

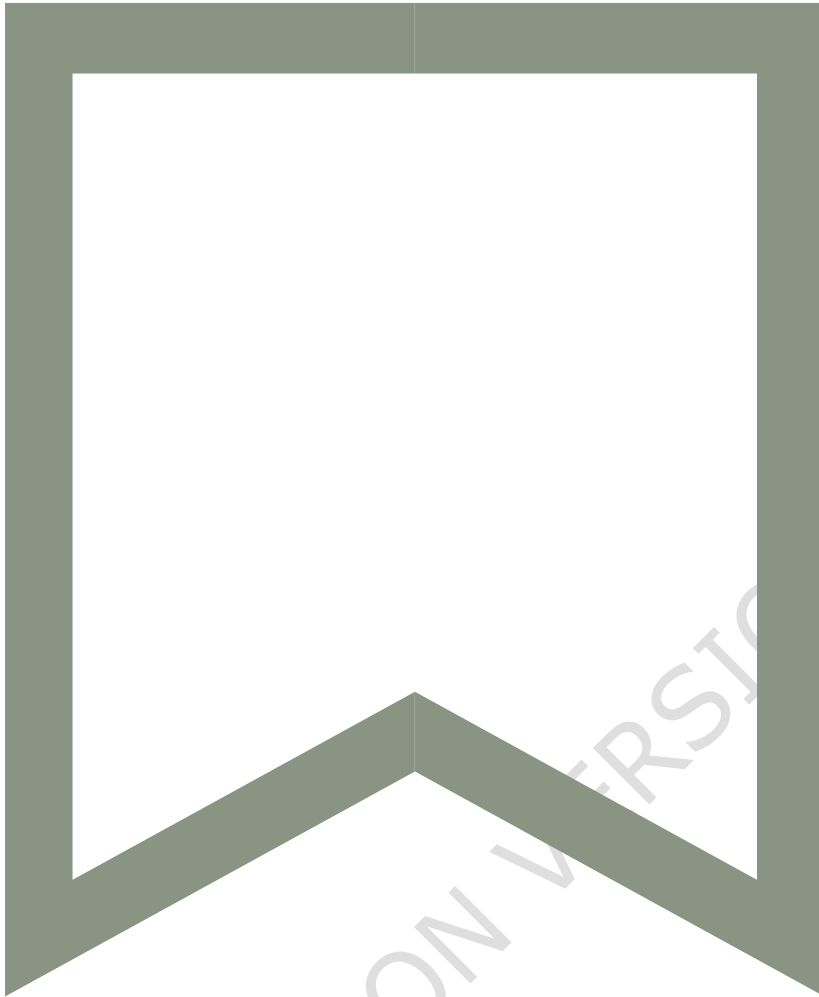
CGIAR Evaluation Guidelines

**Management
Engagement and
Response: Process &
Performance
Evaluations CGIAR**

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DISCUSSION VERSION 09/2023

**CGIAR Independent Advisory
and Evaluation Service**



2023

DISCUSSION VERSION 09/2023

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Name of Guidelines	Guidelines on Evaluation Engagement and Management Response: Process and Performance Evaluations in CGIAR
Purpose	To enhance management engagement in process and performance evaluations, and to guide management in providing a formal response to evaluations for strengthened use of evaluations in CGIAR.
Audiences	CGIAR senior leadership, science leaders and intervention managers who commission decentralized evaluations and/or engage in independent evaluations; and, specifically, managers responding to evaluative recommendations. These guidelines may also be helpful to stakeholders who are interested in the application of evaluative learning.
Policy Reference	The CGIAR Evaluation Framework and CGIAR Evaluation Policy (2022) should be read in conjunction with this guideline, which is part of a compendium of CGIAR evaluation guidelines , including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conducting and Using Evaluability Assessments in CGIAR: CGIAR Evaluation Guidelines (also in Spanish) - Applying the CGIAR Quality of Research for Development Framework to Process and Performance Evaluations (also in Spanish)
Contact	Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service (IAES)/Evaluation Function Email: IAES-Evaluation@cgiar.org

These guidelines have been developed by the Evaluation Function of CGIAR's IAES staff (Svetlana Negroustoueva Karen Erdoó Jay-Yina, and Ibtissem Jouini) with Keith Child, consultant; under the overall direction of Allison Grove Smith, IAES director. The broader IAES team and other consultants supported the document production.

IAES/Evaluation Function encourages feedback to IAES-Evaluation@cgiar.org.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AR4D	Agricultural Research for Development
CRP	CGIAR Research Program (prior to 2022)
EA	Evaluability Assessment
EF	Evaluation Framework
EP	Evaluation Policy
ISDC	Independent Science for Development Council
MELIA	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning and Impact Assessment
MELCOP	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Community of Practice
MR	Management Response
MER	Management Engagement and Response
PPU	Portfolio Performance Unit
PRMF	Performance and Results Management Framework
PRMS	Performance and Results Management System
QoS	Quality of Science
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

The One CGIAR transition process, which began in 2019, calls for a new research vision matched by an operational structure that has opportunities to embed learning across the entire CGIAR portfolio. [CGIAR's Evaluation Framework](#) and [Evaluation Policy \(2022\)](#)¹ articulate how process and performance evaluations support CGIAR in delivering its mission and implementing its [2030 Research and Innovation Strategy](#). These guidelines articulate the purpose and key elements of management engagement across all evaluation phases. The guidelines also outline the steps and roles involved in developing a management response (MR).

