Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service (IAES) & supported Independent Bodies
2024 Annual Workplan Budget Reconfirmation

Purpose

Further to the approved 2022-2024 Advisory Services multiyear plan and the SPIA 2023-2030 plan and operational model, this document sets out the 2024 work plan and budget with greater specificity to intended activities and outputs in the coming year. The mandate documents [namely, Terms of Reference of CGIAR's Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service, Independent Science for Development Council (ISDC), and Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA)], movement towards an evolved One CGIAR portfolio, and prior broad consultation of the multi-year plan underpin the 2024 plan. The 2024 plan presented has benefited from revision and endorsement from SIMEC and the AOC has received and reviewed the budget.

Action Requested

The System Council is invited to review, and if thought appropriate, approve the IAES and supported independent bodies' 2024 Workplan & Budget.

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Prepared by: CGIAR's Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service in consultation with the chairs of the Independent Science for Development Council and the Standing Panel on Impact Assessment

2024 Plan Reconfirmation: Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service & supported independent bodies

CGIAR's Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service (IAES) provides operational support to the **Independent Science for Development Council** (ISDC) and the **Standing Panel on Impact Assessment** (SPIA), and implements CGIAR's multi- year, **independent evaluation plan** as approved by the System Council. IAES and supported bodies are operating under an approved 2022-2024 three-year workplan, adjusted and approved for the 2023-2024 period (Decision Reference SC/M17/DP3). The purpose of this document is to reconfirm the third year of this multi-year plan and fine tune the 2024 activity set. The plan is organized by three workstreams that relate to the three distinct mandates: ISDC, SPIA, IAES/Evaluation function (treated as a separate narrative section and budget line) and the cross-cutting, underpinning IAES support. Exhibit 1 supplies objective-based budget.

Independent Science for Development Council

The ISDC 2022-2024 multi-year vision concentrates on delivering its terms of reference, namely, to support System Council and the CGIAR system.

Portfolio evolution advice – Anticipated portfolio evolution guidance (output: review of portfolio documents and proposals).

Commissioned studies and related outputs – Possible continued work on commissioned megatrends analysis, and publication of a special issue in *Agricultural Systems* on inclusive innovation. These will underpin the scientific credibility and legitimacy of

ISDC's recommendations (output: megatrends recommendations and related communication materials for portfolio evolution guidance and *Agricultural Systems* special issue).

Innovation Science for Development Forum Series – Continuation of the Science Forum Series on innovation that builds on the 2022-2023 events and dialogue (output: Science Forum series 2022-24).

Semi-annual ISDC meetings & System Council Consultation – Agendas and System Council engagements geared towards developing advice (outputs: advice prepared for, e.g., System Council's 20th and 21st meetings).

CGIAR support – In keeping with adaptive management and codesign principles, science for development advice will be provided for arising needs.

ISDC advisory products – Translational materials to make advice more accessible, including video or audio content, briefs, and infographics.

Standing Panel on Impact Assessment

The SPIA 2019-2024 workplan will end next year, and 2024 will usher in the scoping phase of the SPIA 2023-2030 workplan approved by System Council in May 2023 (Decision SC/M18/DP3).

In 2024, under the ongoing 2019 – 2024 workplan, SPIA will:

Deliver the synthesis of causal impact evidence from the SPIA portfolio. The synthesis will bring together insights/lessons by major themes: contributions of CGIAR to long-term, large-scale impacts in priority countries; measurement of externalities and unintended impacts of productivity-enhancing CGIAR innovations; strategies to overcome constraints to adoption to support an effective scaling of CGIAR innovations, improving targeting of CGIAR technologies and interventions, small mechanization, information services (agricultural extension) and climate change adaptation.

Deliver the country reports on the reach of CGIAR innovations in Uganda, Vietnam and Bangladesh, and dynamic evidence on the reach of CGIAR innovations in Ethiopia.

Disseminate to different target audiences in the CGIAR system the evidence coming from the different studies of the SPIA portfolio though research briefs and a series of events organized to discuss the use of this evidence in CGIAR decision-making processes.

