

## Review of Strategic Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee's Terms of Reference

### Purpose

The System Council at SC17 in November 2022 requested that each of its standing committees review its terms of reference and consider whether to recommend any proposed changes; and to respond on the outcomes of that review no later than 14 April 2023.

### Action Requested

Strategic Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (SIMEC) recommends that the System Council adopt new Terms of Reference as set out in the attachment hereto.

<p><b>Document category:</b> Working document of the System Council. There is no restriction on the circulation of this document</p>
--

Prepared by: Secretary to SIMEC

## Background

1. At System Council 17 (SC17) following a paper from the System Board the System Council (SC) requested that each of its standing committees review their terms of reference (TOR) and report back to the SC. This paper outlines SIMEC's findings and recommendations.
2. In completing its review, SIMEC considered:
  - The rationale behind the formation of SIMEC;
  - The evolution of the evaluation and impact functions since the Chengdu decisions;
  - How to best leverage the functions within CGIAR, and the broad expertise within the Funders group, to realize impact through effective stewardship of the 2030 Research & Innovation Strategy and One CGIAR; and
  - The recommendations of the 2019 Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) review<sup>1</sup> and, where science advice can come into CGIAR without compromising the independence of the ISDC and SPIA processes.

## Overview of SIMEC Mandate and Roles and Responsibilities

3. SIMEC has a mandate, an operating context, and broad roles and responsibilities. Its **current mandate** is to assist the SC in:
  - 1) reviewing research program evaluations;
  - 2) overseeing the strategic direction and efficiency of the System Organization; and
  - 3) monitoring efficiency, effectiveness and impact of CGIAR Research.
4. It was intended that SIMEC fulfills its mandate through five key subject areas of roles and responsibilities;
  - I. **Strategy and Results Framework.** SIMEC advises and makes recommendations to the SC in areas related to the Review and approval of the CGIAR Strategy and Results Framework (SRF) submitted by the System Board.
  - II. **Advisory Bodies of the System Council.** SIMEC advises and makes recommendations to the System Council related to the operations of the Independent Science and Development Council ("ISDC" previously ISPC), the Standing Panel on Impact Assessment ("SPIA") and the Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service<sup>2</sup> ("IAES" encompassing what was previously IEA and then the Advisory Services Shared Secretariat), (and any other advisory bodies or committees of the SC that set forth their purposes and functions related to strategic impact, monitoring, or evaluation) ; as well as a role in the selection of the ISDC Chair and members, SPIA Chair and the Head of IAES.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.mopanonline.org/assessments/cgiar2019/>

<sup>2</sup> Where terminology has changed since the drafting of SIMEC's TOR, this has been amended in this document for clarity.

- III. **Governance Related to Strategy, Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation.** SIMEC advises and makes recommendations to the SC related to the approval of CGIAR Policies related to strategic impact, monitoring and/or evaluation that are critical to maintaining the reputation of the CGIAR System.
- IV. **Performance Management and Reporting.** SIMEC advises and makes recommendations to the SC related to the Oversight of CGIAR's performance indicators - methodology and targets - to assess CGIAR's performance with respect to the SRF and research portfolio; an annual review of work programs and financing plans on CGIAR Research, as proposed by the System Board, and provision of strategic guidance to the System Board; and Review of the annual portfolio analysis and program reports on the CGIAR Portfolio; amongst other things.
- V. **Evaluations and Impact Assessment.** SIMEC advises and makes recommendations to the System Council related to all matters related or arising from the approval of a cost-effective multi-year evaluation plan covering evaluation of the CGIAR Portfolio and the structures and functions of the CGIAR System; the review and endorsement of evaluations of the CGIAR Portfolio and functions and structures of the CGIAR System, taking into account input from the System Board and Center management responses; the Monitoring effective implementation of ISDC and evaluation recommendations with regards to CGIAR Research; and Approval of plans and financing of ex-post impact assessment of the CGIAR Portfolio proposed by the ISDC after consultation with the System Board.

### Summary of SIMEC's Review Findings

- 5. In completing the review of its mandate, SIMEC has found that SIMEC's 2019 TOR are outdated in the context of One CGIAR and that the SC would be better served if SIMEC had a more limited, clearer and targeted mandate.
- 6. SIMEC proposes that its purpose or mandate be limited to three core deliverables;
  - a. Providing advice and guidance to the System Council on any gaps, challenges, and synergies related to the System Council independent impact, monitoring, and evaluation entities namely, the Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA), Independent Advisory & Evaluation Service (IAES), and the Independent Science for Development Council (ISDC) (collectively described referred to as the Advisory Bodies);
  - b. Building and facilitating a co-operative and cohesive relationship between the Advisory Bodies and with the CGIAR's internal Portfolio Performance and Project Coordination units (PPU/PCU) (or any successor with similar responsibilities), with the aim of ensuring improved communication, transparency of discussions and recommendations and providing advice across the Advisory Bodies to ensure a cohesive, effective and efficient approach across CGIAR; and