The evaluation MR is a mechanism to ensure that evaluations are systematically used and that recommendations are considered for more effective programming, accountability, and learning. An evaluation MR is issued by the leadership of an evaluand (e.g., the object of an evaluation, for instance a project) in response to a finalized and approved evaluation report. The MR records the concrete and time-bound commitments and the units responsible for implementing each evaluation recommendation. An MR has the potential to be a learning document, helping CGIAR foresee and mitigate future challenges.

Guideline purpose: To enhance management engagement in process and performance evaluations, and to guide management in providing a formal response to evaluations for strengthened use of evaluations in CGIAR. (see Objectives in Figure 2)

1.1 Management Engagement and Response

Management engagement and a thoughtful MR to recommendations strengthen and advance the use of evaluative evidence in CGIAR, while also ensuring greater accountability. The management engagement and response (MER) guidelines distinguish between engagement and response. Both are integral to the evaluative process and outcomes (see Text Box 1).

Standard Evaluation Terms of Reference (ToR) set out specific evaluation phases detailed in the inception report (IR) (example from evaluation of [Genebank Platform](#)). Figure 1 illustrates the typical phases.² Management engagement is key at all the phases and does not end with MR development.

¹ The CGIAR Evaluation Policy is to be occasionally revised. CGIAR's IAES may recommend amendments as appropriate to the System Council and Board for approval. Future revisions may, for instance, consider if the system transformation agenda of CGIAR is best served through additional evaluation criteria.

² See Inception Guidelines [TBC](#) and [blog](#) on the CGIAR approach.

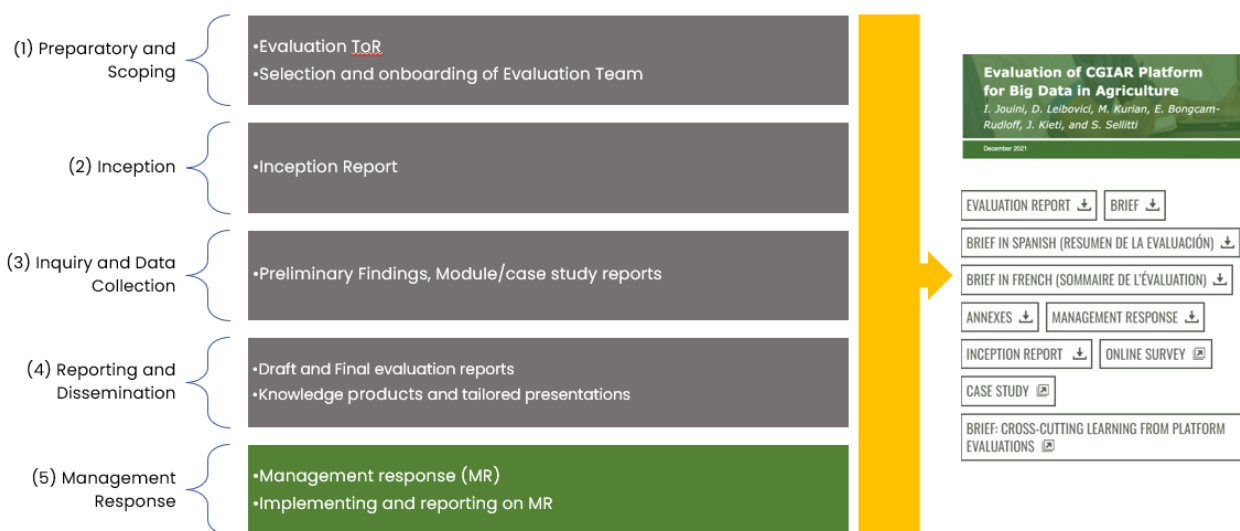
Text Box 1: The Difference between Management Engagement and MR

Management engagement refers to the participation of intervention managers to design, conduct, use and learn from evaluation. Managers’ buy-in affects how the evaluation is implemented. For example, it ensures the evaluation team’s access to key stakeholders and extant documentation during the data collection phase, the availability during inception and validation exercises, and the willingness to participate in reporting out activities to governance bodies. The activities are coordinated with designated monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) professionals, an evaluation manager, the IAES (for independent evaluations), the evaluator(s), and evaluation users.

At different phases, appropriate management engagement includes playing a leadership role. Throughout the process, the nature and timing of management engagement will vary. However, through every phase (see Figure 1), management leadership and engagement are key. Management can lead by putting forward learning questions and providing feedback, being supportive, responding to recommendations, and ensuring actions are implemented.

A **MR** is a formal response to evaluation recommendations. It is a tangible output of the engagement lead by management of evaluand and per CGIAR’s organizational responsibilities, supported by the Portfolio Performance Unit (PPU). The MRE establishes time-bound commitments from management to implement each recommendation. The systematic implementation of accepted and partially accepted recommendations is recognized in CGIAR Evaluation Policy as an integral part of the evaluative process and is reported annually in **Type A** reporting.

Figure 1. Typical Evaluation Phases and related Outputs for Independent Evaluations



1.2 Audience and Users

Text Box 2: MR Requirements in the CGIAR Evaluation Policy

Recognizing the responsibility of CGIAR management to encourage a robust culture of accountability, learning and continuous improvement, the CGIAR Evaluation Policy states: **“A management response is required for every evaluation where CGIAR has had a partial or complete decision-making power in the evaluation process, or CGIAR has fully or partially financed the evaluation.”**

The intended audience for these guidelines includes CGIAR senior leadership, science leaders and intervention managers who commission and/or engage in evaluations. These guidelines may also be helpful to stakeholders who are interested in the application of evaluative learning.

