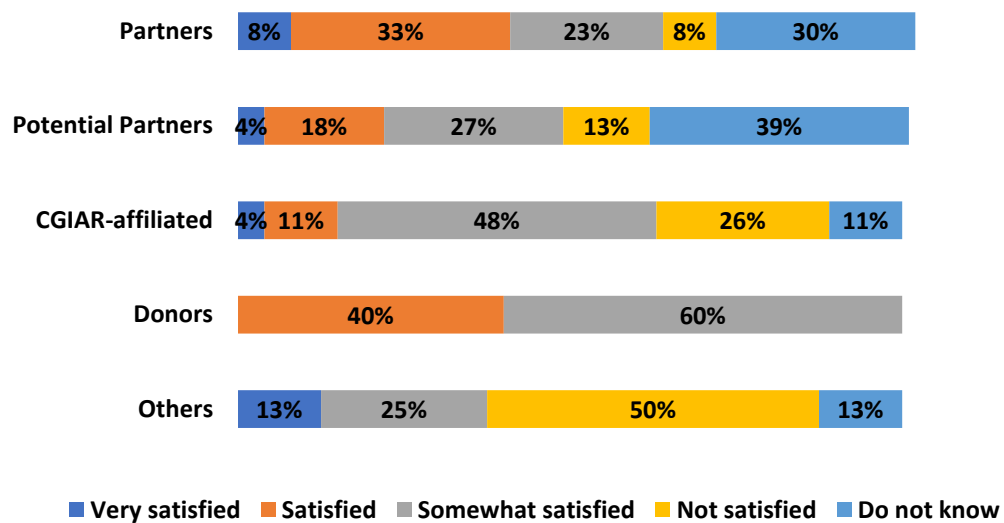
Partners reported a slightly elevated level of higher satisfaction (“very satisfied” or “satisfied”), and similar levels of less satisfaction (“somewhat satisfied” or “not satisfied”), and “Do not know” responses (Table 8 and Figure 12). The other four groups reported higher, in some cases much higher, levels of “somewhat satisfied” and “not satisfied.”

Some of the comments reinforce comments reported elsewhere in this report—that there is room for improvement for NARS, particularly large NARS, in the Global South in CGIAR governance, priority-setting, capacity building of weaker NARS, and in collaborative research. The details would depend on a number of factors, including the size and capacity of NARS, the level of national support received, and country capacity, to name a few. For larger and stronger NARS, concrete linkages are needed to form strategic alliances with CGIAR, as they play an important and significant role in regional, and in some cases, global agricultural development. Other countries, where NARS are not as strong or where national support is lacking, need different levels and types of engagement, including, in particular, a greater role for CGIAR in working with large NARS in building capacity of smaller, weaker NARS. This issue was also emphasized in the interviews.

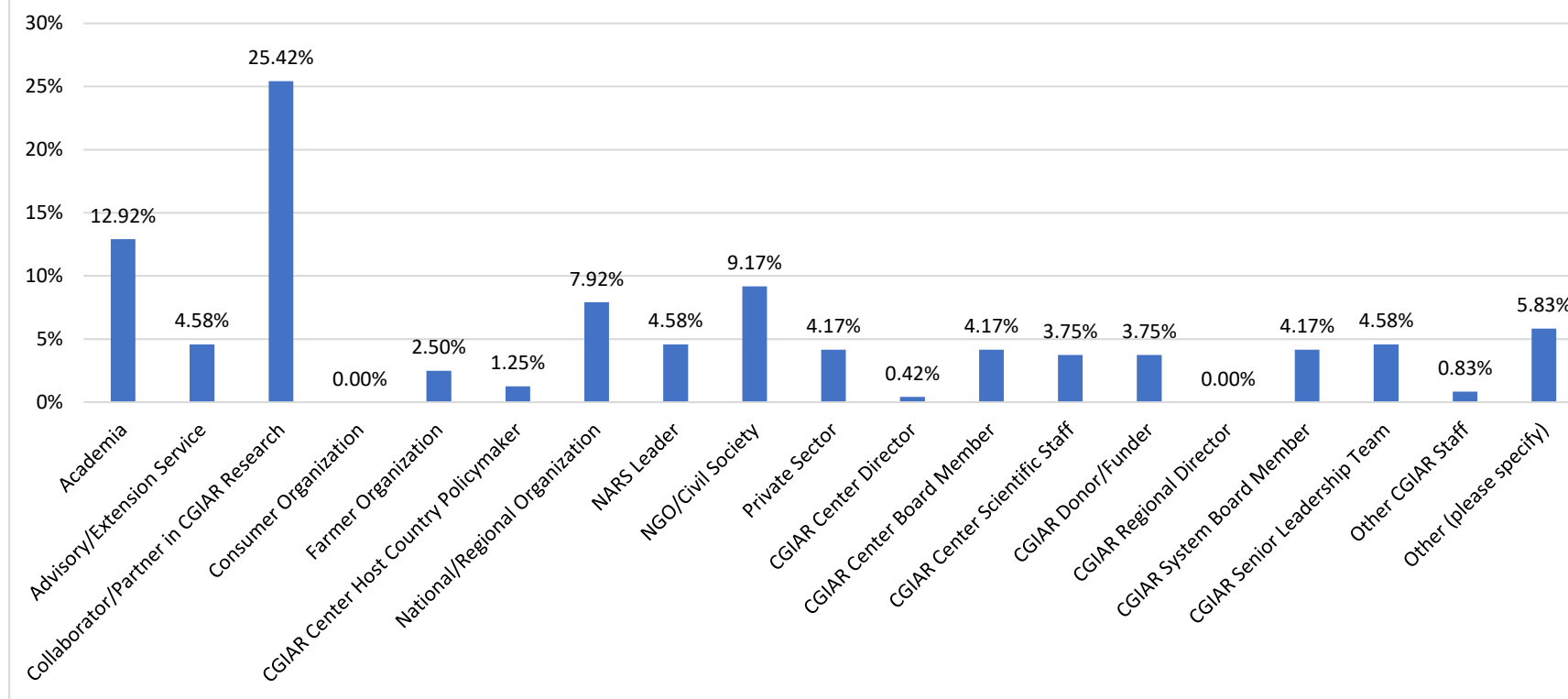
**TABLE 8: Several national agricultural research systems of the Global South are now significant players in agricultural research. As primary partners of the System’s efforts, are you satisfied with their role in One CGIAR? (Q.50)**

|                    | Partners | Potential Partners | CGIAR-affiliated | Donors | Others |
|--------------------|----------|--------------------|------------------|--------|--------|
| Very satisfied     | 8%       | 4%                 | 4%               | 0%     | 13%    |
| Satisfied          | 33%      | 18%                | 11%              | 40%    | 0%     |
| Somewhat satisfied | 23%      | 27%                | 48%              | 60%    | 25%    |
| Not satisfied      | 8%       | 13%                | 26%              | 0%     | 50%    |
| Do not know        | 30%      | 39%                | 11%              | 0%     | 13%    |

**FIGURE 12: Satisfaction with NARS of the Global South role in One CGIAR**



**FIGURE 13: What category of stakeholder or partner best describes your actual or desired relationship with the CGIAR? (If you have multiple actual or desired relationships with the CGIAR, please select the one that is most important to you)**



## **Summary of CGIAR High-level Advisory Panel Stakeholder Interviews**

### **Introduction**

As part of its investigation of stakeholder perceptions on One CGIAR engagement and partnerships, HLAP members conducted a series of one-on-one interviews with stakeholders to get their views on:

1. How One CGIAR engages and partners with stakeholders, especially from the Global South; and
2. Whether One CGIAR reforms have benefited or enhanced engagement and partnerships, or whether the reforms have created challenges or inhibited partnerships.

The HLAP also sought suggestions or recommendations on how One CGIAR could strengthen engagement and partnerships.

Interviews took place in October and November 2022; 30 one-on-one, in-depth interviews were conducted. Interviewees identified themselves primarily as:

- Academia/researchers/development practitioners (14)
- Government policymakers (5)
- NARS leader (1) (complemented by communications from NARS and other letters, for example, in Annexes VI and VII)
- Funders (2)
- Former CGIAR senior management (1)
- Current CGIAR senior management (7)

Results are reported anonymously to ensure confidentiality of sources and content. In addition to the more formal interviews, numerous informal discussions were also held and proved to be a valuable source of feedback, some of which have also been included in this summary.

Of the interviewees *not employed by or serving on a CGIAR body*, about two-thirds identified themselves as collaborators/partners of CGIAR in some capacity. Among this group of collaborators/partners, knowledge of the One CGIAR reform was mixed. Some were well-informed and knowledgeable of the process and content of reforms, but a substantial number of these interviewees had little or no knowledge of the reform, apparently due to inadequate communication from CGIAR. They were unable to provide an assessment of the impact of the reform on stakeholder engagement and partnerships or understand if it facilitated outreach to potential new partners. The summary observations and suggestions and recommendations, included here, were provided by those who had sufficient knowledge of the reforms.

### **Observations**

The main observations that emerged from the interviews were:

- Many of the views expressed in interviews confirmed the findings from the online survey results.
- The One CGIAR reforms do not sufficiently recognize the more complex environment of international agricultural research and development, and as noted in the Introduction, CGIAR is no longer the dominant actor. NARS from the Global South—especially from Brazil, China, and India—have considerable, outsized capacity and are major players in agricultural R&D. Furthermore, private sector firms, civil society organizations, and national governments at the regional level play a much more influential role than CGIAR and have a major impact on what happens in science and innovation. The reforms need to recognize this new environment and integrate CGIAR into this ecosystem.
- There was insufficient stakeholder engagement and consultation conducted during the reform. The approach was too inward looking and did not adequately consider or include the needs of

partners. Stakeholders were “consulted,” but their concerns were not included in the reform, resulting in an erosion of trust. GFAR was also not adequately involved or consulted. Consequently, buy-in from Global South stakeholders was limited, and the process was seen largely as being top-down. Some of the main stakeholder groups that were not adequately consulted, and their concerns not addressed include: (1) Center Host Countries, (2) national and regional research collaborators/partners, and (3) Centers.

- Interviewees emphasized how Host Countries are crucial as partners of the CGIAR System, and that Centers cannot operate without Host Country agreements already in place to facilitate activities of scientists by conferring on them several features of international status (for example, Host Country agreements that include immunities and privileges, tax-free status, diplomatic visas, genetic resources, in-kind contributions, and land). The contribution of Host Countries is often taken for granted and not sufficiently appreciated. Although Host Countries are generally in favor of the One CGIAR efforts to enhance coordination, efficiency, and streamline operations, they have serious concerns about the governance structure of One CGIAR, particularly, the increased voice of CGIAR-appointed members on Center boards, relative to others. This may also be because, since the establishment of CGIAR Centers, Host Countries and Centers have developed modalities for working with each other, including a strong sense of ownership by Host Countries of the Centers and the research. Their concerns need to be taken seriously and brought to the table to find a mutually agreeable way forward that maintains Center autonomy and integrity.
- Centers appear to have been weakened in decision-making capacity. They need to be able to define their own strategies and make impact at the country level in collaboration with national partners, in sync with the One CGIAR common strategy, rather than what can be perceived as following the dictates of the new science groups.
- For those who are not very familiar with One CGIAR reforms or the Engagement Framework, there is not a clear understanding of the objectives and goals of the reforms or a clear roadmap on how to achieve them, which has led to doubts about the entire reform itself.
- On the other hand, for those that are more familiar and/or aware of the Engagement Framework, many agree with the overarching conceptual framework of One CGIAR to improve and enhance CGIAR collaboration/coordination/integration and the potential streamlining and efficiency that could emerge. The renewed focus on engagement with stakeholders and partnership is also welcomed, including in smaller countries where there is little or no CGIAR presence now. How the reforms will be implemented is where there is much less understanding, and therefore, a greater lack of clarity and uncertainty.
- CGIAR’s record on partnerships has been mixed, according to these interviews. Increased effectiveness will be crucial going forward in order to successfully implement One CGIAR reforms and have a positive impact on science and innovation. The System needs to clearly define and deliver in this area, including engaging new partners and incorporating their needs into CGIAR research.
- CGIAR’s strategy should be synchronized with national and regional priorities, requiring in-depth engagement at the country and regional levels. The System needs to put into place institutional mechanisms to facilitate this engagement.
- Some interviewees suggested that the new One CGIAR operational structure should facilitate the engagement with stakeholders by empowering Regional Directors with budgets and decision-making authority to engage in and make decisions on the ground, sidestepping bureaucratic bottlenecks. Complementing the role of Regional Directors, country coordination offices should be considered in areas where sufficient level of activity justifies them, to facilitate CGIAR activities at the country level.

- However, there is a large degree of concern that the new structure has created administrative layers and that it has resulted in confusion among partners on where and how to approach CGIAR. This is true of existing partners and potential new partners that wish to engage with CGIAR.
- There should be a renewed focus on science, which has suffered during the reform process. Non-CGIAR partners and collaborators need to be part of research teams from the beginning to foster true co-ownership, which many remain skeptical of achieving.

## Review of CGIAR's Engagement Framework by the CGIAR High-level Advisory Panel on Country and Regional Engagement and Partnerships in the Global South

### Introduction

As part of its scope of work, the HLAP was expected to “... review and advise on the Engagement Framework in light of feedback from stakeholders” (ToR, see Annex I). This account provides the outcome of the review as reflected in the commentary on the Engagement Framework.

### Commentary on the Engagement Framework

#### Overall Engagement Framework

The HLAP applauds the development of an Engagement Framework within the One CGIAR transformation as a positive step in the right direction. The HLAP finds the overall Engagement Framework to be well drafted, thoughtful, and covering many essential elements and principles of engagement. The HLAP notes that the Framework is written with the perspective of improving the results, outcomes, and impacts of the partnerships and collaborations (“to broaden their base of resources, expertise, and experience to co-create, deliver and scale research, innovations, and technologies toward greater impact,” p. 5).

The HLAP, however, did not find the Engagement Framework reflected a compelling overall change in how CGIAR will undertake its engagement and partnership within the context of the changing world and the One CGIAR transformation. Furthermore, the HLAP did not find a working definition of “good partnerships” that correlated with the principles and objectives set out in the Framework. The Engagement Framework should reflect an even more deliberate and intentional nature of engagement and partnership, which is geared toward improving targeting, reach, delivery, and impact.

The HLAP identified a gap in the presentation of specific changes in the type, nature, and quality of the partnerships that would be necessary for them to deliver more and better. Thus, although it was important and useful for the Engagement Framework to provide guiding principles and “...integrated, coherent, highly coordinated approaches and support systems and services for effective partnerships and advocacy...” (p. 8), it is also necessary to look at the partnerships and the partners themselves. The Engagement Framework focuses on how to ensure that collaborations are more systemic and how to better support them with new services. However, there is an implicit assumption that if the enabling environment and the support systems are improved and the range of activities is broadened (for example, to include advocacy more explicitly), then the results will be better. This assumption is probably only partially true. In addition to better support systems, substantive changes in the types, nature, and quality of the partnerships may be needed.

The Engagement Framework currently does not reflect the significant way in which the rights and obligations of partners and CGIAR and the rules of engagement would be different. The Engagement Framework should show very clearly (in words and actions) that CGIAR considers partners as equals, with complementary roles in the innovation processes in which they engage. The Engagement Framework should reflect that effectiveness in the impact pathways requires everyone on board to work together as partners from the very beginning, and not merely be receptors of recommendations pushed.