- c. Providing advice related to the System Council's approval of CGIAR Policies related to strategic impact, monitoring and/or evaluation that are critical to maintaining the reputation of the CGIAR System.
7. In completing its review of its roles and responsibilities, SIMEC has formed the view that the breadth of the previous roles and responsibilities were too broad to be effective as a standing committee, and that both the demands on SIMEC and its membership have evolved over time, during which time CGIAR has itself changed. The Committee formed the view that:
- SIMEC best serves the SC as a quasi-quality assurance committee, providing guidance to the three independent programmatic assurance bodies and advising the System Council on monitoring and evaluation matters;
  - Evaluations should be approved by the System Council, and SIMEC should not have a role in approving SRFs or similar tasks; and
  - SIMEC must strike a balance between being consultative while acknowledging the MOPAN report's concerns, not interfering in the independence of the Advisory Bodies.
8. Reflecting the proposed new mandate referred to above, SIMEC proposes four areas of roles and responsibilities;
- Oversight of independent evaluation and impact monitoring functions. In relation to CGIAR's independent evaluation and impact monitoring functions SIMEC shall advise and make recommendations to the System Council regarding the
    - Approval of any Terms of Reference and for any other SC advisory bodies or committees that set forth their purposes and functions related to strategic impact, monitoring, or evaluation;
    - Review and endorse annual work programs and budgets; and
    - Review the IAES and ISDC self-assessments and evaluate their effectiveness in fulfilling their functions under their terms of reference and provide recommendations accordingly.
  - Appointments, Nominations and Succession Planning. SIMEC shall provide advice or recommendations to the System Council in relation to the selection of roles related to its mandate, namely the ISDC Chair and members, the selection of the Head of IAES and the selection of the SPIA Chair.
  - Communications and Building Cohesive Relationships. Without diminishing the independence of the Advisory Bodies, SIMEC shall provide advice to, and act as liaison between, the Advisory Bodies and the System Organization to ensure and initiate improved communication, transparency of discussions and recommendations, and to provide advice across the Advisory Bodies to ensure a CGIAR wide cohesive, effective and efficient approach.

- Governance related to Strategy, Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation. SIMEC shall advise and make recommendations related to the System Council's approval of CGIAR Policies related to strategic impact, monitoring and/or evaluation that are critical to maintaining the reputation of the CGIAR System.
9. The Committee also reviewed the skills and experience essential for membership of the Committee. The current TOR provide that Persons serving as members of the SIMEC '*who are not a System Council member or alternate member*' shall have the following experience and skills:
    - a. Knowledge of CGIAR, its vision, mission, goals, objectives, and processes;
    - b. Experience in evidence-based strategic planning in **agricultural** research and development organizations; and
    - c. Familiarity with results frameworks, impact assessment, programmatic evaluation, and programmatic reporting.
  10. The Committee acknowledges that for developing country funders it may not always be possible to nominate someone with the requisite agricultural research and development organizational experience and that skills in non-agricultural research and development organizations should be equally valued. For this reason, the Committee recommends removing the requirement for agricultural experience.

## Conclusion and recommendation

11. SIMEC recommends that the SC amend its Terms of Reference in accordance with the advice of the Committee and the draft attached hereto.
12. SIMEC recognizes the SC and SB may undertake a far more reaching agreement regarding the future roles and responsibilities of the committee that may impact on its operations beyond 2023 and that further to the SC's decision as to its TOR proposes that its membership shall be renewed by electronic decision before 30 June 2023 when the terms of appointment of all members of the Committee expire.

Draft Terms of Reference  
System Council  
Strategic Impact, Monitoring & Evaluation Committee

A. Purpose

1. Strategic Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee ('SIMEC') is a standing committee of the System Council. Its purpose is to assist the System Council by:
  - a. Providing advice and guidance to the System Council on any gaps, challenges, and synergies related to the System Council independent impact, monitoring, and evaluation entities namely, the Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA), Independent Advisory & Evaluation Service (IAES), and the Independent Science for Development Council (ISDC) (collectively described herein as the Advisory Bodies<sup>1</sup>);
  - b. Building and facilitating a co-operative and cohesive relationship between the Advisory Bodies and with CGIAR's internal Portfolio Performance and Project Coordination units (PPU/PCU) (or any successor with similar responsibilities), with the aim of ensuring improved communication, transparency of discussions and recommendations, and providing advice across the Advisory Bodies to ensure a cohesive, effective and efficient approach; and
  - c. Providing advice to the System Council related to the System Council's approval of CGIAR Policies related to strategic impact, monitoring and/or evaluation that are critical to maintaining the reputation of the CGIAR System.