In CGIAR, the PPU is the body responsible for coordinating the development of MRs and tracking and reporting on MR implementation. The MER evaluation guidelines are intended to complement the process note on “Developing, Tracking and Reporting on Management Responses to Evaluations”³, which defines the process by which MR to evaluations are developed, tracked, and reported.⁴ For CGIAR stakeholders, familiarity with the [CGIAR Evaluation Framework](#) and [Evaluation Policy](#)⁵ (2022) is a prerequisite to understanding and using these guidelines.

1.3 Purpose and Objectives of the MER Guidelines

These guidelines cover roles, tasks, activities, and procedures for CGIAR management and for those who commission and execute an evaluation.

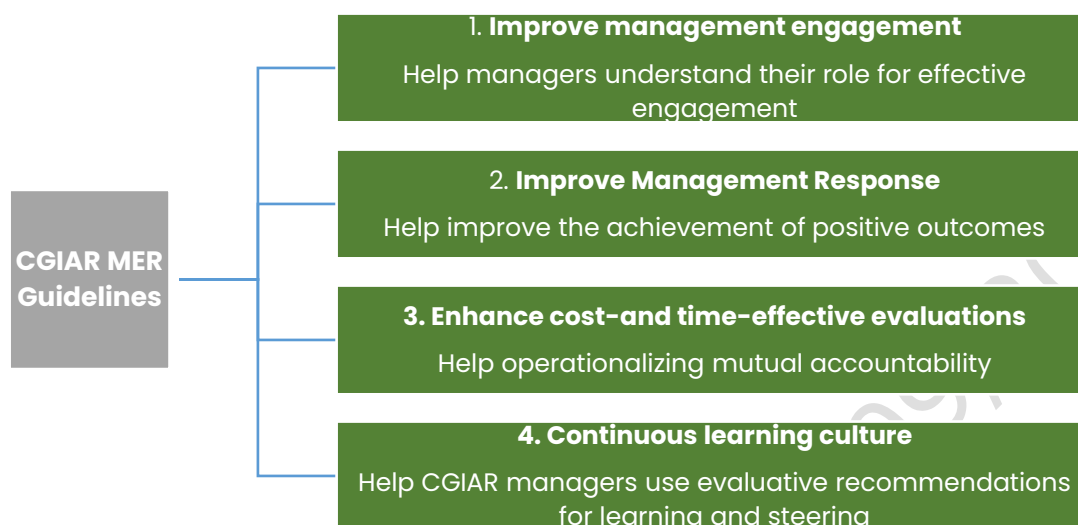
Consistent with the standards and principles of the Evaluation Framework and kts, the MR also contains an embedded theory of change (ToC) for evaluation practice. MR underpins the uptake of evaluative recommendations, organizational learning, and accountability. MR also steers decision-making. Accordingly, the CGIAR [Evaluation Policy](#) requires a MR for all evaluations (see Text Box 2).

Figure 2: Objectives of the MER Guidelines

³ PPU; latest draft available February 2023.

⁴ TBC latest version.

⁵ An additional source about the CGIAR Evaluation Policy and Framework: [A New Evaluation Framework and Policy for One CGIAR](#) (video).



2. Key Considerations for Engagement in Evaluations

The pathway towards an impactful MR begins early in the evaluation process. The evaluation of CGIAR interventions is guided by the CGIAR-wide Evaluation Framework and Policy, which rest upon two frameworks: the Quality of Research for Development (QoR4D), which is research-oriented to deliver development outcomes; and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD/DAC), which is development-orientated.⁶