In determining the change and vision around engagement, CGIAR needs a clear view of its comparative advantage, and when and who it would need to partner with to carry out aspects of the project life cycle, which are not part of CGIAR's inherent strength. The HLAP believes that CGIAR has a clear comparative advantage on upstream research that focuses on producing global and regional public goods and is best positioned as a strategic complement (not an alternate or substitute) to NARS.



Accordingly, the HLAP believes that the Engagement Framework could do more to signal how CGIAR's partnerships and collaborations can be more transparent and inclusive. Partners should have far greater voice, ownership, and responsibility in partnerships with CGIAR than has previously been the case. This change in the nature of partnerships needs to be recognized explicitly and institutionally.

Beyond the principles of making partnerships more effective, there is a need for the Engagement Framework to include mechanisms for greater visibility and innovation in partnership selection, which should underpin and drive the identification and engagement of partners from the outset, starting with CGIAR's comparative advantage. The Engagement Framework should reflect the possible need for a new and different set of partners for One CGIAR, and how the new partnerships could be achieved.

The Engagement Framework provided a partner typology, which outlined the many different types of partners that CGIAR could engage with in different ways. The Framework should provide an explicit understanding and possible indication of the various roles, rights, obligations, and duties of the different partners within the context of engagement with CGIAR. The HLAP believes that the Framework needs to provide further guidance and a methodology to support CGIAR in being more purposeful in deciding which partners would have specific roles and rights (for example in strategic, programmatic, and budgetary decision-making) and operationalizing this decision-making.

The HLAP recognizes the inclusion in the Engagement Framework of the concept of co-design of projects with multiple agencies and stakeholders of public and private sectors at local, national, and regional levels to be a positive step. The HLAP believes that, as in all innovation processes, co-design is key for empowering the different actors that implement or facilitate innovation. In addition to the importance of co-design already identified as a key component of engagement, it is vital that programming also be underpinned by co-definition of priorities, co-creation of solutions, co-ownership of the strategies, co-leading of efforts, and co-learning. The Engagement Framework should reflect the position of CGIAR as one of a number of stakeholders in the innovation [eco]systems involved in each of the research initiatives, engaging in partnerships with all the other actors and organizations that make innovation in agriculture (at the field level) possible. There also may be a need or opportunity for CGIAR to play a facilitation or broker role in bringing together the various stakeholders in an innovation system, which should be considered and planned for.

## **Partners and Stakeholders**

National governments are very important stakeholders, especially those which host CGIAR entities and support their activities, and as such there should be specific engagement with Host Countries that is carefully planned and implemented. Host Countries, both current and possible future ones, need to be well informed on a timely basis and consulted with on changes and decisions being undertaken by CGIAR, which may impact the entities and activities hosted in those specific countries. The HLAP did not find the engagement with Host Countries well reflected in the Engagement Framework, and it represents an area in need of strengthening.

The HLAP also concluded that the National Agricultural Research and Innovation System (NARIS) actors are still primary actors in the work on food systems and agriculture in areas where CGIAR continues to operate. The partnership between CGIAR and NARIS differs in various regions and countries, and these differences must be clearly understood and used to contextualize the Engagement Framework as it is being implemented.

While agreeing that the private sector is a key stakeholder group to be engaged appropriately by CGIAR, the HLAP did not find a clear basis outlined for the private sector engagement in the Engagement Framework and considers it an area for further elaboration.

The HLAP also recognizes that there are some gaps in the stakeholder groups and geographies, as currently listed in the Engagement Framework, which should be addressed.

## **Agenda-setting, Decision-making and Capacity Sharing**

There are three important areas in which engagement needs to be strengthened and better reflected in the Engagement Framework—namely, engagement of stakeholders in agenda-setting, decision-making, and capacity sharing.

The engagement with stakeholders earlier in the programmatic formulation is well recognized through inclusion of concepts of co-design, but stakeholders can and should be engaged even earlier to co-identify the issues and problems being faced in their own countries and regions, which can form the basis and capacity for planning research within delivery cycles. This area needs to be strongly reflected in the Engagement Framework, with explicit mention of processes for determining the new Initiatives of One CGIAR that are currently being implemented, and especially, for the next cycle of Initiatives.

The HLAP did not find in the Engagement Framework a clear commitment and concept for how the input and opinions of partners, at the global or regional levels, would be considered in key system-wide decisions affecting all of CGIAR's work. While the HLAP affirms that stakeholder involvement in agenda-setting and decision-making within CGIAR will be crucial for strengthened engagement and partnership, the HLAP found little reference as to how partners would be involved in ongoing governance of One CGIAR in a strengthened way.

Furthermore, the HLAP observed that the process of imparting ownership of the capacity shared and scaled up is not incorporated explicitly in the Engagement Framework.

## **Consultations and Dialogue**

It has been understood by HLAP that CGIAR has undertaken consultations with various stakeholder groups on different topics and through different processes, as part of its One CGIAR transformation process. The HLAP, however, did not find evidence of these consultations, with respect to what resulted from them or how the consultations have influenced or been integrated into the Engagement Framework. Moving forward, the Engagement Framework needs to set the expectation for commitment to prior and informed consultation in CGIAR's activities as a key pillar of its engagement activities. The HLAP proposes that stakeholders, and especially those that are currently or could become partners of CGIAR, need to be engaged in regular consultations and dialogue. One key element that HLAP believes is important for these dialogues is that they are not always meetings of the same network of actors, but rather a serious effort is needed to include relevant science and innovation stakeholders, including those not previously engaged or partnered with.

## **Operationalization**

The HLAP concluded that the Engagement Framework alone will not bring about the intended and necessary changes in CGIAR's engagement and partnership with stakeholders, without additional measures taken to ensure effective operationalization.

The HLAP did not discover the domains on which the Engagement Framework is to be applied within CGIAR's work, nor how the Engagement Framework is woven into the wider One CGIAR institutional architecture and arrangements, or clearly how it will be linked to key programmatic plans, processes, and life cycles. The HLAP observed that there was a strong focus on the "system," with little indication of the application to Centers and "projects," which are where partnerships practically occur.

The HLAP recommends that the translation of improved guiding principles into effective practice will be vital for the Engagement Framework to leverage its influence and have an impact on the way CGIAR does its business.

## HLAP Recommendations to CGIAR System Board

As previously indicated, the recommendations developed by the HLAP rely primarily on the three investigative tools utilized by the Panel. However, deliberations among the HLAP have also been informed by numerous informal discussions. Although not part of the HLAP ToR, the Panel takes note of the draft *CGIAR Integration Framework Agreement*, released on October 20, 2022, during the course of its work as a building block for implementation of One CGIAR.

The Panel also recognizes the announcement made in November 2022, that CGIAR signed an agreement, “Abidjan II Communiqué” (Annex IX) with the African Development Bank (AfDB), African Union Commission (AUC), and the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), with the aim of aligning collective efforts to boost food and nutrition security on the continent.<sup>18</sup>

The recommendations were refined based on a session with the System Board during their retreat on December 9, 2022, in which the HLAP presented its preliminary recommendations and had an in-depth discussion with the Board. A number of questions and ideas emerged from the interaction with the Board, which were taken into account in finalizing the recommendations. Where some suggestions were considered outside the current remit of the HLAP to fulfill, advice has been provided on how CGIAR could take these forward.

The HLAP members will continue to champion and support the key principles and opportunities for active partnership and engagement of CGIAR with stakeholders through their various networks.

### Recommendations

#### Section A: Top THREE priority recommendations with associated actions

- 1. CGIAR needs to better orient the new One CGIAR model and, in particular, the institutional arrangements being put into place toward improved engagement and partnership with key stakeholders.**

Effective engagement with partners using a new modality is crucial to the success of One CGIAR, and requires commitment from CGIAR and its donors. It calls for rethinking about how CGIAR engages partners at all levels, in a way that is truly embedded into the culture, institutional architecture, roles, responsibilities, and operations of One CGIAR. The One CGIAR transformation needs to provide an opportunity for the Global South to be at CGIAR’s “tables” and contribute to and participate in a structured way.

However, improving partnerships and engagement requires more than institutional and operational adjustments. One CGIAR needs a new and forward-looking partnership strategy, which considers the changing global science and innovation landscape, as well as the practice and lessons learned from past decades of CGIAR work. Based on this new partnership strategy, new institutional and operational arrangements should be developed, taking care not to increase levels of administration and bureaucracy, and importantly, a culture of engagement needs to be cultivated.

As One CGIAR is planned to be a more integrated model, careful consideration needs to be given to how this integration can efficiently work in practice and become tightly woven into the fabric of how the whole system operates. A vital part will be the bridging of science and partnerships to ensure that these work in an integrated and balanced way to achieve the goals.

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<sup>18</sup> “Abidjan II: African Development Bank, African Union Commission, CGIAR, Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa Join Forces to Strengthen Africa’s Food Systems”: <https://www.cgiar.org/news-events/news/abidjan-ii-african-development-bank-african-union-commission-cgiar-forum-for-agricultural-research-in-africa-join-forces-to-strengthen-africas-food-systems>

The right entry points need to be established at various levels and segments of partnerships. At an operational level, the question of how the global units will be coordinated with each other (for example, science with partnerships) needs to be addressed, including consideration of factors, such as size, resourcing, and decision-making processes, in relation to regional/country offices and the existing Centers, and taking into account outreach and scaling out of CGIAR impact.

CGIAR is not the only or primary actor in today's agricultural innovation systems. Therefore, the One CGIAR transformation should strengthen existing partnerships, or create new partnership platforms, as needed, and align them with its operational arrangements to better support a partnership approach.

The HLAP, therefore, recommends the following actions:

- 1.1 CGIAR should *adopt the Engagement Framework as a central driver for improved engagement and partnership as part of its core business*, not as an add-on or parallel track. CGIAR should *fully operationalize* the Engagement Framework by developing the appropriate policies, guidelines, procedures, partnership principles,<sup>19</sup> institutional arrangements, roles/responsibilities, monitoring, evaluation, and learning activities to support its effective, sustainable, and impactful implementation. The Engagement Framework should be used to cultivate a strong culture of engagement with practical actions included to raise awareness, instill ownership, and promote responsibility across all parts of the System. (See section on Review of CGIAR's Engagement Framework.)
- 1.2 CGIAR should *prepare a new partnership strategy* with proactive, transparent, and effective consultation and dialogue with partners and stakeholders established as critical conditions. This partnership strategy should be strongly linked to the Engagement Framework, both conceptually and operationally, using an innovative tracking mechanism to ensure continuous alignment and progress.
- 1.3 CGIAR should *define its comparative advantage within the new landscape*, recognizing its own transformation and the dynamic nature of other actors within the sector; agree on appropriate engagement modalities with its diverse partners; and communicate the unique space it now occupies in the international agricultural R&D sector. CGIAR should strengthen the theory of change and impact pathways, which it has already articulated through the Engagement Framework, to indicate even more clearly, and in a more compelling way, how CGIAR will engage differently and more effectively with partners in this new era and landscape.
- 1.4 CGIAR should *establish or strengthen existing, appropriately integrated institutional mechanisms to effectively coordinate the activities related to One CGIAR's partnerships and engagement*, as part of the agricultural research and innovation systems where it operates. Any mechanism used or developed needs to have clearly agreed upon roles that are linked to the rest of the System and to the Centers; it should be adequately resourced financially and with respect to capacity; it should be empowered to foster necessary relationships, facilitate communication and visibility, and ensure that the engagement is productive; and

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<sup>19</sup> See Section B of recommendations for a complementary proposed action around strengthening partnership principles through harmonizing with others. The HLAP, particularly, takes note of the GFAR Partnership Principles: <https://www.gfar.net/documents/gfar-partnership-principles> and those included in the recently signed Abidjan II Communique (Annex IX), "The High-Level Consultative Forum on Strengthening Africa's Agricultural Research and Innovation in the Context of the One CGIAR Reforms": <https://storage.googleapis.com/cgiarorg/2022/11/Communique-SIGNED-Sept-2022.pdf>

it needs to be widely communicated to partners. The HLAP sees good scope for this to be operationalized at a regional level as partnership and engagement hubs but cautions against creating unnecessary and costly administrative layers, which require additional management and distract from the key mandate activities. However, in countries in which several CGIAR Centers are active, and in which important initiatives are being implemented with an increased focus on delivery, some form of country-level coordination may be needed. Establishing such a mechanism should be decided in close coordination with the countries' governments.

- 1.5 CGIAR should *develop and define the CGIAR matrix management structure further to clearly show the most effective roles and responsibilities, and how these are linked, for supporting effective partnership and engagement activities* across Science Groups, Action Areas, Initiatives, Centers, and Regions and Partnerships groups. The identified roles and responsibilities should be matched with appropriate budgets, decision-making authority, and intra-institutional connections, particularly the bridge between science and partnership roles, to help facilitate and streamline a strong partnership approach.
- 1.6 Accounting for regional specificities, CGIAR should *map out a more robust and innovative partner typology (improving on what is found in the Engagement Framework) onto the new CGIAR institutional arrangements and its programmatic life cycle. The mapping needs to identify clearly and transparently the major partners in contrast to additional collaborators of CGIAR. The mapping also needs to include new partnerships to be sought; and the varying roles, rights, and duties of different stakeholders, as they engage and partner with CGIAR, as mutual beneficiaries. This typology should also draw on a taxonomy of the various countries and regions that CGIAR interacts with, or should interact with, to further help provide better definition of the nature of that engagement.*

**2. Recognizing that engagement with stakeholders from the onset of and continuing throughout programs is key to a collaborative and impactful way of doing business, CGIAR should develop and implement a visible process for inclusive agenda-setting, co-design, and co-ownership of all aspects of One CGIAR's programmatic efforts.**

CGIAR's research programs, including the resource mobilization efforts for these, should be co-created with strong stakeholder involvement to ensure co-ownership, which will both strengthen partnerships as well as their impact. It is essential to bring partners to the table at the outset on agenda-setting, project design, and creation, and to embed them into all phases of research and delivery. The weak link and capacity have often been the last mile—the delivery and the translation of research results into the innovation cycle. Therefore, projects that are to be implemented in the Global South should be designed and implemented to respond to the needs of the countries in the Global South, complementing their own development plans and institutions, and any regional/subregional priorities with which they are aligned, especially where CGIAR experience can strengthen the capacities at the last mile.

The involvement of stakeholders, particularly those from the Global South, is needed in project development to ensure co-ownership of the research portfolio, enhance knowledge sharing, and enable eventual capacity strengthening and delivery. CGIAR needs to identify and implement ways to strengthen engagement of stakeholders from the Global South at multiple levels and, as appropriate, multiple types of research collaboration—from global to local—through representation and participation in various CGIAR bodies and processes. There is a need to elevate Global South ownership of the overall agenda and priority-setting as a strategic goal.

To achieve this crucial role of engagement in programmatic activities of One CGIAR, institutional arrangements need to support strong bridging between science and partnership roles. A roadmap for bridging science and partnership needs to come in the programmatic life cycle, in which engagement starts at the onset of priority-setting and runs through the whole gamut of programmatic activities of co-design and implementation to delivery.