Organize a central, in-person results dissemination event in which research teams involved with all studies under the 2019-2024 workplan present findings to a wide set of stakeholders (System Council members, CGIAR leadership and researchers, representatives of national partners, and other stakeholders).

Continue to support CGIAR initiatives using a light-touch approach to facilitate matchmaking with academic researchers to design rigorous impact assessments around initiative research questions.

In 2024, under the new 2024 - 2030 workplan, SPIA will:

Complete the transition into SPIA's new operational modality.

Identify research consortia that will continue to dynamically track the reach of CGIAR innovations in Ethiopia, Uganda, Vietnam and Bangladesh, as well as research consortia that will document the reach of CGIAR innovations in four new high-priority countries and carry-out initial scoping work (stock-taking only) in 12 other countries by 2027 and 2030.

Use a systematic scoping of potential causal "learning" and "accountability" studies through hands-on technical assistance and follow-up with CGIAR researchers, and a systematic effort to link

CGIAR researchers with internal and external IA (Impact Assessment) experts.

IAES / Evaluation function

The IAES/Evaluation function delivers process and performance evaluations and associated evaluative activities to increase use of evaluative evidence for decision-making and learning. The multi-year evaluation plan is distributed across four areas (*see italics*), to support and steer an 'evaluable' CGIAR portfolio, bolstering accountability and learning.

Conduct and quality assure external evaluative activities – Overall, 2024 will focus on providing evidence towards ongoing portfolio revision. Completion of ongoing 2023 engagements: (i) Genebank Platform evaluation; and (ii) Synthesis of results and learnings from Evaluability Assessments (EA) of four Regional Integrated Initiatives (RIIs)[1]. New activities commencing: (iii) evaluation of 3 Science Groups (engineered to support evolution of CGIAR portfolio and new proposals); (iv) Gender, Diversity, and Inclusion (GDI) action plan assessment (n.b., joint engagement with Internal Audit); and (vi) review of the status of implementation of Management Responses (MR) to evaluations between 2021-2023.

Evaluation standards, guidance & capacities development – To support excellence across a CGIAR-wide evaluation practice, operationalizing the CGIAR Evaluation Policy & Framework will continue: namely, IAES will implement activities for uptake of guidelines for "Management Engagement and Response" and "Gender, Diversity, and Inclusion-responsive Evaluations." Roll-out and learning from the application of QoR4D Evaluation *beta* guideline will continue. Review of the EA tool based on 2023 Regional Integrated Initiatives Evaluability Assessments. Under discussion: Evaluating Climate Change as a cross-cutting theme guidelines.

Engaging with CGIAR – Engaging with governance, management, and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) practitioners in CGIAR to engage and support uptake and use of evaluative evidence, from evaluative studies (EAs & Performance and Results Management System) and evaluations. Active coordination with Project Coordination Unit, Portfolio Performance Unit, and other MEL practitioners, to support learning and accountability, and complement second line assurance MEL activities.

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[1] two remaining RII EA embedded in 2024 activities

Knowledge management – Translate and convert independent evaluation recommendations, learning and advice to video or audio content, briefs and infographics. Continue positioning CGIAR's global knowledge on evaluating quality of science; steering and participating the community of practice of the evaluation offices of the Rome-based Agencies of UN and CGIAR (EvalForward). Selected translation of materials to Spanish/French.

IAES /Operations

CGIAR's IAES underpins the implementation and delivery of the above three workstreams. IAES provides operational support to ISDC and SPIA, and implements CGIAR's multi-year independent evaluation plan (workstream-specific deliverables described in previous sections).

In 2024, a key cross-cutting output for IAES will be the preparation of the 2025-2027 consolidated plan and budget, prepared consultatively with system actors, and in alignment with mandates and operating principles recorded in the respective IAES, ISDC and SPIA terms of reference (and, in SPIA's case, 7-year plan). Multi-year planning will complement regular annual planning, monitoring, and reporting tasks.

The bulk of IAES resources are invested in personnel to support the three workstreams. IAES staff performance objectives align directly to the three workstream-specific plans. The staffing plan has been adjusted from 2024 to align with the need to implement the (i) SPIA operational model approved at 18th System Council (i.e., the global deployment of a professional team, of which those providing solely operational support employed via IAES); (ii) the evolving needs of ISDC, i.e., towards expanding channels of actionable advising.