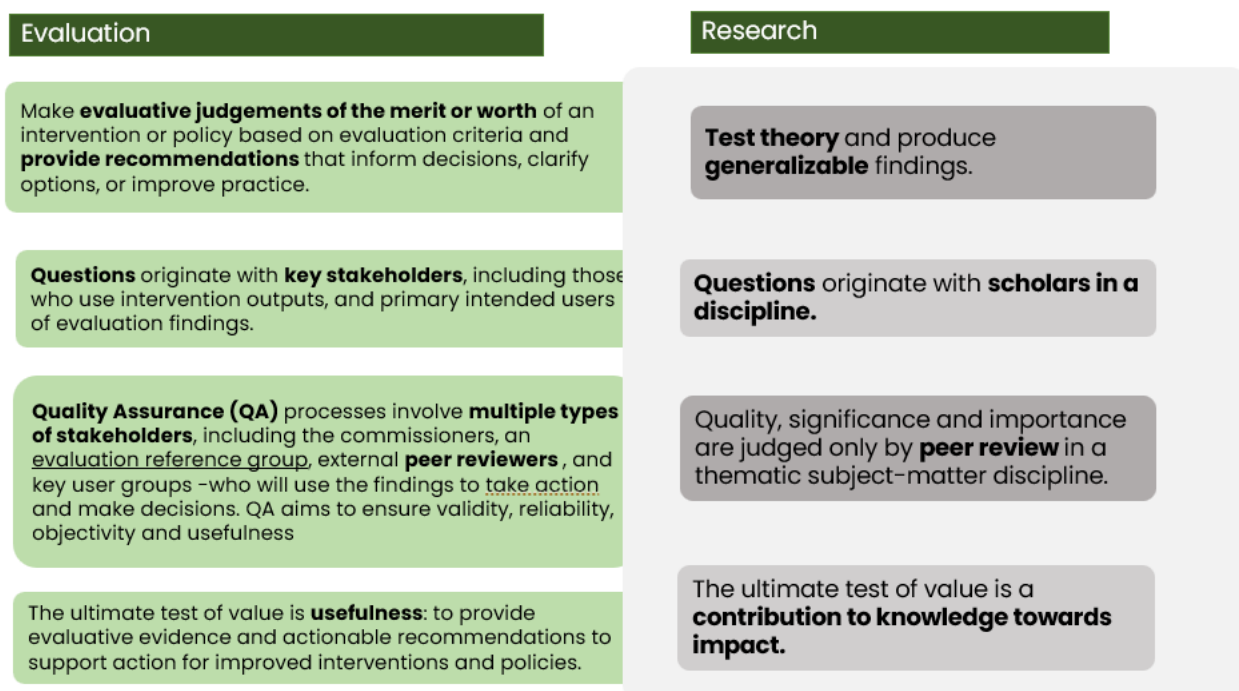
2.1 Evaluation versus Research

It is important to distinguish between scientific research and evaluation—distinct spheres of practice, with different objectives and approaches to implementation modalities. Even in the research-for-development (R4D) context (i.e., CGIAR), an evaluation cannot be viewed as a research activity *per se*. While both research and evaluation are inquiry-focused and iterative, research aims to pose and *answer learning questions*, while the objective of evaluations⁷ is to pose and answer *evaluative questions based on an identified set of [evaluation] criteria, and to formulate recommendations based on evaluation findings*. While scientific research may inform an evaluation design, the type and intensity of engagement from management and implementers of an intervention are different. See Text Box 3:

Text Box 3: What is the Key Difference between Research and Evaluation?¹

⁶ Notably, evaluation policies and frameworks of comparators funded through multi-lateral funding, i.e. FAO, or funders themselves, i.e. [USAID](#), use OECD/DAC as a foundation.

⁷ Referring to *process* and *performance* evaluations for clarity (CGIAR Evaluation Framework).



For example, scientific research points to the importance of vitamin D for strong bone growth. Evaluations do not need to prove this; scientific research has already done so. Rather, a process or a performance evaluation can provide evidence-based judgments on how effective an intervention was at rolling out vitamin D supplementation in a target population.

In the above analogy, managers would use evaluative evidence and recommendations as a means of learning and accountability (to those funding and/or managing an intervention), rather than as a contribution to a body of scientific knowledge. The evaluation would determine if an intervention (a project, a program, etc.) is being implemented as intended, highlight lessons learned, and use evaluative findings to make related recommendations on where and how such roll-out activities can be enhanced.

In the R4D contexts, presenting distinction necessitates not only nuanced but also targeted approaches and methods on how to evaluate interventions, with research and science elements. This work should be conducted for development towards contributing to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In CGIAR, the [Guidelines on Applying Quality of Research for Development Frame of Reference to Process and Performance Evaluations](#) (2022) provide the framing, evaluation criteria, dimensions, and methods for assessing the quality of CGIAR research for development.

2.2 Scope of MER in Process and Performance Evaluations

In CGIAR, evaluative activities can be conducted on any object of evaluation.⁸ Within these potential objects of evaluation, management engagement in the evaluative process is necessary. The level, timing and intensity would depend on the type of evaluative activity.

⁸ See example of [twelve evaluative reviews of CGIAR Research Programs \(CRPs\) with effectiveness and Quality of Science \(QoS\) evaluation criteria, 2020](#).

Management engagement follows one of two pathways, along the types of process and performance evaluations in scope of the policy: (i) external, **completely independent evaluations** that are commissioned by the System Council (SC) and conducted through the Evaluation Function of IAES; and (ii) **largely independent/decentralized evaluations** that are commissioned by an initiative or project and conducted through their internal governance structures (see Table 1). These two evaluation types are associated with parallel but substantively different engagement pathways.

Table 1: Key MER Elements by Type of Process/Performance Evaluation in CGIAR

	Independent evaluations	Largely independent/ decentralized evaluations⁹
Object	Initiatives and Platforms, or thematic evaluations	Initiatives and Platforms, or other thematic evaluations and sub-units thereof
Commissioner	SC	CGIAR Board, management, or bilateral/W3 funder
Evaluation manager appointed by IAES/Evaluation Function	Yes	No
MR required	Yes	Yes (see Text Box 2)
Included in a multi-year evaluation plan¹⁰	Yes	Maybe-if QA is provided by IAES
Timeframe for MR development	Maximum 2 months	Discretion of commissioner

Management engagement is a generic process that is applicable to both independent and largely independent evaluations.