The HLAP, therefore, recommends the following actions:

- 2.1 CGIAR should *revisit governance arrangements, and the related funding contribution strategies as needed, to better recognize and support inclusion of major Country players in agricultural R&D in appropriate CGIAR strategy-setting and decision-making bodies (for example, the System Council, System Board, etc.).* Note, for example, that China, India, Brazil, and South Africa play major and quite significant roles in global science and innovation, and CGIAR would be enriched and strengthened if these countries were recognized and engaged individually as core partners and contributors. Other such major countries may be additionally identified. (See Box 1 for current System Council arrangements, for context).
  - 2.2 CGIAR should *examine how to strengthen and elevate the participation of key representation of other "Global South stakeholders" as groups in its global bodies (System Council, System Board, etc.),* through preexisting organizations/networks, such as, but not limited to GFAR, to ensure effective representation without having to create new structures.<sup>20</sup>
  - 2.3 CGIAR should *design and establish a systematic, innovative, and regular dialogue and consultation process that could serve as a "partnership platform" and engage partners using a consistent methodology for supporting inclusive agenda-setting, planning, implementation, knowledge sharing, and delivery.* In addition to its own efforts, CGIAR should explore appropriate partnerships with those that can help to bring together a range of stakeholders in ways that can achieve these aims, such as but not limited to GFAR and the Regional Fora; and CGIAR should also seek opportunities to participate in partnership platforms of the South, where possible, to deepen dialogue and partnerships.
  - 2.4 CGIAR should *elaborate, in a detailed, transparent way, the modalities and opportunities for co-design of future CGIAR Initiatives,* which will be put in place for the next programmatic cycle. This requires specific attention for the Regional Initiatives. The responsibility for designing and implementing the modalities needs to be clearly established across science and engagement/partnership units.
  - 2.5 CGIAR should *strengthen collaboration with NARIS in particular geographical areas, to be identified through careful plans for redefining the basis of those collaborations based on countries' needs, own development plans, and capacities* (for example, co-designing, co-leading projects, capacity sharing, providing support, etc.). An ecosystem-based taxonomy of different countries' NARIS in terms of needs, capacity, and other relevant criteria would be a useful tool to support a more strategic and targeted approach.
- 3. Recognizing the vital role of Host Countries, CGIAR should prioritize the establishment and urgent implementation of appropriate engagement modalities with Host Country Governments, as key partners in the One CGIAR transformation.**

<sup>20</sup> Note: GFAR currently participates in the CGIAR System Council as an Active Observer (non-voting role) only: <https://www.cgiar.org/how-we-work/governance/system-council/sc-composition/>

Host Countries<sup>21</sup> are critical as key partners of the CGIAR System, due to the vital role they play in providing the enabling environment for CGIAR Centers (for example, Host Country agreements, including freedom to operate, immunities, and privileges provided)—and through them One CGIAR. However, the HLAP discovered that, in the One CGIAR transformation, there was a sense that these voices had been diminished, their contribution was not sufficiently appreciated, and their concerns not taken seriously. Urgent attention should be paid to rectify this situation, to bring Host Countries to the table, and to see how their concerns can be addressed in the ongoing restructuring and transformation.

The HLAP, therefore, recommends the following actions:

- 3.1 CGIAR should *develop a clear strategy and mechanism for dedicated and direct, regular engagement and partnership with Host Country Governments*, including through periodic (for example, annual) consultations at the ministerial level, making use of any existing modality for high-level policy dialogue and engagement with decision-makers (for example, the African Union and its regional/continental initiatives, including the African Union–European Union High Level Policy Dialogue [HLPD] for Science Technology and Innovation; or the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme [CAADP]),<sup>22</sup> or designing its own modality for dialogue and engagement.
- 3.2 CGIAR should *put into place a representation mechanism for Host Countries, as a group, in key CGIAR governance and decision-making bodies* (for example, the System Council, System Board, etc.).
- 3.3 CGIAR should *engage with Host Country Governments to better understand the Country's development goals and plans. CGIAR should seek to align and partner with the Host Country Governments in One CGIAR's programmatic planning and delivery*, including through appropriate regional and subregional mechanisms that are already in place.

## Section B: Complementary proposed actions

The HLAP also proposes that, complementary to the priority recommendations previously articulated, CGIAR plan for and implement several actions in the following two areas:

### 1. CGIAR should be more strategic with engagement and partnerships through:

- Undertaking a reflection and diagnosis of its current and recent collaborations, and making use of past evaluations and assessments, to examine and carefully identify what changes need to occur to strengthen future engagement and partnerships.

<sup>21</sup> There was no clear definition that the HLAP could work from on “Host Countries,” but it was generally accepted to be those countries with which CGIAR entities have formal agreements that allow for its presence and operation. A clear definition may be helpful moving forward.

<sup>22</sup> A recent side event of the 18th CAADAP Partnership Platform, attended by an HLAP member, entitled “Forging collaborative engagement between CGIAR and CAADAP,” looked at the CAADAP partnership with CGIAR and how to encourage stronger participation of CGIAR in the CAADAP program and strengthen the ability of CGIAR to identify entry points at regional and country levels, since CAADAP is a platform for the Ministers of Agriculture in Africa.

- Strengthening and streamlining Partnership Principles for engaging and empowering all stakeholders as a global standard,<sup>23</sup> harmonizing with other partnership principles where possible, and making use of the principles in partnership agreements and contracts.
- Designing clear partnership identification criteria and processes, including a set of partnership selection criteria, which would underpin and drive the engagement of partners from the outset. The criteria should use, but also go beyond, the principles of making partnerships more effective generally, as outlined in the Engagement Framework—to help bring attention to stakeholders that are currently not well represented in CGIAR processes,<sup>24</sup> and to enable the identification of new partners at regional and national levels and support the mapping of how partners can be integrated into CGIAR programs. The criteria, therefore, should define CGIAR’s comparative advantage and provide a clear understanding of what partners can bring to the table through their roles/capacities.
- Reviewing the role of the “private sector” is critical, as a partner for CGIAR, the ways in which it can be beneficial to engage with it, and the modalities to do so—making use of key experts in this area and developing a sub-strategy of the Engagement Framework.

**2. CGIAR should strengthen the operation of engagement and partnerships through:**

- Undertaking comprehensive and holistic communication efforts to increase the visibility and awareness of stakeholders about the objectives, functionality, and processes of the One CGIAR transformation, including its intentions and direction for improved partnerships. This undertaking should include a communications work plan and committed resourcing. A practical suggestion would be to publish an “annual report” on partnerships and engagement or include a key section in current annual reporting.
- Creating a capacity-strengthening coalition, with key actors to help innovate and implement the capacity-sharing work, as outlined in the Engagement Framework.

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<sup>23</sup> Note, for example, as previously referenced, the Partnership Principles of GFAR and others have developed and would like to establish as a global standard. See, “Selected Criteria for Assessing Quality of Research Partnerships”: <https://www.gfar.net/sites/default/files/GFAR%20Partnership%20Principles.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> For example, farmers; GFAR; Regional Fora and subregional organizations; NARIS in various regions; the Caribbean; regional networks of regional or science partners; subregional bodies; other UN agencies, such as the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP).



## Annex I



### CGIAR High-level Advisory Panel on Country and Regional Engagement and Partnerships in the Global South<sup>25</sup>

#### Terms of Reference

##### Purpose

Conscious of the need for CGIAR to refresh and deepen its engagement with partners in the Global South and enhance their voice and participation in CGIAR, its Centers and Alliances, a High-Level Advisory Panel (HLAP) is being established to guide leadership and staff in strengthening their strategic engagement with countries and regional partners, building on their track record of achievements so far. The goal is to better facilitate the co-development of solutions for food, land, and water systems transformation in view of evolving country and regional opportunities and needs. Reporting to CGIAR's System Board, the HLAP will review current engagement practice and recommend ways to establish sustained, equitable and effective science and innovation partnerships that leverage talent and skills to this effect across the Global South. This statement outlines the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the HLAP.

##### Background

CGIAR is fundamentally rooted in partnerships, with the organization recognizing the immense value it garners from diverse voices across the globe. For instance, CGIAR's 2030 Research and Innovation Strategy was shaped by two rounds of regional consultations, resulting in a demand-driven proposition for the organization and its partners. Nevertheless, CGIAR's System Board recognizes that despite long-standing efforts as a collaborative and responsive partner, new forms of engagement deserve to be explored. CGIAR's System Council echoed this sentiment at its 15th meeting in March 2022, as it reiterated its strong commitment to moving forward with the 'One CGIAR' transition. The opportunity before CGIAR to seize this moment has been echoed in feedback from a broad range of stakeholders who have collectively called on CGIAR to better demonstrate how it is listening to and adjusting how it works with partners in the Global South, to ensure their perspectives are properly reflected in the One CGIAR transition.

##### Panel membership

The HLAP will be constituted by two Co-Conveners and up to 12 additional members with a broad understanding of the challenges and opportunities for research and development in food, land, and water systems transformation across the planet. The Co-Conveners and members will be globally recognized thought leaders with strong professional and personal reputations, and exemplary integrity and ethics.

They will be nominated and selected by the CGIAR System Board, which acknowledges feedback from multiple stakeholders received in recent weeks. HLAP members will possess a keen

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<sup>25</sup> The Global South is a widely used term in academia and policy discourse, with multiple definitions and interpretations. In this statement we use it essentially to refer to low- and middle-income countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, representing key regions where CGIAR works.

appreciation of the role National Agricultural Research and Innovation Systems ('NARIS'<sup>26</sup>) play in research, development, innovation, and scaling in the Global South, and will be representative of these rich institutional ecosystems. HLAP members will include senior government officials, 'connectors' to key regions and stakeholder groups (including the private sector), and the heads of both the Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation (GFAR) and the Regional Fora<sup>27</sup> that are its members – representing the regions where CGIAR works across the Global South. The Co-Conveners may bring in additional voices to ensure a wide range of opinion is heard as warranted by the course and direction of discussions in the HLAP.

### **Scope of work**

The HLAP will reflect and advise on partnerships for impact, and mechanisms for shared learning and engagement with governments, regional organizations, farmer groups, the private sector, and community organizations across the regions where CGIAR works.

The concept of partnership advocated here is one of transparent co-creation, bringing diverse views to bear on problems and leveraging assets and skills in pursuit of the mission of 'food, land and water systems transformation in a climate crisis.' Suggested principles and approaches for CGIAR and partners to consider are offered in CGIAR's just-published Engagement Framework for Partnerships & Advocacy – Toward Greater Impact.

As envisaged at this time, the work plan of the HLAP will comprise three steps as follows: first, to engage in facilitated discussions with significant stakeholders against the background of on-going consultations by CGIAR, GFAR and the Regional Fora identified above; second, to review and advise on the Engagement Framework in light of feedback from stakeholders; and third, to formulate recommendations on the way forward.

In this respect, the HLAP will share reflections and guidance on strategies, approaches, and best practices overall for the operationalization of the Engagement Framework, including metrics for delivery in the context of the ongoing transition to One CGIAR.

### **Timing and cadence**

The HLAP will meet 4 to 5 times during the second half of 2022 to deliver on the three steps, interacting with CGIAR's System Board and senior leadership. An indicative timetable is set out in Annex II.

### **Support**

Operational support for the work of Co-Conveners and the Panel, including involvement in a broad series of consultations, will be arranged and stewarded by CGIAR's Global Director for Partnerships & Advocacy, with CGIAR's Global Director for Communications & Outreach providing strategic guidance on communications aspects of the work.

### **Compensation**

An honorarium, at a rate commensurate with CGIAR's independent committee members may be made available to the HLAP Co-Conveners and members who are not remunerated in full for their professional time.

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<sup>26</sup> NARIS are constituted by National Agricultural Research and Extension Services (NARES), research centers, academia, civil society organizations, and the private sector.

<sup>27</sup> The regional fora include the Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East & North Africa (AARINENA); the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI); the Association of Agricultural Research Organizations of Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus (ACAARI); the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA); and the Forum of the Americas for Agricultural Research and Technological Development (FORAGRO).

## Annex II – Indicative Timetable

| Item | Date             | Action   | Responsible party                              |
|------|------------------|--|--|
| 1    | 14 June          | System Board approval of TOR and member approach   | SB Chair to steward                            |
| 2    | 17 June          | Advisory Panel members approached, and availability confirmed  | SB Chair to steward. GD P&A to action/ support |
| 2    | 21 June          | Advisory Panel members publicly identified   | GD C&O   |
| 3    | 27 June          | Panel convenes for initial high-level briefing with System Board Chair and other key stakeholders  | SB Secretary, GD P&A and GD C&O, Co-Conveners  |
| 4    | Across July      | Panel member virtual engagement with key CGIAR partner representatives; virtual fora concept developed, and initial consultations commenced ( <i>to run across July and August on thematic basis</i> ) | Panel support team                             |
| 5    | 9 August         | Panel convenes with System Board and EMT for open discussion   | Panel support team                             |
| 6    | Across August    | Panel engagement with SC regional constituencies, and global and regional fora on engagement modalities  | Panel support team, CGIAR Regional Directors   |
| 7    | 23 August        | Panel ad hoc call with System Council members, System Board Chair and EMT  | SC Secretary, Panel Support team               |
| 8    | 6 September      | Panel convenes with System Board and EMT for open discussion on emerging themes  | SB Secretary, GD P&A and GD C&O                |
| 9    | Across September | Panel ongoing consultations across stakeholders  | Panel support team                             |
| 10   | 4 October        | Panel convenes with System Board and EMT for open discussion on emerging themes  | SB Secretary, GD P&A and GD C&O                |
| 11   | 18 October       | Panel ad hoc call with System Council members, System Board Chair and EMT  | SC Secretary, Panel Support team               |
| 12   | By end-Oct       | Panel elaborates reflections and guidance  | Panel support team                             |
| 13   | 15 November      | Panel convenes with System Board and EMT to share reflections and guidance   | SB Secretary, GD P&A and GD C&O                |
| 14   | 21 November      | System Board presents materials on work and outcomes of Advisory Panel for   | SC Secretary, GD P&A and GD C&O                |

| Item | Date            | Action  | Responsible party                        |
|------|-----------------|---|--|
|      |                 | System Council in-person meeting on 31 Oct/1 Nov in Brisbane, Australia   |  |
| 15   | By end November | System Board communicates pathways forward taking into consideration SC deliberations and final reflections of Advisory Panel | SB Chair, supported by GD P&A and GD C&O |

## Annex III: High-level Advisory Panel Membership

### *Co-Conveners*

**Dr. Uma Lele**, President of the International Association of Agricultural Economists and co-author of *Food for All: International Organizations and the Transformation of Agriculture* (Oxford University Press, 2022). She has five decades of experience in research, operations, policy analysis, and evaluation in the World Bank, universities, and international organizations, including on previous meta evaluations of CGIAR.

**Dr. Namanga Ngongi**, currently a member of the African Economic Research Consortium, Chair of the Seed Systems Group (SSG) and former Chair of the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture's Board. He was President of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) from 2007 to 2012, and involved in the One CGIAR reform process as a member of the CGIAR System Management Board.

### *Panel Members*

**Dr. Adil Abdelrahim**, a widely published researcher and academic, is President of the Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East and North Africa (AARINENA).

**Hon. Dr. Mohammad Abdur Razzaque** is Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

**Dr. Yemi Akinbamijo**, an agriculture expert with a track record of leadership in Food/Nutrition Security, Rural Development, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, is Executive Director of the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA).

**Dr. Julio Berdegue** was FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean between 2017–2022; he served as member and chair of the Board of the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) and has participated in several advisory roles with different CGIAR Centers.

**Dr. Botir Dosov** participated in developing and implementing national and international programs and strategies in agri-food systems over his 25-year career; currently, he is CEO/Executive Secretary, Central Asia and the Caucasus Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (CACAARI).