B. Roles and Responsibilities

2. Advisory Bodies. SIMEC shall advise and make recommendations to the System Council in relation to the Advisory Bodies in relation to
  - a. Approval of the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Bodies and any other advisory bodies or committees of the System Council that set forth their purposes and functions related to strategic impact, monitoring, or evaluation;
  - b. Review and endorsement of the Advisory Bodies annual work programs and budgets; and
  - c. Review Advisory Bodies' self-assessments and evaluate their effectiveness in fulfilling their functions under their terms of reference and provide recommendations accordingly.

---

<sup>1</sup> It is noted that other advisory bodies and mechanisms exist in CGIAR's architecture, however in this document the term is used specifically to refer to those mentioned in paragraph 1.

3. Appointments, Nominations and Succession Planning. SIMEC shall provide advice or recommendations to the System Council in relation to
  - a. The selection of the ISDC Chair and members;
  - b. The selection of the Head of IAES; and
  - c. The selection of the SPIA Chair.
4. Communications and Building Cohesive Relationships. Without diminishing the independence of the Advisory Bodies, SIMEC shall provide advice to, and act as liaison between, the Advisory Bodies and the System Organization to ensure and initiate improved communication, transparency of discussions and recommendations, and to provide advice across the Advisory Bodies to ensure a CGIAR wide cohesive, effective and efficient approach.
5. Governance related to Strategy, Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation. SIMEC shall advise and make recommendations to the System Council related to the System Council's approval of CGIAR Policies related to strategic impact, monitoring and/or evaluation that are critical to maintaining the reputation of the CGIAR System.

### C. Composition

6. Membership. Membership of SIMEC shall be composed of a maximum of nine (9) persons who represent voting member constituencies of the System Council.<sup>2</sup>
7. SIMEC members are nominated and appointed by the System Council.
8. Skills and experience. Persons serving as members of SIMEC who are not a System Council member or alternate member shall have the following experience and skills:
  - a. Knowledge of CGIAR, its vision, mission, goals, objectives, and processes;
  - b. Experience in evidence-based strategic planning in research and development organizations; and
  - c. Familiarity with results frameworks, impact assessment, programmatic evaluation, and programmatic reporting.
9. Chair. In the usual course, the members of SIMEC shall elect a Chair from among themselves. If the SIMEC members determine that an external chair would enhance the committee's operations, and upon System Council approval, the Chair may be an independent person. In such cases, the System Council approved terms of reference for an external Chair, once approved, would guide the identification and appointment process for that person, including the required skills and competencies and honorarium arrangements.
10. If circumstances require, the Chair may delegate duties to an individual of his/her choosing if acceptable to the other SIMEC members.

---

<sup>2</sup> Representatives who serve as members of the SIMEC would ordinarily be the member or alternate member of the System Council, or another person who is a member of a voting constituency that is well linked to the System Council discussions and can participate in a proactive and informed way.

11. Terms of members. Each SIMEC member (including the Chair) shall serve on the committee for up to three years and may be renewed. Renewal of terms shall be determined by the System Council.
12. Meeting attendance. Whilst typically, SIMEC meetings will be held amongst the members, a SIMEC member may attend a meeting with another member of his/her constituency to bring additional topic specific expertise after consultation with the Chair. Should a SIMEC member be unable to attend a particular meeting and wish to send a substitute, the member will ensure that the person standing in for them will be fully briefed on current SIMEC business in advance of meeting attendance.

#### D. Operations

13. Meetings. SIMEC shall meet at least twice per year, and prior to System Council meetings. SIMEC shall meet as determined by the Chair in consultation with the other members.
14. Engagement with other parties: The Chair of SIMEC shall interact regularly with and report to the System Council on the results of the committee's deliberations, as well as any issues relevant to its discussions. The Chair, at his/her discretion, will interact with a relevant committee of the System Board as relevant to SIMEC deliberations.
15. Disclosing conflicts of interest. Where a member has a conflict of interest on a specific topic under discussion, they will make the circumstances of the conflict known to the SIMEC, to ensure that discussions proceed in an open and transparent manner.
16. Quorum. A majority of members, one of whom is the Chair or his/her delegate, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
17. Meeting support. The System Organization's budget for system costs must include the cost of reasonable support for the SIMEC operations to ensure its efficient and effective functioning.
18. Access to expertise, including consultants. SIMEC, in fulfilling its duties under these TOR, will draw on expertise from the System Organization, CGIAR staff and the Advisory Bodies. The System Council may decide to provide additional support in the form of external consultants to assist the SIMEC with its work.
19. Delegation of Authority. SIMEC shall have the power to delegate on an exceptional basis its authority and duties to the Chair or individual committee members as it deems appropriate. Individual SIMEC members may call on members of their own constituency to support them in their role as a SIMEC member.