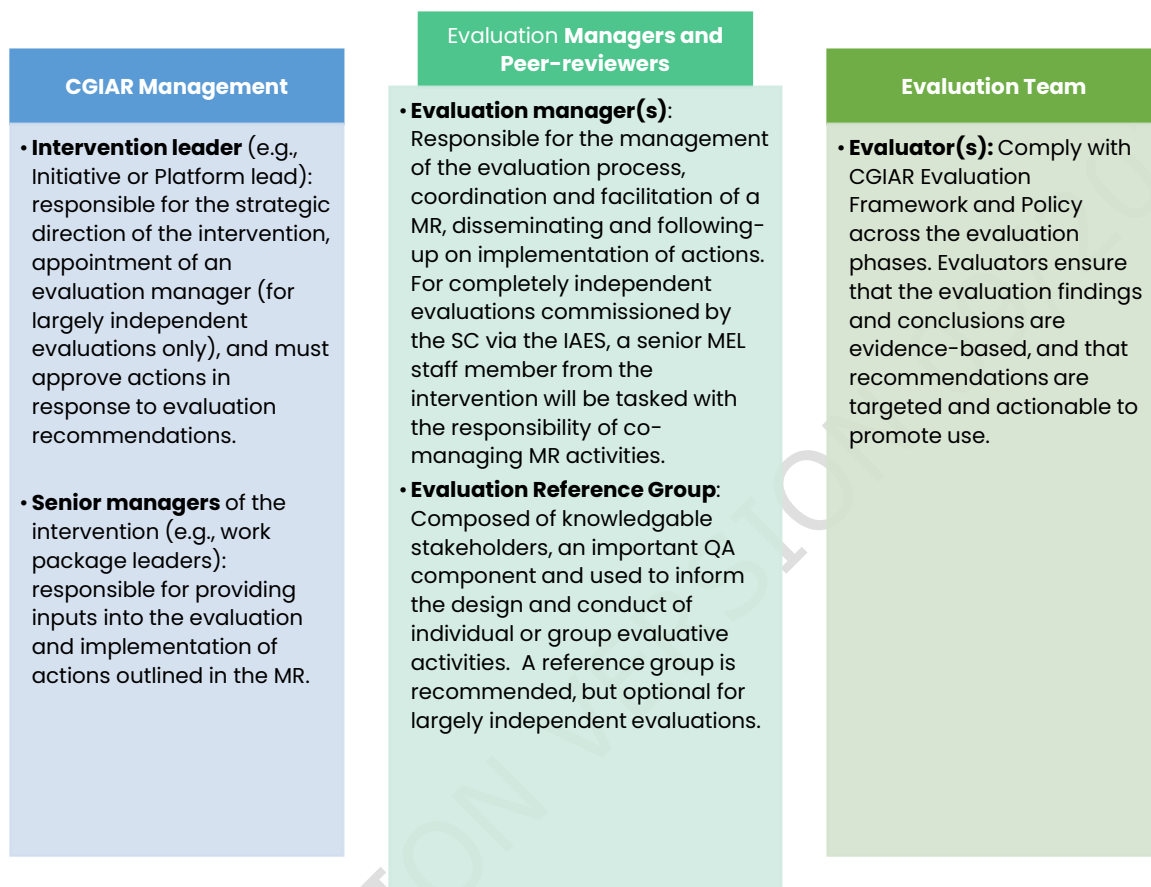
2.3 Roles and Responsibilities

When the core evaluation users are aware of their roles and are engaged from the start, recommendations are more likely to be acted upon, monitored and implemented. Though intervention managers/leads are the ultimate stakeholders and, thus, bear responsibility, everyone must understand their role in the process. The evaluand needs to be clearly defined for an evaluation to be meaningful. The evaluation ToR (see example [from Genebank Platform evaluation](#)) should make clear what the evaluand is, and who the users and key stakeholders are. As part of an onboarding, induction or socialization process, roles and responsibilities should also be made clear to all key stakeholders, including the members of the reference group, the evaluation manager(s), senior managers and related staff. While the evaluation team conducts the evaluation, its members need to understand the evaluation governance structure, and specifically, the role of the intervention management and the evaluation manager(s) (see Figure 3).

⁹ CGIAR Center-based or commissioned evaluations would fall under this type, consistent with the scope of the CGIAR-wide Evaluation Framework and Policy.

¹⁰ At the time of development of the Guidelines ([2021; Decision Reference SC/M14/DP4; 2023 plan reconfirmed in 2022](#))

Figure 3: Key Roles and Responsibilities in the CGIAR Evaluation Process



2.3.1 CGIAR Management and Evaluand

CGIAR management share leadership and responsibility for inputs into the evaluation design, conduct and use of evaluation results. CGIAR management’s role is consistent with the principles and standards in the Evaluation Framework, namely utility and use.¹¹ The management role includes the obligation to: (i) contribute to the implementation of evaluative activities; and (ii) provide adequate resources to ensure the proactive consideration of findings and recommendations, the preparation of management responses, and the timely follow-up and implementation of actions. **Error! Reference source not found.** summarizes management engagement tasks by evaluation type and phase.

Management engagement must balance responsible engagement with evaluative independence (see). For example, if management and evaluators disagree over a substantial issue, differences of opinion should be noted in written feedback to the evaluators. Ultimately, however, the evidence-based judgment

¹¹ The Evaluation Framework assumes that responsibilities pertaining to evaluation are carried out by CGIAR governance, management, and operational units and independent assurance, as detailed in current governance [frameworks](#), [charters](#), and similar documents. It similarly assumes the implementation of established ToRs for relevant, responsible governance bodies and committees, independent advisory and evaluation services, and units within the operational [structure](#) that pertain to MEL across CGIAR.