**Dr. Jikun Huang**, a Fellow of the World Academy of Sciences and the Applied Economics Association, is a Professor at the School of Advanced Agricultural Sciences and Honorary Director of China Center for Agricultural Policy and Director of New Rural Development Institute, Peking University.

**Dr. Ravi Khetarpal**, Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation (GFAR) Chair and Executive Secretary, Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions; he is deeply engaged in promoting, facilitating, and networking for strengthening agricultural research and innovation systems in the region.

**Dr. Hildegard Lingnau**, Executive Secretary, Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation, has over 30 years of experience in research, policy development, and management positions in institutions and countries all over the world.

**Hon. Dr. Gérardine Mukeshimana**, Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources of the Republic of Rwanda, is responsible for oversight of all agricultural and livestock-related activities in the country.

**Viviana Palmieri** serves as the Executive Secretary of the Forum of the Americas on Agricultural Research and Technology Development (FORAGRO) and technical specialist in Innovation and Technology for Agriculture at the Directorate of Technical Cooperation of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture.

## **Annex IV: Summary Findings and Recommendations from the 2017 Evaluation of CGIAR Partnerships**

### ***Main Findings***

Some of the main conclusions and findings from the Evaluation were:

- The 2008 CGIAR reforms steered the System and its Centers toward greater collaboration and coordination in CGIAR Research Programs (CRPs), bringing Centers together to design and implement the programs, and generating greater attention to the strategic role of partnerships along the impact pathways.
- The 2008 reforms led to greater involvement of partners in consultation about program content, resulting from the Centers' deliberate attempts to form strong partnerships with their collaborators.
- The evaluation also found that, although public–private partnerships (PPPs) had been emphasized in reform discourse, the System lacked agreement and strategies for how best to engage with the private sector for enhancement of science and delivery.
- Scaling of research was also an area where strategic direction was lacking, both in terms of the extent of CGIAR's direct involvement in delivery of technology and the support needed for national partners to take over delivery and scaling effectively.
- Funding to support partnerships and partners' work requires attention: the combination of uncertainties associated with funding represented a major constraint to partnering, and hence, to the delivery of CGIAR's objectives. Mechanisms are needed to reduce the unpredictability of core funding, its late delivery, and the constraints imposed by annual budgeting. In addition, since it is not realistic to expect the CGIAR budget to fund all aspects of partnerships and scaling of results, more attention is needed by CGIAR and its partners to increase co-funding of activities and investments in agricultural research and development in the recipient countries.
- Finally, the evaluation noted that CGIAR's comparative advantage lies in a combination of two factors: presence in and knowledge of the many countries where it works, in some cases with long-term links to national institutions and a reputation as a solid scientific partner. With capacities and interest evolving fast, CGIAR and its partners need to continuously reflect on their respective comparative advantage. For sustainability of the research program, Centers must continue to be strong and credible partners, maintaining not only ground presence and infrastructure, but also scientific expertise in core areas. They must also collaborate with organizations that have strong capacity for scaling and their own sources of funding.

### ***Recommendations***

The evaluation made six recommendations—the first three relate to strategic selection of partnerships, two relate to the enabling environment, and one to partnerships in action.

#### ***Recommendation 1: All CRPs should have a distinct partnership strategy and accompanying operational plan.***

Strategies should clearly align approaches to partnerships with research strategies and theories of change, and make clear the objectives for partner selection and engagement to strengthen research

implementation, delivery, and scaling of results. Operational plans should provide a basis for monitoring progress in development of partnerships. There is value in developing these documents because of the collective analysis it will require, and to build on what was described in the Phase 2 proposals and ensure it is actioned. Centers that have not recently updated their partnership strategies may find value in doing so. Documented strategies should reflect the internal relationships that Centers have in CRPs.

***Recommendation 2: Strategic reviews should be conducted of multi-stakeholder partnership models.***

In order to optimize CGIAR's involvement and investment of resources in multi-stakeholder platforms (MSPs). System-level strategic reviews should be conducted of the types of partnerships in which CGIAR has invested heavily or where it expects to expand participation. Global MSPs dealing with environment, food security, and nutrition are a priority for such a review. The aim of these reviews would be to draw lessons on the following:

- i. the objectives of CGIAR participation in this type of partnership
- ii. CGIAR's comparative advantage and role in this type of MSP;
- iii. resources and capacities involved; and
- iv. their potential to enhance program objectives, and to offer strategic guidance for future engagement.
- v. the evaluation sees this review as a follow-on exercise to the report on partnerships that has been published by the Independent Science and Partnership Council (ISPC), and therefore something that it may be appropriate for the ISPC to undertake.

***Recommendation 3: A strategic analysis should be conducted at System level for guiding the development of public–private partnerships.***

Given the importance attached to partnership with the private sector and the uneven progress that has so far been made, an analysis should be carried out at System level of the following aspects:

- i. a broad plan for engagement with multinationals and smaller companies to best fit the needs of the Strategy and Results Framework (SRF); and
- ii. drawing on experience to date, principles of engaging with private sector organizations according to their size and global reach.

The strategy should acknowledge both CGIAR's comparative advantage as a public sector entity with field presence in developing countries, and any potential risks to reputation. The evaluation sees the strategy development process as a way of consolidating and expanding the thinking that has been done by CGIAR's governing bodies previously, and progressing towards implementable guidelines.

It may be necessary to implement practical measures to support the implementation of the strategy, such as support on due diligence processes to assess partners and advice to Centers from intellectual property rights (IPR) specialists.

***Recommendation 4: A position paper on funding should be prepared and used for influencing discussion and decisions on funding of partnerships.***

Given the growing contribution of bilateral funding to total CGIAR funding, the System Council should prepare guidance on how it expects CGIAR and Centers to contribute to supporting partnerships when funding is dominated by primarily bilateral projects, and how co-financing of research and development by partners and stakeholders can be best stimulated. This discussion should be linked to a reassessment of the scope of CGIAR's research portfolio and funding requirements relative to the System Level Outcomes (SLOs).



At the same time, in order to minimize disruption to partnerships resulting from problems with funding, the System Council and System Organization should work together to a) reduce to the extent possible large fluctuations and late delivery of Window 1 and 2 funding, and b) attempt to find a way to provide funding with multi-annual budgets.

***Recommendation 5: System-wide organizational learning on using partnerships to best effect should be enhanced.***

The System Management Board should oversee activities to enhance organizational learning about partnerships through the following activities, with support from central funding:

- i. taking advantage of opportunities offered by existing activities that bring scientists together across Centers and CRPs;
- ii. preparing periodic meta-synthesis report on partnerships from narrative information in the annual reports; and
- iii. in selected countries that are a focus for the country collaboration process, introducing mechanisms by which locally-based Centers and their partners can reflect and learn together about their partnerships.

***Recommendation 6: Emerging and developing country NARS with strong capacity should be more closely involved in research management in CRPs.***

In order to strengthen relationships with those emerging and developing country NARS that have strong research capacity, CRPs, and Centers should increase their efforts to involve these institutions in planning and management of CRP research.

The evaluation recognizes that the recommendation to increase developing country NARS' involvement in research management will be challenging to implement. As well as commitment from CGIAR, it requires that the home organizations of the science leaders from NARS encompasses regional or global development issues, and are willing to express their interest in CGIAR through engagement with the CRP process and investment of resources. For this reason, only a small number of developing country partners are likely to be interested and qualified for direct involvement in research management.

## Annex V: Stakeholders Questionnaire on One CGIAR Engagement and Partnership

### Cover Note to Survey

The One CGIAR transition is a reformulation of CGIAR's partnerships, knowledge, assets, and global presence aiming for greater integration and impact in the face of interconnected food, land, water, and climate crises.

The CGIAR System Board appointed an independent High-level Advisory Panel (HLAP) to guide CGIAR in improving its strategic engagement with partners during transition to One CGIAR (See "CGIAR System Board Names High-Level Advisory Panel Members to Guide Leadership in Strengthening Engagement with Partners – CGIAR" [\[https://www.cgiar.org/news-events/news/cgiar-system-board-names-high-level-advisory-panel-members-to-guide-leadership-in-strengthening-engagement-with-partners/\]](https://www.cgiar.org/news-events/news/cgiar-system-board-names-high-level-advisory-panel-members-to-guide-leadership-in-strengthening-engagement-with-partners/)).

The Panel has been tasked to "advise on fostering ownership of reforms and mechanisms for joint learning and engagement..." with partners across the regions in which CGIAR works. **We want to capture what is going well with the CGIAR reforms, with respect to its engagement with stakeholders, as well as what needs to be improved. Further we want to know about the unfulfilled needs of existing CGIAR partners, as well as the needs of others who are not CGIAR partners but wish to enter into partnership.** Stakeholders may be contacted to provide feedback in one or more ways: 1) online survey, 2) one-on-one interviews, 3) focus group discussions.

You have been carefully chosen to answer questions in the linked survey to elicit your forthright views which will help inform the HLAP's advice and recommendations to CGIAR leadership:

Background materials (see [here](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1n5KziifvL0St0FlqDDk5L8O7qp5bwPTb/edit) [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1n5KziifvL0St0FlqDDk5L8O7qp5bwPTb/edit]) on the CGIAR reform process are available for information.

The survey will take 20–25 minutes to complete. We hope that you will carefully consider your responses and provide your full and frank feedback. The survey is designed to apply to a diverse group of Stakeholders; therefore, you may or may not be able to respond to all of the questions. If that is the case, we kindly ask that you focus only on those questions which are relevant to your knowledge and experience, and simply move on to the next question, or if you wish to indicate the reason why you are unable to answer (e.g., "no familiarity with the issue").

The survey responses are anonymous, but the final field provides space for you to identify yourself in case the panel decides to reach out to you to follow up on your responses.

We kindly ask that you respond to the survey by **October 7, 2022**. Subject to the strength and quality of responses, the survey results will be made public later in the year.

Our best regards,

Uma Lele and Namanga Ngongi, on behalf of the HLAP

## Section 1: Background/Setting the Stage

1. What category of stakeholder or partner best describes your actual or desired relationship with CGIAR? (If you have multiple actual or desired relationships with CGIAR, please select the one that is most important to you.)

Drop down menu:

Academia  
Advisory/Extension Service  
Collaborator/Partner in CGIAR Research (university, national/regional institute, etc.)  
Consumer Organization  
Farmer Organization  
CGIAR Center  
Host Country Policymaker  
National/Regional Organization  
NARS Leader  
NGO/Civil Society  
Private Sector  
CGIAR Center Director  
CGIAR Center Board Member  
CGIAR Center Scientific Staff  
CGIAR Donor/Funder  
CGIAR Regional Director  
CGIAR Senior Leadership Team  
CGIAR System Board Member  
Other CGIAR Staff  
Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

2. How many years ago did you first have any kind of relationship with CGIAR?

Drop down to select number of years:

- a. None (I do not yet have any relationship with CGIAR)
- b. less than 1 year (I just began my relationship with CGIAR)
- c. 1–3 years
- d. 3–5 years
- e. 5–10 years
- f. 10–15 years
- g. 15–20 years
- h. 20 or more years

3. Are you currently or have you recently (in the past 2–3 years) been *operationally* engaged with CGIAR (i.e., as a collaborator/partner, employee, consultant, donor/funder, or otherwise)?

Drop down menu:

Yes  
No

4. If yes, in what capacity?

Drop down menu

1. Employee
2. Collaborator/Partner
3. Consultant
4. Donor/Funder
5. Center/System board member
6. Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

5. In what programmatic field(s) do you work? (Choose all that apply)

Drop down menu:

- a. Food security and nutrition
- b. Natural resource management/Agroecology/Forestry
- c. Policy/Markets/Value chains
- d. Crops
- e. Livestock/fisheries
- f. Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

6. In what area(s) do you believe CGIAR partnerships can be most productive? (Choose all that apply)

Drop down menu:

- a. Research
- b. Planning
- c. Policy
- d. Development
- e. Agricultural value chains (e.g., inputs, credit, insurance, production, value addition, etc.)
- f. Output/technology transfer (e.g., breeding/germplasm, raw data, fact sheets, climate/crop/livestock models, peer-reviewed papers, joint evaluations, etc.)
- g. Other, please specify (including more detailed explanation of your choice above, if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

7. What is your level of understanding of One CGIAR reforms? (On a scale of 0 (no understanding) to 10 (intimate understanding))

Drop down menu:

0    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

8. How far do you believe One CGIAR reforms have been operationalized? (On a scale of 0 (not at all operationalized) to 10 (fully operationalized))

Drop down menu:

0    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

9. Have you been approached by One CGIAR to provide advice or inputs *on the reform process* in any context from 2019 up to now?

Drop down menu:

- Yes  
No

10. If so, in what context?

Dropdown menu with choices (multiple choices can be selected):

1. None
2. Participated in surveys
3. Attended consultation/briefing on One CGIAR
4. Provided direct feedback
5. Member of One CGIAR working group or other team
6. Other, please specify

11. How satisfied are you with the One CGIAR consultative process?

Drop down menu:

1. Very satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. Somewhat satisfied
4. Not satisfied
5. Do not know

12. If “Very satisfied” or “Satisfied”, in what respect?

*Free text field to be filled in*

---

13. If “Somewhat satisfied” or “Not satisfied”, why?

*Free text field to be filled in*

---

14. What steps do you recommend CGIAR should take to strengthen consultations, in order to improve One CGIAR Reforms? *Free text field to be filled in*

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## Section 2: Voice [of the Global South], Ownership and Priority-Setting

For the next set of questions, please consider the following general definitions when providing feedback:

***Voice [of the Global South]:*** The views, priorities, and concerns of Stakeholders from the Global South—including those in positions of influence and decision-making to those who are most impacted by policies and decisions taken at higher levels—being embedded into agenda-setting and ownership, decision-making, priority-setting and operational modalities.

***Ownership:*** The ability of CGIAR’s intended beneficiaries to expand and improve their own development strategies, priorities, and projects in the context of their engagement with CGIAR; and to receive/obtain the necessary funding and staff to take responsibility for implementation.

***Priority-Setting:*** The process of ranking activities, and hence, making choices within CGIAR framework, which lead to allocation of resources to selected activities, institutions, or programs. Priority-setting includes the values, preferences, rationales, and constraints that underline those decisions. An important aspect of priority-setting is the degree of transparency in methods and processes by which those factors are taken into account when setting priorities.

15. Using the definition above, are you satisfied that the **voices** and concerns of the Global South (including your Stakeholder group's) have been adequately taken into consideration and reflected in the One CGIAR reform process?

Drop down menu:

1. Very satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. Somewhat satisfied
4. Not satisfied
5. Do not know

16. If "Very satisfied" or "Satisfied", in what respect?

*Free text field to be filled in*

---

17. If "Somewhat satisfied" or "Not satisfied", why?

*Free text field to be filled in*

---

18. What steps do you recommend CGIAR should take to ensure your concerns are reflected in the reform process? (Respond on this and similar type questions only if you are familiar with the reform process and substance.)