IAES issues policies and procedures to support good stewardship, confidentiality, freedom from conflicts of interest and other fundamental aspects that characterize well-governed and managed independent advisory and evaluation bodies. With respect to policies and procedures, a major concentration in 2024 will be documenting the relevant procedures to support the new SPIA plan and contracting activities.

IAES will continue to deploy its competitively selected roster of subject matter experts (SMEs) for ISDC and Evaluation Function assessments, reviews, studies, and evaluations. An expansion of SME roster in 2023 secures the foundation for efficient and compliant contracting of 2024 review and evaluation activities.

As the portfolio of CGIAR evolves in 2024, IAES will underpin the workstreams' heavy concentration on knowledge management and use of evidence. As part of its cross-cutting supportive role, IAES provides website, social media, and branding platforms that undergird workstream-specific communication and knowledge management activities. IAES also engages in planning and coordination activities related to the entry points in portfolio and proposal revision process.

IAES holds budgets and spending accountability for the funds supporting the three workstreams. Table 1 summarizes the 2024 budget. Notes present variance and rationale against the three-year approved budget for 2024 (reconfirmed in System Council decision SC/M17/DP3).

The budget introduces the full Y1 budget for the first year of the SPIA 2023-2030 plan (Decision SC/M18/DP3). To keep the overlapping SPIA multi-year plans distinct, the SPIA current and new plan appear on separate lines.

Table 1: ISDC, SPIA, IAES (Evaluation Function and Operations) 2024 Budget (in 000 USD)

	2024 (3)
ISDC	1,275
SPIA (1)	2,429
SPIA New Plan (2)	2,242
IAES/Evaluation	2,147
IAES/Operations	2,110
Total	**10,203**

Budget notes: (1) For SPIA, an estimated USD 750k has been reprogrammed from 2023 to 2024 due to an adapted approach to early career researcher support, budget shifts in the grant-making component (no cost extensions for ongoing studies) and adaptations in launching country work in Vietnam and Bangladesh. The USD 750k is based on a forecast of the 2023 budget as of end August 2023; a budget revision will be submitted to System Council in November 2023 in case of adjustment. (2) Under the SPIA 2023-2030 workplan, the requested budget relates to the new operational model and workplan approved by CGIAR System Council. (3) The 2025-2027 business cycle budget will be prepared consultatively in 2024.

See Exhibit 1 for objective-based budget per workstream in 2024 (estimation).

Exhibit 1: ISDC, SPIA and IAES 2024 Budget by Objective

	'000 USD
ISDC	
Initiative & Portfolio Reviews	336
Generating CGIAR Scientific Advice: Commissioned Studies	112
Innovation Science for Development Forum Series	190
Council Honoraria & Targeted Products	258
Consensus Building & SC (System Council) Consultation	318
Overhead to CGIAR hosts	61
ISDC Sub-Total	**1,275**
SPIA (workplan 2019-2024)	
Supporting the impact culture in the CGIAR	834
Expanding and deepening evidence of impacts of CGIAR research	518
Improving and institutionalizing collection of data	927
Oversight, management, monitoring & evaluation	66
Overhead to CGIAR hosts	84
SPIA (workplan 2019-2024) Sub-Total	**2,429**
SPIA (workplan 2023-2030)	
Institutionalizing and scaling country-level data on CGIAR reach	1,217
Expanding and deepening evidence of causal impacts of CGIAR research	364
Strengthening the use of rigorous impact evidence	270
Program Management	321
Overhead to CGIAR hosts	70
SPIA (workplan 2023-2030) Sub-total	**2,242**
IAES/EVALUATION FUNCTION	
External evaluative activities (process & performance)	1,792
Evaluation guidance	81
Engagement with CGIAR on process/performance eval	44
Knowledge management & translation of eval knowledge	216
Overhead to CGIAR hosts	14
EVALUATION Sub-Total	**2,147**
IAES OPERATIONS	
Personnel, communications, procedures, engagement, hosting and overhead charges	**2,110**
IAES and supported independent bodies TOTAL	**10,203**