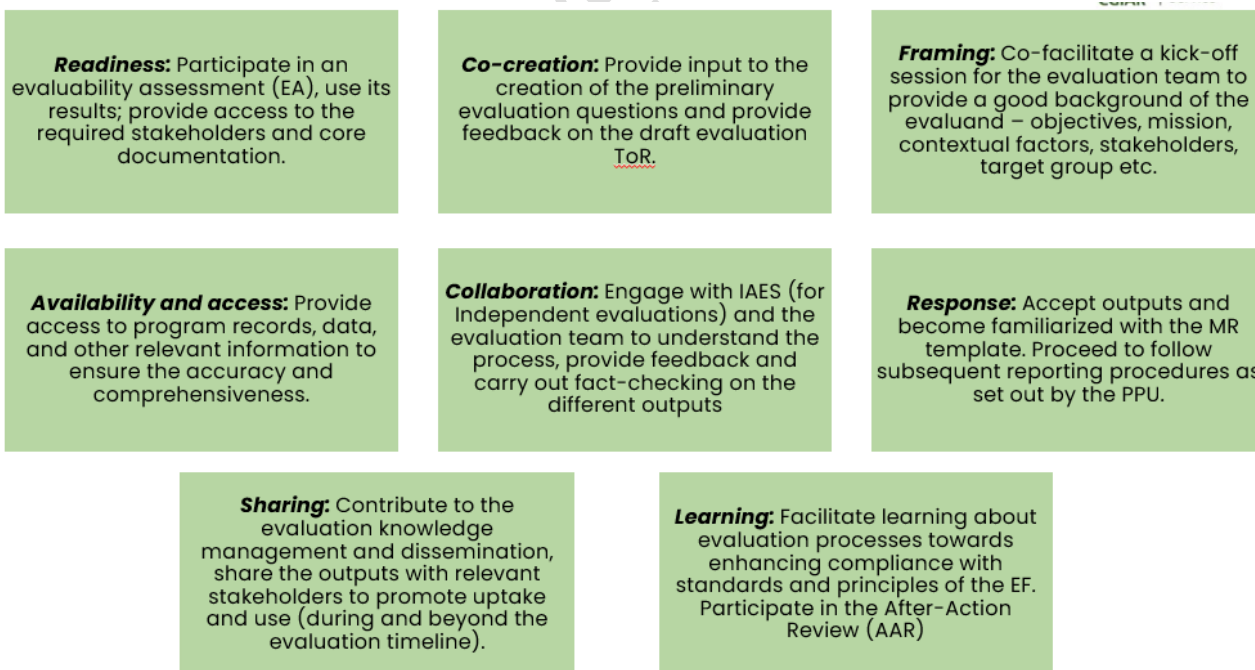
of the evaluator(s) must drive evaluative conclusions and recommendations. **Error! Reference source not found.** outlines other related risks and mitigation measures.

Text Box 4: What is the appropriate Level of Management Engagement in Evaluation?

- The level of management engagement must be balanced against the goal of producing an objective evaluation. The importance of evaluative independence and lack of bias is captured in CGIAR evaluative principles and standards: “Evaluations instill confidence among all users that the evaluation is as objective as possible with the highest ethical standards and codes of conduct, impartial with a system in place against conflict of interests, and unafraid to raise constructive feedback on critical issues, being unbiased operationally and analytically.”
- Finding the correct balance between responsible management engagement and respecting the standard of evaluative independence is not always obvious. If in doubt, managers should contact the IAES for additional guidance.

The intent of engaging the management of **evaluand** into evaluation processes early and throughout is to promote trust, a shared understanding of the exercise, and increase evaluation usefulness. This section presents an example of management engagement with an independent evaluation, while [Annex 1](#) outlines both independent and largely independent evaluations.

Evaluation Function of IAES and/or the evaluation team invite the evaluand to engage in several activities, along the parameters outlined below (see Annex 1 for details):



Management of CGIAR, including of interventions subject to evaluation, have a reporting line to the System Board (SB)¹². Working in partnership with CGIAR System Council, to which IAES reports through the [Strategic Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee \(SIMEC\)](#), the SB keeps under review the effectiveness of the CGIAR System, its reputation for excellence, and adopts and monitors compliance with CGIAR policies, procedures and guidelines.

The approved CGIAR Evaluation Policy and Framework (2022) specifies the important role of the SB in evaluative processes. Namely, Section 6 recalls SB's responsibility for providing strategic oversight and direction to CGIAR management concerning the effective and efficient implementation of CGIAR's Strategy and Results Framework and the results achieved through CGIAR's operations. In discharging its responsibilities under the Charter of the CGIAR System Organization, the SB relies and draws on all sources of monitoring and evaluation across the CGIAR System. This includes external evaluation.

2.3.2 The IAES, as the Evaluation Manager

The primary goal of CGIAR through IAES is to provide independent advice and evaluative evidence in a *timely, relevant, and accessible* manner to the SC. The aim of the centralized evaluation management is consistency, quality and independence of the evaluation process and reports, compliant with CGIAR's evaluation [Framework and Policy](#). The fifth operating principle of IAES is higher ownership and improved coordination of advice by the System itself.