*Free text field to be filled in*

---

19. Do you believe the **voice** of individual NARS and national and regional research organizations in your region are more represented or less represented following One CGIAR reforms? Why? (Refer to the definition of voice at beginning of this section above)

*Free text field to be filled in*

---

20. Are you satisfied at the level of Global South **ownership** of the One CGIAR agenda? (Refer to the definition of ownership at the beginning of this section)

Drop down menu:

1. Very satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. Somewhat satisfied
4. Not satisfied
5. Do not know

21. If "Very satisfied" or "Satisfied", in what respect?

*Free text field to be filled in*

---

22. If "Somewhat satisfied" or "Not satisfied", why?

*Free text field to be filled in*

---

23. How would you suggest that the level of Global South ownership could be enhanced?

*Free text field to be filled in*

---

24. In your view, who sets priorities in One CGIAR, and do they reflect the priorities of Stakeholders/partners from the Global South? (Refer to the definition of priority setting at beginning of this section)  
*Free text field to be filled in*
- 
25. Does your answer above [on reflecting the priorities of the Global South] compare positively, negatively or the same as prior to the One CGIAR reforms? Why?  
*Free text field to be filled in*
- 
26. What do you believe is driving this change?  
*Free text field to be filled in*
- 
27. Are you satisfied at the level of transparency in **priority setting** in One CGIAR?  
Drop down menu:  
1. Very satisfied  
2. Satisfied  
3. Somewhat satisfied  
4. Not satisfied  
5. Do not know
28. If “Very satisfied” or “Satisfied”, in what respect?  
*Free text field to be filled in*
- 
29. If “Somewhat satisfied” or “Not satisfied”, why?  
*Free text field to be filled in*
- 
30. How would you suggest transparency in priority setting be enhanced?  
*Free text field to be filled in*
- 
31. Are you satisfied with the level of Global South (including your Stakeholder group) engagement and influence on **priority setting** in One CGIAR? (Refer to the definition of priority setting at the beginning of this section)  
Drop down menu:  
1. Very satisfied  
2. Satisfied  
3. Somewhat satisfied  
4. Not satisfied  
5. Do not know
32. If “Very satisfied” or “Satisfied”, in what respect, e.g., meeting NARS priorities, providing global or regional public goods, or other?  
*Free text field to be filled in*
- 
33. If “Somewhat satisfied” or “Not satisfied”, why?  
*Free text field to be filled in*
-

34. How would you suggest that Global South (including your Stakeholder group's) involvement and influence in the priority setting process be strengthened?

*Free text field to be filled in*

---

35. Are you satisfied at the level of the participation of Stakeholders/partners in the allocation of resources in One CGIAR?

Drop down menu:

1. Very satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. Somewhat satisfied
4. Not satisfied
5. Do not know

36. If "Very satisfied" or "Satisfied", in what respect?

*Free text field to be filled in*

---

37. If "Somewhat satisfied" or "Not satisfied", why?

*Free text field to be filled in*

---

38. How would you suggest the participation of Stakeholders/partners in the allocation of resources be enhanced?

*Free text field to be filled in*

---

### Section 3: Effect of One CGIAR Reform on Quality and Impact of Partnerships

The One CGIAR transition is a reformulation of CGIAR's partnerships, knowledge, assets, and global presence, aiming for greater integration and impact in the face of interconnected food, land, water and climate crises. We would like to know how this can best be achieved through better partnerships with the Global South.

39. What are your opinions/views on how One CGIAR can achieve the above mission, based on a participatory approach, at the *global and regional levels* through better partnerships with: Your own team?

Drop down menu:

1. Do not know/no opinion
2. I have the following opinion: (please explain): \_\_\_\_\_

40. Your institution?

Drop down menu:

1. Do not know/no opinion
2. I have the following opinion: (please explain): \_\_\_\_\_

41. Your country (including who or which institutions CGIAR should work with and how)?

Drop down menu:

1. Do not know/no opinion
2. I have the following opinion: (please explain): \_\_\_\_\_



42. What are your opinions/views on how One CGIAR can achieve the above mission, based on a participatory approach, in *your country* through better partnerships with:  
Your own team?  
Drop down menu:  
1. Do not know/no opinion  
2. I have the following opinion: (please explain): \_\_\_\_\_
43. Your institution?  
Drop down menu:  
1. Do not know/no opinion  
2. I have the following opinion: (please explain): \_\_\_\_\_
44. Your country (including who or which institutions CGIAR should work with and how)?  
Drop down menu:  
1. Do not know/no opinion  
2. I have the following opinion: (please explain): \_\_\_\_\_
45. Do you believe your country should have a single CGIAR coordination office/center that can help make CGIAR research a more demand driven activity in your country, or do you prefer a different model with multiple entry points?  
Drop down menu:  
1. Do not know/no opinion  
2. I have the following opinion: (please explain): \_\_\_\_\_
46. Are you satisfied that the One CGIAR reforms, including the new management and governance structures, have improved and enhanced partnerships in CGIAR [or will improve and enhance partnerships in CGIAR]?  
Drop down menu:  
1. Very satisfied  
2. Satisfied  
3. Somewhat satisfied  
4. Not satisfied  
5. Do not know
47. If “Very satisfied” or “Satisfied”, in what respect to believe this has occurred?  
*Free text field to be filled in*  
\_\_\_\_\_
48. If “Somewhat satisfied” or “Not satisfied”, why?  
*Free text field to be filled in*  
\_\_\_\_\_
49. What suggestions do you have to improve and enhance partnerships in the reformed One CGIAR?  
*Free text field to be filled in*  
\_\_\_\_\_

50. Several NARS of the Global South are now significant players in agricultural research. As primary partners of the System's efforts, are you satisfied with their role in One CGIAR?

Drop down menu:

1. Very satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. Somewhat satisfied
4. Not satisfied
5. Do not know

51. If "Very satisfied" or "Satisfied", in what respect?

*Free text field to be filled in*

---

52. If "Somewhat satisfied" or "Not satisfied", why?

*Free text field to be filled in*

---

53. What suggestions do you have to enhance the role of NARS and ensure their role is most effectively utilized?

*Free text field to be filled in*

---

54. How can the quality, strength and stability of partnerships in CGIAR best be achieved? Please comment in the context of your partnership, if applicable, or partnerships in general.

*Free text field to be filled in*

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55. If you are a collaborator/partner in CGIAR research, how have One CGIAR reforms addressed the needs of your partnership with CGIAR Center researchers compared to prior to the reforms [or will address the needs of your partnership with CGIAR Center researchers...]?

*Free text field to be filled in*

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56. Has your organization received funding or in-kind support from the reformed CGIAR, or does it contribute from its own budget?

*Free text field to be filled in*

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57. If your organization is NOT already a CGIAR partner, what are your specific needs and expectations regarding agricultural research and innovation, particularly regarding a [potential] partnership with CGIAR, given that CGIAR and the Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation (GFAR) have their own partnership principles?

*Free text field to be filled in*

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58. How would you envision a partnership with CGIAR?

*Free text field to be filled in*

---

**Section 4: What else?**

59. Is there anything else you would like to add that wasn't covered above?

*Free text field to be filled in*

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60. If you wish to voluntarily identify yourself should the HLAP decide to contact you and follow up on your answers, please provide your name and contact details below:

*Name:*

*Email:*

*Telephone:*

## **Annex VI South Asian Regional Consultation on the Expectations from One CGIAR**

A Regional Expert Consultation on “One CGIAR Reform Process” was organized at the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences, New Delhi on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2022. It was attended by the Member (Agriculture), NITI Aayog, Govt. of India, the Chairman, Trust for Advancement of Agricultural Sciences (TAAS) and the President of the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences (NAAS), besides NAAS Fellows, eminent experts and NARS leaders from South Asian countries (Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka). The meeting was organized in hybrid mode. In all, 16 experts had participated (list attached). The meeting was chaired by Dr. Ramesh Chand, Member, NITI Aayog. As an outcome of the consultation, some major facts and specific concerns emerged. These are highlighted below for urgent consideration by the System Council and System Board of CGIAR for priority action:

- South Asia represents 25% of the global population (about 2 billion), majority of which is dependent on agriculture for its livelihood. The challenges currently being faced by the smallholder farmers, majority of whom having less than 2 ha land, are both diverse and formidable. South Asia provides unique agricultural ecosystem landscapes. It also has the largest population affected by poverty and malnutrition, besides enormous adverse impacts of climate change.
- Currently, the most serious problem of under nutrition and malnutrition exists in South Asia. National Family Health Survey-5 (2019-21) of India has revealed that 67.10% of children below 5 years of age are anaemic, 35.5% suffer from stunting and 27.0% are in the wasted and severely wasted category. Further, according to the Country Nutrition Profiles in South Asia, the wasting of children <5 years of age is 14.1 %, stunting 30.7%, overweight children 2.5% and prevalence of anaemia among children is 51.73%. Also, more than 48% of women are anaemic. Hence, nutrition security in the region has emerged to be an utmost priority.
- For more than five decades, South Asia has contributed very significantly towards growth, development and impact of CGIAR, in terms of human resource development, technological innovations and their scaling and most importantly sharing of rich germ plasm of diverse crops. In fact, the smallholder farmers in the region had been very receptive to the adoption, transfer and scaling of technologies resulting in the Green Revolution which ensured household food security in a most densely populated region of the world.
- South Asia is the only region to have established Borlaug Institute for South Asia (BISA), as a legacy of Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Dr Norman E. Borlaug, whose contributions to address poverty, hunger and malnutrition are indeed unparalleled.
- South Asia region thus needs priority attention in terms of enhanced funding investments for agricultural research and innovation for development (ARI4D) in order to meet the most important sustainable development goals (SDGs) of no poverty, zero hunger, better health and nutrition as well as adaptation to climate change.
- It is being felt that the voice of South Asia has not been heard during the on-going process of reorganization of One CGIAR. This is quite unfortunate that the decisions concerning reforms have been taken without prior consultation and involvement of key stakeholders, especially the heads of national agricultural research systems (NARS) in the region despite the fact that 2 CG Centers are based in South Asia.

- In fact, almost all CGIAR institutes have been established through bilateral agreements with the host countries under which the tax rebates, financial resources and infrastructural facilities were made available for their smooth and independent functioning. Hence, the unilateral decision to transfer the de facto control of all assets (staff, finances, bilateral grants, infrastructure facilities) to the One CGIAR will not only have legal implications but shall disturb the existing harmony and good working relations. Accordingly, it is our considered view that proper dialogue and consultation with respective governments be first initiated to resolve such sensitive issue amicably. Also, the equal voting rights for the host country members on the System Board for the concerned Centers be ensured.
- As already stated, the poverty, nutrition and environmental security in the South Asia region needs high priority attention, requiring reorientation of current research agenda. Any research prioritisation by CGIAR without proper consultation and agreement would not serve needed purpose. Thus, it is urged that the process be made bottom-up and more transparent.
- India is the geographic anchor of South Asia. It is also contributing the largest proportion of resources including manpower, infrastructure, crop germplasm and funding to CGIAR. Thus, consultation with ICAR and other NARS in the current reform process must be ensured.
- The very fact that 3 out of 15 CGIAR Centers have opted out of One CGIAR amply shows that all with reform process is not right and needs transparency and further consultations with concerned stakeholders. We are of the view that functional freedom, rather than too much of centralisation through proposed top-heavy bureaucratic system, be ensured. Also, the clarity with regard to future role of Centers and the reporting lines for the scientists working in these Centers is needed urgently.
- We are disappointed to note that some of the most successful Challenge Programs (CRPs), including the most popular ones like 'CCAFS', 'Harvest Plus' etc., now stand closed. Also, there appears to be no clarity yet as to how the ecoregional research needs will be addressed during the funding cycle of 2022-2024.
- Attention of funders to provide high priority for resource allocation to South Asia region is urgently needed if we have to achieve sustainable development goals globally.
- All participants unanimously resolved that a process of stakeholder consultation, involving CGIAR Center Directors, DDGs and senior scientists located in South Asia, NARS leaders, SAARC Agriculture Centre (SAC), policy makers and other stakeholders, be initiated urgently in order to finalise research priorities for the region towards accelerated South Asian agricultural transformation for shared prosperity and improved livelihoods. This initiative could be institutionalized as South Asia Agriculture Development Program (SAA DP), on lines similar to Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) adopted by all political leaders in Africa.

Ramesh Chand  
Member NITI Aayog

T. Mohapatra  
President, NAAS

R.S. Paroda  
Chairman, TAAS

## **List of Participants**

(2 April 2022)

1. Prof Ramesh Chand, Member, National Institution for Transformation of India, NITI Aayog, Govt. of India, New Delhi; Formerly: Deputy Director General (Education), ICAR (rc.niti@gov.in)
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11. Dr HS Gupta, Chair, Agriculture Commission of Assam; Formerly: Director, Indian Agricultural Research Institute; Director General, Borlaug Institute for South Asia (BISA). New Delhi (hsgupta.53@gmail.com)
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14. Dr Ravi Khetarpal, Executive Secretary, Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institution (APAARI), Bangkok (ravi.khetarpal@apaari.org)
15. Dr Rishi Kumar Tyagi, Coordinator, APCoAB, APAARI, Bangkok; Former Head, National Gene Bank, ICAR-NBPGR, New Delhi (tyaginbpgr@gmail.com)

16. Dr Kailash Bansal, Secretary, National Academy of Agricultural Sciences; Former Director, ICAR-NBPGR, New Delhi (kcbansal27@gmail.com)

## **Annex VII**

Date: April 2, 2022

### **Subject: Concerns relating to One CGIAR reform process**

Excellency,

We, the stakeholders from different regions, as firm believers and strong supporters of partnership and collaboration for agricultural research and innovation for development (ARI4D), especially between the international research centers under the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and the developing country national agricultural research systems (NARS), that helped achieve the green, white and blue revolutions, are approaching you with deep concern and a common resolve to ensure strong partnership for ARI4D so critical for our food security.

In the past, the highly motivated scientists of the 15 CGIAR Centers and NARS partners, epitomized by close working relationship between Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Dr. Norman Borlaug and World Food Prize awardee Dr. MS Swaminathan, who had worked in partnership to generate international public good, such as high yielding crop varieties that greatly contributed to the Green Revolution. It is this strategic partnership that was the cradle of success during the past five decades and helped many nations achieve food self-sufficiency and address effectively both hunger and poverty. In fact, it was possible because all the CGIAR Centers, under the oversight of their respective Board of Trustees, had functional autonomy to work closely with the NARS. Also, the unrestricted funds provided by the donors had helped these Centers to respond effectively to the location specific research needs of respective partners, besides providing the required support for capacity building so critical to upscale and outscale innovations.

Unfortunately, all the CGIAR Centers received a big jolt when some major donors seemed to have presumed that the System had become unwieldy and rather inefficient. The funders felt that autonomous functioning of Centers was neither conducive for required administrative efficiency nor coherent for decision making. Consequently, the entire system has been subjected to the One CGIAR reform process with the expectation that donors would commit additional funding under non-restricted windows (1 and 2) rather than bilateral funding (window 3). The Centers also expected that donors would commit long term investments in One CGIAR.

As a reform process, the System Council was reconstituted with only the major donors as members having the voting rights and a System Board for all Centers was established with eight members having inadequate representation from Global South. Further, for each Center Board these 8 members with voting rights are common, besides the ex-officio members from the host country NARS, surprisingly with no voting rights. This clearly reflects the fact that the Global South has either been ignored or treated differently.



Also, contrary to expectations, despite four years of long drawn reform process, evidently no additional funding has become available (see attached figure from the CGIAR Report of 2020). In fact, the maximum funding had peaked at more than a billion dollars in 2014, much before the reforms started. Since then, it declined to \$780 million in 2020 with no further increase in 2021. Also, the unrestricted funding has further declined by >10% (from 34% to now 24%) despite expectations otherwise, reflecting the fact that there has not been any positive change in Funders' perception regarding the need for additional funding. On the contrary, a top-heavy bureaucratic system has been created with dichotomy between the Directors General of the Centers and the Program Directors for different eco-regions. Further, there is no clarity on the reporting line for the scientists working in different CGIAR Centers in the overall structure being put in place.

In the reform process, the Independent Science and Partnership Council (ISPC), the most important wing for strategic research planning and oversight, based at FAO, Rome was suddenly moved out and renamed as the Independent Science and Development Council (ISDC) with a curtailed role in research review and strategic advice to the Centers. It is beyond our comprehension as to how any development is possible without a defined role and responsibility for strengthening research partnerships.

It needs to be recognised that the existence of all CGIAR Centers stems from their host-country legal agreements which must be respected. Thus, it seems irresponsible and offensive to unilaterally merge the assets and human resources of the Centers without the host country consent. Furthermore, it is well known that without active involvement and representation of the Global South in the current reform process of the One CGIAR, the adoption and scaling of new innovations and their expected impacts on the ground would be a major challenge. We also wonder as to how there would be ownership of the new system research framework (SRF), being put in place, without the voice, consultation and active involvement of major stakeholders from the Global South. It is unfortunate that they have been ignored completely in the current reform process which has taken too long with hardly any research programs finalised and approved for the 2022-2024 cycle. On the contrary, all Challenge Programs (CRPs), including the most popular ones like 'CCAFS' and 'Harvest Plus' stand summarily closed effective 31 December 2021. There is no clarity yet to the stakeholders as to how the new research agenda will address their concerns and specific needs.

In addition, the representation of Global South stakeholders in the main decision-making bodies such as the System Council and System Board appears to have been completely ignored as compared to the previous governance structure of CGIAR, where organizations such as the FAO, IFAD, GFAR, Regional Fora and the heads of developing country NARS were equally heard as voting members of the CGIAR Council. Unfortunately, none of these organizations have been given a place in the decision-making process - as voting members either of the System Council or the System Board.

We are sure that no one would want such a non-inclusive and rather disruptive process to go ahead without the involvement and active support of those stakeholders whose ownership and goodwill is highly critical for the achievement of tangible outputs and outcomes on the ground. The synergistic research partnerships between CGIAR Centers and NARS effectively demonstrated that research results reached the farmer much faster and with higher productivity, sustainability and income.

Moreover, in this fast-changing world, the fading voice of the Global South must be heard and acted upon especially to counter some of the worst impacts of climate change and declining natural

resources. We need to be 'vocal for local', seeking spatially differentiated policy options, action plans, financial allocations and human resource deployment to ensure system-based research, technology, and innovation geared to meet humanitarian and environmental challenges while harnessing the opportunities to alleviate poverty and hunger - being the most important sustainable development goals (SDGs) to be met by 2030.

It is rather sad that 3 out of 15 Centers have already opted out of the One CGIAR for want of freedom from a top-heavy bureaucratic system that has been put in place involving high transaction costs with no clarity on reporting lines for the scientists who do quality science to serve the millions of smallholder farmers and consumers. Hence, we earnestly hope that the remaining Centers do not follow suit.

In view of the above, we collectively urge you to kindly intervene and urgently take corrective steps to make the process of reforms truly transparent and 'bottom up' as well as inclusive, rather than 'top down' as at present. In this context, our expectation is that you may consider this matter urgently and initiate the required mid-course correction involving visionary leadership, an external review of the One CGIAR reform process, and to have a participatory research agenda put in place without diluting the critical functionality of the CGIAR Centers.

Finally, with great admiration and aspiration, we wish for the CGIAR system to continue serving effectively to achieve global food, nutrition and environmental sustainability.

We the signatories as well wishers of CGIAR:

1. Dr Adel El Beltagy, Former DG, ICARDA; Minister of Agriculture, Egypt; Former Chairman, GFAR, FAO; Currently: Chair, International Dryland Development Commission (IDDC), Cairo, Egypt ([elbeltagy@drylanddevelop.org](mailto:elbeltagy@drylanddevelop.org))
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3. Prof Timothy Reeves, Former DG, CIMMYT and Currently Professor in Sustainable Agriculture, University of Melbourne, Australia ([t.reeves@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:t.reeves@unimelb.edu.au)) – William Farrer Medal Awardee
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8. Prof Rattan Lal, Distinguished University Professor and Director, CFAES Rattan Lal Center for carbon management and sequestration, Columbus, Ohio, USA ([LAL.1@osu.edu](mailto:LAL.1@osu.edu)) - World Food & Padma Shri Awardee
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## CGIAR Response

**Sent:** 03 April 2022

**To:** Stated signatories on 2 April letter

**Subject:** CGIAR's courtesy response to the joint letter from Raj Paroda and group

### **CGIAR's courtesy response to letter on One CGIAR reform of April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2022**

*\*\*\* Message from CGIAR System Board Chair to those persons named as signatories of joint letter – Named Signatories in BCC to aid email management \*\*\**

Dear all,

I am writing to follow up on the email below and its attachment, as copied to me. On behalf of CGIAR's leadership, I thank Dr. Paroda and his colleagues for their deep interest in CGIAR's work, and some valuable input.

However, CGIAR – its Board members and leadership – regret that Dr. Paroda's letter makes several inaccurate statements regarding CGIAR, our valued partnerships, and our transition process.

Attempts to correct these and similar inaccuracies during discussions were regrettably unsuccessful. I therefore take this opportunity to provide some corrections and clarifications.

Partnerships are essential to CGIAR's ability to fulfill its mission, which is why CGIAR has engaged diverse partners and stakeholders at every step of the One CGIAR transition. CGIAR acknowledges that we need to do much more to ensure the perspectives of our valued partners are both heard and reflected in CGIAR's transition and shared future.

To that end, the CGIAR System Board and management are taking concrete action to boost our engagement with key partners, as we recently announced here: [CGIAR to launch Advisory Panel and consultations to boost partner engagement](#)

With great respect to Dr. Paroda and those who are named as signatories, CGIAR provides the following corrections and clarifications to the 2 April 2022 letter:

**Statement:** *“Unfortunately, all the CGIAR Centers received a big jolt when some major donors seemed to have presumed that the System had become unwieldy and rather inefficient.”*

- **Fact:** The full System Council, including Funder and Country Constituency members representing the global South, unanimously approved the recommendations of the CGIAR [System Reference Group](#) ('SRG') to transition to One CGIAR.
- Those recommendations arose from 18 months of detailed deliberations and engagement, always with the CGIAR Centers in every conversation and contributing to a more efficient and effective way of working. The CGIAR General Assembly of Centers was a proactive and important [engagement partner](#) as the design elements of operating as One CGIAR were realized.

**Statement:** “[T]he System Council was reconstituted with only the major donors as members”

- **Fact:** There are 18 countries from the Global South represented in five regional constituencies on the CGIAR System Council as voting members. The five regional constituencies agree amongst themselves who is their voting member and alternate member, and how they will work together.
- The [composition](#) of the [CGIAR System Council](#) was set out in the [2016 CGIAR System Framework](#) and has remained unchanged since. This formulation of the System Council was mutually agreed between CGIAR’s Centers and Funders in May 2016, with the CGIAR Centers unanimously endorsing the CGIAR System Framework at that time.

**Statement:** “Contrary to the expectations, despite three years of long drawn out reform process, evidently no or little additional funding has become available. In fact, the maximum funding had peaked in 2014, much before the reforms started. In addition, the unrestricted funding has further declined despite expectations otherwise, reflecting the fact that there has been no positive change in donors’ perception about their accountability.”

- **Fact:** Pooled funding has increased by 60 percent for 2022, to over \$300 million. In support of One CGIAR transition, and response to CGIAR’s new 2030 Research and Innovation Strategy, [over US\\$1 billion was pledged](#) in 2021. Funding is expected to continue to increase with the transition to One CGIAR. Peak funding in 2014 and subsequent decline through to 2017 was one key driver of the One CGIAR reform.
- Echoing donor’s (Funder’s) support for One CGIAR, the transition offered opportunities to amplify the importance of food, land and water systems in a climate crisis – and the role of the global research and innovation ecosystem (global, national, local) – in key fora, including the [G7](#), [United Nations Food System Summit](#), [G20](#), [COP26](#).

**Statement:** “it seems irresponsible and offensive to unilaterally merge the assets and human resources of the Centers without host country consent”

- **Fact:** The transition to One CGIAR is not a merger of CGIAR’s Research Centers, their



assets, or human resources. One CGIAR is precisely the opposite of a merger. Instead, it is a new and integrated way of working seamlessly across CGIAR to ensure that we better use our collective skills, knowledge, and resources – wherever they are located – in response to the most pressing global, regional, national, and local challenges.

- The One CGIAR transition is entirely consistent with Center headquarter host country agreements and governing instruments. Through their representatives on CGIAR Center Boards, headquarter host countries have played and continue to play an instrumental role in all key decisions regarding Center assets and resources.

**Statements:** “[I]t is well known that without active involvement and representation of the global South in the current reform process of the One CGIAR...” “It is unfortunate that [stakeholders from the Global South] have been ignored completely...Unfortunately, [no stakeholders from the Global South as well as FAO, IFAD, GFAR, Regional and Sub-regional For and the Heads of developing country NARS] are now included in the decision-making process - either as members of the System Council or the System Board.”

- **Fact:** There has been diverse engagement with and representation from the global South – including governments, NARES, farmers’ organizations, civil society, universities, and regional development banks – in CGIAR’s formal decision-making bodies as well as the advisory bodies formed to guide the transition, such as the multi-stakeholder CGIAR System Reference Group, its [Transition Consultation Forum](#), Transition Advisory Groups, and for the new CGIAR 2030 Research and Innovation Strategy, CGIAR’s Investment Advisory Groups.
- As noted above, there are 18 countries from the global South represented in five regional constituencies on the CGIAR System Council as voting members. Many of those countries are represented by heads of NARES.
- FAO, IFAD and GFAR are active observers on the System Council, with GFAR connecting a diverse range of NARES and other stakeholders.
- Throughout the transition, voices from the global South have provided strong and consistent support for a unified and integrated One CGIAR fit to tackle the ever more complex, increasingly interdependent challenges of our era.

**Statement:** “[A] System Board for all Centers was established with each Center required to have eight Board members common across all Centers”

- **Fact:** Unified governance was one of five [recommendations of the CGIAR System Reference Group \(SRG\)](#) for the transition arising from the collaborative SRG process that was launched in mid-2018.
- CGIAR’s Centers endorsed the model of unified governance at their extraordinary General Assembly of Centers [December 2019](#), with the focus of additional inputs being how to enhance unified governance, not distance themselves from it.
- In September 2020, the System Board adopted a model for unified governance

based on broad Center engagement and consultation on that model.

**Statement:** *“In the reform process, the Independent Science and Partnership Council (ISPC), the most important wing for strategic research planning and oversight, based at FAO, Rome was suddenly moved out and renamed as the Independent Science and Development Council (ISDC) with a curtailed role in research review and strategic advice to the Centers. It is beyond our comprehension as to how any development would be possible without the role of ISDC for strengthening research partnerships.”*

- **Fact:** Critical to the credibility of CGIAR’s scientific research outputs, outcomes and impacts on the global, regional, and local stage, is that there is independent, objective assessment of CGIAR’s research effort according to the [Quality of Research for Development Framework](#).
- The unequivocal findings of the [Independent Evaluation Report of ISPC](#) (informed by six months of independent review, data from nearly 200 survey respondents, 70 interviewees, and the deliberations of the former ISPC), were that it was fundamental for CGIAR to transform the ISPC into a more fit-for-purpose, higher level, strategic advisory to the CGIAR System Council. That is why the ISPC was transitioned to the [Independent Science for Development Council](#).
- Specifically – the evaluation confirmed the error of placing the ‘P’ for partnerships in the then titled ISPC, as it erroneously inferred responsibility for enduring effective partnerships rested with an external independent panel, and not management.
- Contrary to the statement, neither body has ever been responsible for strategic research planning and oversight. Responsibilities of the ISDC, which is made up of a diverse group of stakeholders, are clearly articulated in its System Council unanimously approved [Terms of Reference](#).

**Statement:** *“It is unfortunate that they have been ignored completely in the current reform process which has taken too long with hardly any research programs finalized and approved for the 2022-2024 cycle.”*

- **Fact:** The [CGIAR Portfolio of Initiatives](#), comprising 31 Initiatives, were developed via extensive consultations – with over 1300 individual responses from 77 countries informing the development of CGIAR’s 2030 Research & Innovation Strategy.
- The Initiatives were objectively and independently assessed by a diverse and inclusive group of experts, as moderated by CGIAR’s [ISDC](#).
- Informed by that objective and independent review, the Portfolio has been approved by CGIAR’s System Council. How, precisely, those Initiatives will be delivered will be informed by proactive partner consultations relevant to the specific research activities within each Initiative.

**Statement:** *“no clarity for those who do quality science at these Centers to serve the millions of smallholder farmers and consumers.”*

- **Fact:** In response to the first-ever CGIAR-wide staff survey in 2021:
- 62% of nearly 4,000 participants responded positively to the statement that they could “clearly explain why CGIAR needs to come together as a unified ‘One CGIAR’”, with 12% negative
- 71% responded positively that they “believe One CGIAR will make the work of CGIAR and its entities (Centers/ Alliances/ System Organization) more impactful”, with just 5% negative.

CGIAR is deeply committed to transparency in all that it does. One of the ways we seek to achieve this, is through publicly available Frequently Asked Questions – as are accessible on our public internet site: [here](#). We are equally committed to being a stronger partner with all our stakeholders, in particular – the global South.

Sincerely

Marco Ferroni, Ph.D.

Chair of the CGIAR System Board and member of the Boards of One CGIAR Centers

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**From:** TAAS IARI <[taasiari@gmail.com](mailto:taasiari@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Saturday, April 2, 2022 1:38 PM

**Cc:** [ismail.serageldin@bibalex.org](mailto:ismail.serageldin@bibalex.org); Ferroni, Marco (Chair, CGIAR System Board) <[SBChair@cgiar.org](mailto:SBChair@cgiar.org)>

**Subject:** Concerns relating to One CGIAR reform process

Honorable Sir/Madam,

Kindly find attached herewith a joint letter signed by 75 agricultural experts from all over the world expressing their concern relating to One CGIAR reform process for your kind perusal and necessary action.

Thanking you,

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*Trust for Advancement of Agricultural Sciences (TAAS)*

## **Annex VIII**

**Speech by Dr. Akinwumi A. Adesina**  
**President**  
**African Development Bank Group**  
**Consultative Meeting on the Reforms of the Consultative Group on International**  
**Agricultural Research (One CGIAR)**  
**May 19, 2022**  
**African Development Bank**  
**Abidjan Cote d'Ivoire**

Good morning, everyone.

I wish to thank you all for attending this meeting in Abidjan.

The attendance by Excellencies, Ministers of Agriculture, and the African Union's Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, H.E. Josefa Sacko, shows how important this meeting is for Africa.

I wish to thank the senior management team of the One CGIAR, Director Generals of CGIAR centers, Executive Director of FARA and heads of sub-regional agricultural research centers for being here for this meeting, following the first virtual meeting held in Abidjan.

I would like to thank all the partners of the CGIAR for being here, especially the World Bank, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

I wish to thank the One CGIAR for all the hard work and efforts that have gone into the reform of the CGIAR. I can understand the need to improve coordination, efficiency and effectiveness of the CGIAR.