IAES takes a lead role in independent evaluations commissioned by the SC and included in the CGIAR multi-year evaluation plan. The CGIAR IAES [Evaluation Function](#) executes the evaluative work consistent with its mandate set in the [2018 IAES Terms of Reference](#). The IAES responsibilities include planning, initiating, and managing evaluation workflows, as well as the drafting of an evaluation ToR that includes evaluation criteria and associated evaluation questions—that guide evaluative inquiry.¹³ IAES also takes the lead role in recruiting evaluation team, managing contracts and enforcing the CGIAR Advisory Services Conflict of Interest Policy.¹⁴

More broadly, the evaluation function of IAES:

- Ensures that evaluator recruitment is adequate by verifying that evaluators have the necessary skill set and experience to carry out the activity; and that evaluators have been carefully vetted for any conflicts of interest (COI)¹⁵.
 - The IAES uses a pre-vetted pool of subject-matter experts and professionals who are jointly screened by the Evaluation Function and the secretariat of the Independent Science for Development Council (ISDC), under the IAES.¹⁶
- Helps to facilitate and manage the implementation following a phased and sequenced timeline by providing expert guidance and professional services.

¹² [CGIAR System Board](#), accessed July 2023.

¹³ See examples of ToRs for evaluative reviews of the [CGIAR Research Program \(CRP\) \(2020\)](#); [Genebank Platform Evaluation](#) (2023); and TORs in Annex 5 of the [Inception Report](#) to the GENDER Platform evaluation (2023).

¹⁴ Evaluation, ethics and conflict of interest are discussed in detail in the Evaluation Policy (section 8.5).

¹⁵ Declaration of interest, based on the submitted COI form, is a core element of a standard evaluation report by IAES.

¹⁶ Original SME roster call issued in 2021: <https://iaes.cgiar.org/news/expression-interest-consultant-roster-subject-matter-expert-cgiar-advisory-services>; the next round was at the end of 2022 for vetting and inclusion in 2023.

- Oversees QA, including the process and outputs, which is key to the utility and credibility of the evaluation.

For independent evaluations commissioned by the SC, one staff member of the IAES/Evaluation Function is assigned as evaluation manager and works closely with the MEL professional or other designated relevant staff of the evaluand. The IAES evaluation manager is responsible for: (i) selecting, contracting, and convening the evaluation team of qualified and experienced evaluators and subject-matter experts; (ii) ensuring transparent and open communication with the management of the evaluand and other core stakeholders; (iii) monitoring and supervising the evaluation team against agreed ToR and contracts; (iv) co-facilitating access to the evaluand during data collection; (v) coordinating QA and validation; (vi) guiding and supporting documentation; and (vii) co-developing a knowledge management approach and products. Implementation and monitoring of evaluation recommendations fall outside the IAES remit ([Step Seven: Follow up and tracking the MR](#)).

For independent evaluations, the IAES uses a layered QA system that involves an internal peer-to-peer review, a second-level review by IAES, and an external peer review mechanism supported by an evaluation reference group to IAES. The IAES director is ultimately accountable for the work and makes a final determination about the release of the final evaluation report, advised by the IAES Evaluation Function lead. All reports are proofread and copyedited by a native English speaker, using the IAES Style Guide, and finally formatted by IAES.

For largely independent evaluations, the IAES role can be that of formal QA and/or that of an advisory body to the evaluation commissioner. The IAES can provide timely and detailed advice and suggestions on the professional management of an evaluation or provide clarification related to the CGIAR Evaluation Policy and Framework.

2.3.3 Evaluation Team

The evaluation team is responsible for conducting the evaluation in conformity with the evaluation ToR (key deliverables are discussed in) and the CGIAR-wide evaluation Framework and Policy. Deviation in any way from the evaluation ToR should be explicitly acknowledged in the IR and communicated in writing to the evaluation manager. The evaluation manager must approve any change to expectations outlined in the ToR.¹⁷

2. Management Engagement by Evaluation Phases

Evaluations are process-driven and typically divided into phases (see Figure 1). The process and timeline for the evaluation includes design, planning, commissioning, oversight, stakeholder feedback, QA, and dissemination phases. Management engagement tasks by evaluation type and phase are summarized in **Error! Reference source not found.** This section highlights critical engagement points, related to core phases and deliverables.

¹⁷ The ToR sets clear expectations for the evaluation but should not be regarded as immutable. During the context analysis, or stakeholder consultation during the evaluation inception phase, new information may become available that warrants changes to the evaluation's questions, methodology, timeline, or deliverables outlined in the ToR. Changes to the expectations outlined in the ToR should be regarded as a guide.

(1) Preparatory and Scoping

During the preparatory/scoping phase, a ToR document is drafted and finalized by the commissioning evaluation unit, and an evaluation team is identified to conduct the evaluation. The following key points of engagement are critical and require active participation from the evaluand:

- ✓ Introductory meeting between the commissioner and evaluand, to explain rationale and present this MER guidelines document
- ✓ Identify the core team from the evaluand, with a designated MEL professional or any other relevant staff to work in collaboration with a designated IAES evaluation manager (see