Our meeting is critical, as the One CGIAR reforms are at critical junctures, as far as Africa is concerned. You will recall that I had expressed my concerns in December 2021 about the on-going CGIAR reforms. My position then, and now, remain the same: the One CGIAR is not sufficiently supporting, engaging and prioritizing the needs and concerns of Africa, and therefore need to be recalibrated.

I come to this discussion wearing several hats.

The first, as an agricultural economist with close to 35 years of experience in international agriculture, including ten years as a senior scientist in three CGIAR centers: ICRISAT, WARDA (now Africa Rice Center), and IITA.

Second, as a former Minister of Agriculture of Nigeria, Africa's largest country, who led an agricultural transformation that got agricultural technologies to 15 million farmers within four years.

Third, as a World Food Prize Winner.

And finally, as President of the African Development Bank, an institution that is implementing investments of up to \$25 billion in agriculture in Africa.

So, you can see that I am thorough bred agricultural leader and expert, who has spent all my career to help Africa feed itself.

That is why I want the best for Africa.

My experiences have shown me that the CGIAR is central to any efforts for developing countries to achieve agricultural growth and food security. The work of the CGIAR centers in Africa are critical for achieving food security on the continent.

When I was elected President of the African Development Bank in 2015 – the first ever agricultural expert to be a President of a multilateral development bank -- I decided to use my position to help Africa feed itself. The Bank launched its Feed Africa strategy, with the goal of reaching farmers with agricultural technologies and achieving zero hunger by 2025.

It has been a race against time.

The Bank launched a ten-year, \$25 billion investment program, to spur agricultural transformation and food security. I recognized the CGIAR was critical for our success.

Many of you will not know that I helped to save the CGIAR from being closed in 2015 by the World Bank. I will tell you, so you can understand why I am particularly worried about the approach being taken on CGIAR reforms and Africa.

I will share it so you know why business as usual approach by the CGIAR will never be supported in Africa. I will tell you, so you know that I am your biggest supporter, so when I say I am unhappy with the ongoing reforms, you understand where I am coming from.

Following my election as President of the African Development Bank, I met for the first time with the then President of the World Bank, Dr. Jim Kim, in New York, in September 2015 at the UN General Assembly. I told him of my vision for Africa to feed itself and that to do this the African Development Bank would be launching a Feed Africa Strategy. And that the African

Development Bank plans to invest \$25 billion in agriculture over a ten-year period to help Africa feed itself.

President Jim Kim told me how the World Bank had been financing the work of the CGIAR for decades, and that he was not seeing many impacts, and wanted to phase out the World Bank's support, and redirect the funds to other critical areas such as health and education.

I urged that he should not, as this would jeopardize the planned Feed Africa strategy of the African Development Bank. I told him, we cannot succeed if there is no CGIAR to support the vision and deliver the technologies. I assured him I will do all I can to ensure that the CGIAR is held accountable for results for food security.

President Jim Kim finally agreed to shelve his plans to phase out financing for the CGIAR and said the now famous words to me: "OK, Akin. If you can get them to deliver, you lead, and we will follow".

This was what led me to call for the meeting of all DGs of the CGIAR in Dakar in October of 2015, where the African Development Bank launched its Feed Africa Strategy.

In Dakar, I told the Director Generals of the CGIAR that were there to give me a plan to feed Africa.

The then coordinator of the CGIAR secretariat at the World Bank said, “we will deliver this to you in six months”. I said “really? For all these decades of support to the CGIAR, you can only give me a plan to feed Africa in six months?”. I demanded, firmly, that if that was the case.

I would have no qualms calling the President of the World Bank to shut down the CGIAR. I said, “if you do not give me the plan to give Africa by 6 am the following day, I will call the President of the World Bank to shut down the CGIAR!”.

The Director Generals of the CGIAR centers worked overnight and through the next day and this was what led to the development of TAAT – Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation – with commitments to get technologies to scale of millions of farmers, for several commodities. Hence the TAAT’s Technology Delivery Compacts, which were signed with the participating centers.

We saved the CGIAR. And the development of TAAT secured the future for the CGIAR. The focus was simple: get technologies to farmers at scale and be accountable for impacts.

TAAT is also revolutionary, in that as opposed to the old systems where technologies were tested several years in multiple locations before being released, technologies tested in similar agroecological bands would be released in countries sharing the same agroecological zones. This allows for rapid release of technologies.

Our Feed Africa work at the African Development Bank has already benefitted over 76 million farmers with access to improved agricultural technologies.

Since we launched TAAT, Africa has been achieving incredible success. Let me share some examples.

TAAT has delivered climate smart seeds to 12 million farmers in 27 countries in just two years. TAAT delivered water efficient maize to 5.6 million households in East Africa, an area hit by severe droughts three years ago. The drought was severe, but farmers secured their food supply with the water efficient maize varieties.

In Sudan, TAAT financed the provision of 65,000 metric tons of heat tolerant wheat varieties. That is seeds enough to fill 665 Airbus 380 aircrafts, the largest passenger airplanes. Sudanese farmers grew on 317,000 hectares, and in just two years, Sudan reduced its wheat import by 50%.

We did the same in Ethiopia.

TAAT financed the provision of 61,000 metric tons of seeds of heat tolerant wheat varieties to farmers in Ethiopia. The farmers cultivated 5,000 hectares of these heat tolerant wheat varieties in 2018, expanded to 167,000 hectares, two years later, and by this year they had grown 400,000 hectares.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed of Ethiopia told me last week: “Ethiopia’s wheat production is now 650,000 hectares. We harvested 2.6 million metric tons of wheat. Ethiopia did not import wheat this year. Next year we will cultivate 2 million hectares under wheat. We expect to export at least 1.5 to 2 million metric tons of wheat to Kenya and Djibouti next year”.

Simply incredible!

TAAT delivered NERICA rice varieties to 3.2 million households in just two years. These successes were possible because of the financial support of the African

Development Bank, and with support of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and other partners, in collaboration with the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR).

Never in the history of the CGIAR has these kinds of impacts been witnessed in Africa. TAAT has helped to connect the research and development of the CGIAR with farmers, seed companies, agricultural value chains, and sources of finance, as well as policy support that now delivers technologies to farmers at scale.

As the CGIAR does its reforms it needs to bear in mind that the focus in Africa is not more technologies, but getting technologies out to farmers, at the scale of millions of farmers. Africa has no time again for tiny CGIAR projects. We must feed Africa and there is no time to waste. There must therefore be accountability of the CGIAR to help achieve zero hunger. Research is important, but people do not eat research papers. We are just 8 years away from 2030, and Africa must achieve zero hunger by then.

Thus, your reforms must hold you accountable to targets that Africa seeks to achieve. The days of the CGIAR doing what it pleases, where it pleases, and when it pleases, are over in Africa.

This is not the time for untested experiments with the CGIAR in Africa. This is not the time for theory. This is the time to build on and around what is working, pragmatically.

The One CGIAR reforms in Africa should explicitly build around TAAT, to take results to even greater scales and put in place a system for accountability for delivering technologies to millions of farmers, using results-based financing.

The CGIAR must also learn from failures of earlier approaches that have tried to use a programmatic approach instead of an institutional approach in Africa.

Let me share lessons from three examples: Rice in Africa, sorghum in Africa, and maize in Africa.

**Rice:** in the 1980s and for decades the approach of the CGIAR to address the lack of productivity gains in Africa, and repeat the rice revolution witnessed in Asia, was to have rice research programs centralized. Researchers would contribute their germplasm work to what was then called INGER-Africa (or International Genetic Resources for Africa).

Research proposals would link researchers from international and global universities and research and development centers, as well as national agricultural research institutions, to develop and deploy germplasm of rice to Africa.

There was even a recommendation to scrap the then West Africa Rice Development Association (WARDA) and let the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) based in Philippines to take over rice work for Africa.

The approach failed, as rice varieties introduced or deployed were not adapted to Africa. The success we have today on rice, with the NERICA varieties came because there was an Africa-based and well-funded (at the time) West Africa Rice Development Association. I was part of the team that developed the NERICAs in the early 1990s.

Today, we have great success with rice, with Nigeria witnessing a rapid rice revolution which I started when I was Minister of Agriculture.

Here is the lesson: without a well-empowered CGIAR center in Africa on rice, Africa would not have achieved success it has today. Institutional approach succeeded; programmatic approach failed.

**Sorghum:** similarly, the approach for sorghum in Africa mirrored that of rice. Sorghum technologies from India, where the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-arid Tropics (ICRISAT) is based, was to use a programmatic approach of connecting scientists via proposals to target sorghum technologies to Africa. This approach failed, as sorghum technologies developed did not fit in Africa's environment.

Success came when an institutional approach was taken and ICRISAT set up centers in Africa: one in Niamey, for the Sahel, one in Bamako, Mali (the West Africa Sorghum Improvement Program – WASIP), and one in Southern Africa, based in Zimbabwe for the semi-arid areas of southern Africa.

Here is the lesson: The successes achieved with sorghum technologies to date in Africa came from an institutional approach with these centers on the ground, not from the centralized programmatic approach.

**Maize:** The success of the maize work in Africa came because of the institutional approach of the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA), in the Guinea savanna of West Africa, and by CIMMYT with the water efficient maize developed on the ground by its scientists based out of the CIMMYT research center based in Harare, Zimbabwe. Interestingly, I had supported the development of these water efficient maize varieties while I was an Associate Director at the Rockefeller Foundation, in Harare, Zimbabwe.

The CGIAR reforms should therefore learn and use an **institutional approach based on strong on-the-ground and fully empowered centers, not a series of programs stitched together to be delivered around the CGIAR centers.**

In Africa, institutional approaches have been the success of the CGIAR. Programmatic approaches have failed. **We need very strong CGIAR centers in Africa, with Director Generals that can make decisions, independently, reporting to a small but empowered and efficient board, and accountable for driving agreed results for farmers.**

It has been said that “history repeats itself when people do not learn from the first time”.

The One CGIAR reform has also introduced the **centralization of leadership** of the CGIAR **outside of Africa**. There are **serious issues** with the **lack of diversity**, and **absence of senior African leadership in the Management Committee of the CGIAR**. The Africa-based CGIAR centers have therefore relegated to being **subservient to decisions** of just 3-5 people based outside of Africa. **This is not acceptable to Africa.**

The CGIAR reform also does not have any plans **institutionally to strengthen the national and regional agricultural research centers**, such as the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), or any of the sub-regional agricultural research organizations.

As I reviewed all the programmatic proposals of the One CGIAR, one cannot but notice that national researchers are nothing more than individuals listed as collaborators on project proposals.



There is no institutional framework to strengthen national and regional agricultural research centers. The issue of training of national agricultural researchers, and the research and development ecosystem, for success on the ground is completely missing.

It may be time to bring back the old ISNAR (International Service for National Agricultural Research). Ever since ISNAR was dissolved and moved to become a program within IFPRI, support for strengthening national agricultural research institutions in Africa disappeared. **The CGIAR cannot succeed in Africa unless it creates an institutional framework for strengthening national and regional agricultural research centers.**

Furthermore, the One CGIAR reforms do not reflect nor represent the interests of African governments and their incredible role in hosting the Africa-based CGIAR Centers, within the framework of Headquarters hosting agreements, which were approved by their parliaments. My own father in law, late Dr. Barnabas S. Oloruntoba, who was Permanent Secretary of Agriculture of Nigeria, was the one who in the 1970s gave away the land where the campus of the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture is based, and he later served as the Vice Chair of IITA's Board of Trustees.

For over 50 years, African governments have sacrificed for the CGIAR. They have provided land, facilities, fiscal incentives with tax exemptions for staff salaries, equipment, giving away badly needed taxes, and providing diplomatic support for the work of the CGIAR centers.

To come up with a reform that now takes control of these Africa-based CGIAR centers, by a small One CGIAR Executive Management group based in France and Rome, goes contrary to the host-country agreements and the spirit of strategic partnership that have given the CGIAR wide political support in Africa.

Let me be clear: the CGIAR is not doing Africa any favors. African governments must be seen as equal partners and stakeholders of the CGIAR. Without the strong support of governments for the CGIAR centers in Africa, the One CGIAR will fail in Africa.

In closing, let me say that the African Development Bank calls for a review of the One CGIAR reforms.

The reforms must not weaken the CGIAR centers in Africa.

The reforms should not minimize Director Generals and Board decision-making structures on the ground. While some areas need to be optimized to lower administrative costs, and improve coordination and efficiencies, **reforms should not become deforms.**

The reforms should ensure that CGIAR is held fully **accountable for impacts** in getting technologies to millions of farmers. The days of research for research's sake are over.

The reforms should **build around the highly successful TAAT program in Africa** to ensure **accountability in the delivery of technologies to millions of farmers**, based on the impressive results that are being achieved by TAAT on the ground in Africa.

The reforms should be based on an **institutional approach** not a **programmatic approach** that has been shown to have failed in the past.

The reforms should **focus on and strengthen decentralization of the CGIAR**, not a **centralization of the CGIAR** managed by a select few based out of Africa.

I can assure you that no African country will agree to turn the control of its Africa-based CGIAR centers to a select One CGIAR leadership team based out of Africa.

Finally, the reforms should **incorporate and strengthen partnership and ownership with the national and regional agricultural research centers**, and specifically **strengthen national and regional agricultural research institutions, such as FARA and the sub-regional research organizations.**

Let me repeat it again: **Reforms must not become deforms!**

It is time that we recalibrate the One CGIAR reforms in Africa., to better take on board the full range of priorities and concerns of Africa.

You can be sure that the African Development Bank will strongly support such a recalibration to ensure that the interests of Africa are well taken on board, and that the CGIAR Centers take their proper role in helping to drive zero hunger in Africa.

Thank you very much.

## **Annex IX: Communiqué: High-Level Consultative Forum on Strengthening Africa's Agricultural Research and Innovation in the Context of the One CGIAR Reforms<sup>28</sup>**



*Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, May 19, 2022*

### **Abidjan II Key Principles and Commitments**

#### **Preamble**

Africa has the fastest population growth of any region but the lowest agricultural productivity, with climate change threatening to erode gains achieved in recent decades. The work of Africa based CGIAR Centers is critical for achieving food security on the continent in the same way CGIAR was central to efforts to achieve accelerated agricultural growth and food security in Southeast Asia and Latin America. During the last five decades, CGIAR delivered many game-changing crop, livestock and aquaculture technologies on the African continent. It is also widely acknowledged that Africa's human capital in agriculture has received a tremendous boost from training programs of the CGIAR system. These investments in human capital have yielded a cadre of trained scientists who have played leadership roles in agricultural productivity, economic and environmental gains.

More recently, CGIAR has become a major vehicle in getting technologies to farmers at scale through the African Development Bank's Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation (TAAT). Based on Commodity Compacts that connect research and development of CGIAR with farmers, seed companies, agricultural value chains, seed system policy support, and crop campaigns that bulk certified seeds of climate adapted varieties for delivery to farmers, TAAT has delivered climate smart seeds to 12 million farmers in 27 countries in just three years.

The One CGIAR reform process, which commenced in August 2020, was partly born out of a recognition that the over 30 million smallholder farmers of Africa require new technologies, systems, institutions, and policies for advancing their agriculture, and that the evolving, interconnected global challenges facing food systems require a unified and integrated systems response.

But as CGIAR does its reforms, it needs to bear in mind that the focus in Africa for the short term is not more technologies but on getting technologies out to farmers at the scale of tens of millions of farmers.

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<sup>28</sup> Available at: <https://storage.googleapis.com/cgiarorg/2022/11/Communique-SIGNED-Sept-2022.pdf>

The One CGIAR reforms in Africa should explicitly build around TAAT, to take results to even greater scales, and put in place a system for accountability for delivering technologies to millions of farmers, using results-based financing.

Secondly, experience in Africa shows clearly that siloed project-based approaches failed. Africa-based CGIAR centers are required for successful development and dissemination of technologies. CGIAR reforms should therefore take an institutional approach based on strong, fully empowered, on-the-ground centers led by Directors General, as directed by their Boards. We need very strong CGIAR centers in Africa, with Directors General that can make decisions independently while leveraging the benefits of One CGIAR authorized by and reporting to an empowered and efficient board, and accountable for driving agreed results at scale for farmers.

The CGIAR reform should have plans to institutionally strengthen national and regional agricultural research centers, such as the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) and the sub-regional agricultural research organizations. CGIAR cannot succeed in taking technologies to scale in Africa unless it creates an institutional framework for strengthening national agricultural research systems, to support the dissemination and uptake of new technologies to the thousands of micro-ecologies on the continent.

Africa is in a race against time on food security, especially in the face of climate change. The global benchmarks for food, nutrition and environmental security are at risk and dependent on what Africa does next. Factors determining success or failure include policy orientations, the quantum of science across the continent, engagement of the private and public stakeholders, and efforts to take technologies to the farmers at scale. CGIAR, as the world's largest public agricultural research network, must continue to play a strong role in the delivery of critical science and innovation to equip and enable farmers to feed themselves and the world.

## **Abidjan II Commitments**

The Abidjan II Commitments constitute a set of *seven principles* and core values, mutually agreed upon following the [high-level consultative forum on strengthening African agricultural research and innovation in the context of the One CGIAR reforms](#). This event (Abidjan II meetings) was hosted by the African Development Bank (AfDB) on 19 May 2022 in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, and was co-organized by the African Union Commission (AUC), the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) and CGIAR. It was preceded by technical meetings on 18 May 2022, the Abidjan I meeting held on 31 March 2022, and several consultative sessions held between both Abidjan meetings. The preceding discussions were characterized by frank dialogues, mutual understanding, and cooperation, which tone continued into the Abidjan meetings held in March and May.

Participants of the Abidjan II meeting, which was addressed by the President of the African Development Bank, Dr. Akinwumi A. Adesina, included the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), the AUC, the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), CGIAR, FARA, the sub-regional agricultural research organizations (ASARECA, CCARDESA, CORAF, NAASRO), the Africa Forum for

Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and Akademiya2063.

Participants acknowledged the challenging external environment Africa faces, which is characterized by increasingly complex and interconnected, systemic threats to its food security, including climate change, COVID-19 pandemic, globalization, and the impact of the Russian-Ukraine conflict.

In the context of a looming food crisis, the continent must urgently transform its food, land, and water systems by equipping its farmers with the science and technologies they need to thrive.

The Abidjan II meetings noted that there is convergence on the premise that the CGIAR reforms offer a unique opportunity to honor and continue the legacy of One CGIAR Centers operating in Africa – building on over 50 years of country and regional cooperation, deepening partnerships, and expanding linkages among the research and innovation systems at national, sub-regional and international levels. At the same time, the transformational change on the scale needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) Malabo Commitments can only be delivered by getting technologies out to farmers at the scale of millions of farmers, via very strong CGIAR centers in Africa that are accountable for driving agreed results and in partnership with strong national agricultural research centers and regional research organizations. Thus, the CGIAR reforms can be a springboard to strengthening Africa's agriculture research and innovation system. The meetings affirmed that the One CGIAR reforms can only be a success if they are a success for Africa.

These dialogues, conducted in a frank and open manner, have helped to chart a clear path towards the development of an institutional framework for collaboration and closer engagement between CGIAR, African governments, National Agriculture Research Systems, FARA and Subregional Research Organizations (SROs). Through research, innovation and strong partnership, the African institutions and CGIAR have sufficiently demonstrated commitment to achieving a resilient and food secure Africa.

Consequently, key proponents of this Communiqué – the President of the African Development Bank; the Commissioner for African Union's Commission's Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment; the Ministers of Agriculture of Cote D'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria and Senegal, and Chairpersons of the CGIAR System Board and FARA – during the Abidjan II meeting provided guidance aimed at ensuring that the One CGIAR reforms are in the best interests of African farmers and food systems.

Through continuous engagement and adaptive management, in conjunction with African institutions, the One CGIAR transition must ensure that the needs of its African partners are considered and reflected. It will further ensure that strong One CGIAR Centers are maintained, whereby they continue to play their proper role in helping to enable Africa to feed itself and to build food security.

The present Communiqué is proposed to ensure clarity on the shared commitments between CGIAR, the host governments, the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, and the Africa's agriculture research and innovation institutions convened by FARA. These entities support the following principles and core values:

**1- CGIAR herewith unequivocally affirms that CGIAR Centers are the essential building blocks of One CGIAR and that the reforms will build on rather than diminish the delivery capacity of the Centers.**

Therefore, all One CGIAR Centers – including AfricaRice, ICARDA, IITA, and ILRI – will retain their own governance mechanisms while leveraging the benefits of the One CGIAR transition. The reforms should be based on an institutional approach not a programmatic approach. Going forward, these Africa-based CGIAR centers will maintain host-country agreements and the spirit of strategic partnership that have given the CGIAR wide political support in Africa.

**2- The roles and composition of the respective One CGIAR Center Boards will be composed as set out in their governing documents.** The autonomy of Center Boards and their rights to determine their governance instruments will continue to be at the full discretion of the Center Board in accordance with those governing instruments, and the agreement with the headquarter host country government. It is fully accepted that an important focus of the reforms should be to respect the role of CGIAR Directors General and the Center Board decision-making structures of Africa-based CGIAR centers. The reforms should focus on and strengthen operational decentralization of CGIAR, not a centralization of CGIAR managed by a select few based out of Africa.

**3- The focus in Africa should be on getting technologies out to farmers, at the scale of millions of farmers.** The One CGIAR reforms in Africa should explicitly build around TAAT, to take results to farmers at scale and put in place a system for accountability for delivering technologies to millions of farmers, using results-based financing. The reforms should ensure that CGIAR and National Agricultural Research Systems partners are held fully accountable for impacts in getting technologies to millions of farmers.

**4- Consistent with the African continental architecture and geopolitical policies of one united and integrated Africa, the One CGIAR reforms will respect the position of the continent and eschew the concept of a ‘sub-Saharan Africa’.** CGIAR, in the context of an evolving leadership structure, will **institute and ensure a mechanism for effectively representing Africa’s priorities and research delivery.** It will **review the role and participation of the global South in its governance structures**, including representation on the [CGIAR System Council](#) and at CGIAR Centers headquartered on the African continent.

**5- CGIAR must create an institutional framework that supports and strengthens national and supra-national agricultural research organizations.** The reforms should incorporate and strengthen partnership and ownership with the national and regional agricultural research centers, and specifically strengthen national and regional agricultural research institutions, such as FARA and the sub-regional research organizations.

**6- To this end, CGIAR will formalize its engagement with the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme ex-pillar 4 (CAADP-XP4) organizations i.e., FARA, AFAAS, ASARECA, CCARDESA and CORAF, and other CAADP-associated initiatives. CGIAR will also include fresh engagement modalities and greater alignment on institutional structure, funding, strategy, and capacity, among other elements:**

*a) Institutional structure:* **CGIAR will align, through formalized engagement, with the established continental and sub-regional agricultural research and development coordinating structures,** specifically with FARA as the apex agricultural research coordinating institution and the technical arm of the AUC on research and technology generation, the sub-regional research organizations (ASARECA, CCARDESA, CORAF and NAASRO), agriculture extension organizations (AFMS) and AUDA as the development organization of the African Union. CGIAR shall update its MoU with the AUC.

*b) Funding:* The African organizations and CGIAR will work collaboratively to advocate for **increased investment in African agricultural research and innovation systems**, recognizing that CGIAR can play an essential role in facilitating funding to support national systems. CGIAR should work with the African Development Bank to seek institutional support for African-based CGIAR Centers, NARS, FARA and SROs, so they can take their proper role in helping to drive zero hunger in Africa.

*c) Strategy:* CGIAR re-affirms its commitment to working with African organizations to ensure **close alignment between CGIAR's strategy and the continent's priorities and frameworks for the development of agriculture, notably CAADP and the S3A.** Complementary instruments and programmes, such as the African Development Bank's Feed Africa Strategy, the Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation (TAAT) programme and the Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zone (SAPZ) initiative; the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the Common Africa AgroParks (CAAPs) programme, the CAADP XP4 programme and FAO's science strategy for Africa will be embraced in defining research and innovation priorities and linkages to the relevant CGIAR structures.

*d) Capacity:* CGIAR and the African institutions will **work together to strengthen human and institutional capacities of Africa's agricultural research and innovation system** and leverage CGIAR global networks to foster greater South-South and triangular cooperation. This will include but not be limited to the development of a mechanism to mobilize targeted resources for national agricultural research institutions, and learning.

**7-** Regarding CGIAR's efforts to deepen engagement with country, regional and continental partners, it is agreed that **Africa must have its own representatives** accountable to its constituencies to ensure that the voice of Africa is heard. The current effort on the formation of a [high-level independent advisory panel](#) that will review current approaches and oversee implementation of an engagement consultation plan and the roll-out of the [CGIAR Engagement Framework for Partnerships & Advocacy – Toward Greater Impact](#) will take this concern seriously.

Within three months of the endorsement of this Communiqué, a plan of action to operationalize these commitments shall be prepared for agreement by CGIAR and the African institutions.

**Endorsed with effect from 1 August 2022**

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**Akinwumi Adesina**, President of the African Development Bank

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**H.E. Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko**, Commissioner, Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy, and Sustainable Environment, African Union Commission

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**Marco Ferroni**, Chair of the CGIAR System Board

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**Alioune Fall**, Chairperson of the Board of Directors, Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa



## Annex X: CGIAR Engagement Framework: Seven Guiding Principles for Partnerships

| Guiding Principles   | Application  |
|--|--|
| <b>1. Complementarity for Impact</b>   |  |
| CGIAR enters into partnerships based on shared visions, values, and goals, and builds mutual trust through a common understanding of each party's competencies and values. The complementary efforts, contributions, and outcomes of each partnership generate mutual benefits and add value and greater impact for people and the planet. This value is weighed against savings, risks, costs, and impediments for each party.                | Establish partnerships with other entities whose focus, approaches, methods, and capacities complement CGIAR's offering, while working toward clearly defined common outcomes.   |
| <b>2. Shared Ownership</b>   |  |
| CGIAR fosters mutual respect and interdependence in partnerships where the objectives, responsibilities, and agenda for action are jointly and equitably agreed upon. This includes incentives and support for each party to articulate, agree, and fulfill their partnership obligations and commitments, including planning for joint dissemination of results and the fair sharing of intellectual property and its benefits. <sup>29</sup> | Provide all partners with the opportunity to jointly define the scope, reach, and expected outcomes of a collective endeavor; ensure a clear distribution of complementary roles and responsibilities among all parties; recognize and acknowledge the value and contributions of each; and ensure that all have the necessary enabling conditions, in terms of resources and capacities, to deliver on agreed outcomes. |
| <b>3. Focus on Results</b>   |  |
| The establishment of partnerships is guided by a focus on sustainable outcomes aligned to Agenda 2030, and to the needs and priorities of partners.  | Agree with all partners on the expected outcomes of a joint endeavor based on clearly articulated stakeholder demands and market opportunities aligned with specific Sustainable Development Goals.  |
| <b>4. Transparency and Accountability</b>  |  |

<sup>29</sup> CGIAR may be a leader, participant, beneficiary, or facilitator in a partnership where the manner of cooperation is appropriate to the context and agreed goals, taking into account conditions and requirements at regional and country levels.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| CGIAR and its partners operate transparently and are accountable to each other and their respective constituencies. This extends to access to all relevant information.  | Share with all partners, under an agreement of reciprocity, all necessary information to ensure the successful delivery of a joint endeavor; ensure effective and open lines of communication at all times; and establish and regularly monitor consensus-based deliverables and milestones.   |
| <b>5. Integrity</b>  |  |
| CGIAR partnerships call for each participating member to operate under strict principles of integrity, safeguarding sustainability, equity, scientific credibility, and impartiality while avoiding conflicts of interest.   | Commit with all partners to abide by applicable institutional policies, standards, and protocols; maintain independence from outside influences; ensure rigor and best practices in all activities conducted jointly, and communicate and share the results of joint endeavors openly.   |
| <b>6. Calculated Risk</b>  |  |
| CGIAR is willing to establish partnerships and take advocacy positions based on evidence-based forecasts and investment options related to the current and potential trajectory of food, land, and water systems. This requires the organization to assume some level of reputational risk directly or by association with activist partners, which is guided by reputation and risk-benefit analysis. | Assess the reputational, financial, and operational risk, among others, of a partnership or advocacy action, respecting the different weight and importance assigned to these by all partners; openly discuss these with partners; and jointly define measures to manage risk with a clear distribution of roles and responsibilities. |
| <b>7. Learning Culture</b>   |  |
| CGIAR cultivates a culture of learning and innovation which enhances the skills and capabilities of CGIAR and its partners equally, including through systems of shared results-based monitoring and incorporation of lessons learned. This means that personal knowledge is translated into sustainable institutional capacities and further joint activities.  | Identify with partners means and opportunities to leverage individual and institutional growth from joint endeavors; conduct periodic reviews of progress and lessons learned; and support one another in adopting best practices.   |

## Annex XI: CGIAR Partner Segmentation

| Segmentation                     | Guiding Criteria  | Example partners   |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| Institutional partner            | <p>Meets at least two of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared impact objectives, risks, and returns at an institutional level</li> <li>• Co-investment in multiple endeavors across the organization, including at the policymaking level</li> <li>• Joint accountability to key stakeholders for delivery</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO)</li> <li>• African Development Bank (AfDB)</li> <li>• World Bank Group</li> <li>• Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)</li> <li>• Land Grant Universities</li> <li>• Wageningen University &amp; Research (WUR)</li> </ul> |
| Regional or science partners     | <p>Meets at least two of the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Material scale: value of project(s) is greater than set threshold (amount TBD)</li> <li>• Critical to operating in a particular region or area of science</li> <li>• Acts as a “gatekeeper” to be able to work and achieve impact in a particular region or science area</li> <li>• Only organization that can deliver required capabilities</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inter-American Development Bank</li> <li>• Innovative Genomics Institute</li> <li>• Indian Agricultural Research Institute (ICAR)</li> </ul>  |
| Country partner                  | <p>Meets at least two of the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Material scale: value of project(s) is greater than set threshold (amount TBD)</li> <li>• Critical to delivering a particular project or commodity</li> <li>• Acts as a “gatekeeper” to be able to work and achieve impact in a particular country or subregion</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NARES partner, e.g., Council for Scientific and Industrial Research of Ghana</li> </ul>   |
| Other partnerships <sup>30</sup> | <p>Meets at least one of the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Material scale: value of project(s) is less than set threshold (amount TBD)</li> <li>• Not critical to operations or delivery above project level</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Peruvian NGO, Asociación Pataz</li> </ul>   |

<sup>30</sup> This segment includes informal partnerships where there are no agreements in place, formal or otherwise, or sharing of resources. These partnerships are assessed against established risk assessment guidelines at the most appropriate level of the organization. Informal partnerships tend to be sporadic, or timebound, and are considered important entry points to enhanced engagement.