Evaluation phase	MEL focal point key tasks
Scoping/pre-planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Assemble relevant and reliable extant program documentation and data for the evaluation against the requested detailed list of required documentation. This will constitute the evaluation repository. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide access to a designated, secure SharePoint (SP) folder for the evaluation document upload, or upload to designated SP folder of IAES. <input type="checkbox"/> Review key evaluation questions.
Inception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in the EA; namely, provide the supporting documentation and reliable data. Complete the spreadsheet based on the condensed core parameters of the CGIAR guidelines on conducting an evaluability assessment (2022) and provide supporting documentation where necessary. <input type="checkbox"/> Review the evaluation design matrix and comment on the methods/and data sources (e.g., Annex 2 in an IR from evaluation of Big Data Platform). <input type="checkbox"/> Co-facilitate engagement(s)/meetings, with evaluation team members. <input type="checkbox"/> Review the evaluation IR, developed based on the ToR, see above example for Big Data. <input type="checkbox"/> Review questionnaire for online survey. <input type="checkbox"/> Contribute to the review of the stakeholder analysis.
Inquiry/data collection & analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Support/facilitate access to interviewees/key informants to answer questions from the evaluation team. <input type="checkbox"/> Serve as a key informant about the MEL system for an interview and respond to online survey.
Reporting/ dissemination & use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in the validation of preliminary findings, conclusions, and recommendations. <input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate comments from the evaluand team on the draft evaluation report and any sub-studies, and ensure they are sent to IAES within the stipulated time. <input type="checkbox"/> Contribute to the development of the MR, e.g., from Big Data Platform Evaluation. <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor and report to the PPU and other stakeholders on implementation of MR.

Annex 2 for MEL-related roles)

- ✓ Engage with mechanisms for sharing documents, and relevant resources
- ✓ Elaborate and provide evaluation and learning questions to IAES as an input to the selection of evaluation questions
- ✓ Participate in the EA in accordance with CGIAR Evaluation Policy
- ✓ Review the ToR for the evaluation.

Text Box 5: What is a ToR for Evaluation?

An evaluation ToR is a written document presenting: the purpose and scope of the evaluation, the methods to be used, the standard against which performance is to be assessed or analyses are to be conducted, the resources and time allocated, and reporting requirements.

While the specific contents of a ToR will vary for each evaluation, it includes the following information:

1. What evaluation category is being commissioned
2. What it intends to accomplish
3. How it will be accomplished
4. Who will be involved
5. What are the deliverables and expected timeline
6. Any additional relevant background information, e.g., key guiding principles, existing resources, and capacities
7. How to apply for the evaluation team when the ToR is used to recruit external evaluators

See example of [ToRs for Genebank Platform Evaluation](#) (2023)

(2) Inception

The inception phase grounds the whole evaluation, and it is fundamental to the overall success of the process. The development of an IR is a co-creative journey with the evaluand, IAES, and the evaluation team, all coordinated by the evaluation team leader. The IR helps ensure a shared understanding of the evaluation conduct between the commissioner and the external evaluation team, as well as among key stakeholders.

Text Box 6: Key Deliverables of the Evaluation Process

The IR builds on the ToR for the evaluation, outlining the team’s proposed approach to the main phase of the evaluation. Following CGIAR guidelines on EAs, the IR clarifies the scope and focus of the evaluation, outlines the methodological approach and tools for gathering evidence, provides a detailed evaluation matrix, establishes the analytical frameworks, and provides a detailed work plan in line with the [CGIAR Guidelines on Evaluation Inception Report](#).

The evaluation report (draft/final) is the primary output aligned to the [CGIAR’s Guidelines on the Final Evaluation Report](#) and [IAES’s Style Guide](#); it follows a standardized structure and [template](#) to be provided by IAES. In line with the evaluation matrix, the finalized evaluation report describes evidence-based findings and conclusions and makes impactful recommendations aligned with the seven CGIAR evaluation criteria.

The IR sets the basis for the final evaluation report—both key outputs of the evaluation process (see Text Box 6), with recommendations for MR. The IR serves as a roadmap and as a guiding document in the evaluation process for all stakeholders involved.¹⁸ The IR focuses on:¹⁹

- ✓ Refinement of the evaluation questions and sub-questions, and elaboration of evaluation methodology including quantitative and qualitative approaches through an **evaluation design matrix**. The **evaluation design matrix** should be circulated with the evaluand for feedback.
- ✓ **A stakeholder analysis** identifying key stakeholders and their roles.
- ✓ Prioritization of strategic issues for emphasis during the inquiry phase, should they have changed from scoping.
- ✓ Circulating of IR to the evaluand for comments and factual corrections.

The evaluation methodology and work plan of an IR should be adaptive and flexible enough to allow for new issues. However, budget assumptions made at the planning and scoping phase frame the degree of adaptiveness allowed, consistent with the nature of a performance and process evaluation (see section 3). The final IR represents the contractual basis for the evaluation team's work and deliverables.

(3) Inquiry and Data Collection

The inquiry, data collection, and analysis phase are grounded in the **IR**. The evaluation design matrix establishes how the evaluation team will collect and analyze data and evidence. Currently, management engagement is focused on being key informants. They facilitate access to core stakeholders if the evaluation team has challenges.

If fieldwork is conducted, an additional layer of assistance is required to help schedule appropriately, facilitate logistics and give access to necessary facilities and activities.

(4) Reporting and Dissemination

In the reporting phase, the evaluation team drafts/finalizes an evaluation report (see), under the overall responsibility of the evaluation team leader. The evaluand validates findings that serve as the basis for formulating recommendations.

The evaluation team is responsible for formulating recommendations. Their validation with the evaluand is key to ensure that recommendations in the evaluation report are evidence-based, relevant, clear, and actionable. With feedback from the evaluand and other relevant stakeholders, the evaluation team finalizes the draft report. There are two kinds of evaluation recommendations:

1. **Formal recommendations:** are numbered and appear in an evaluation report's recommendations section. In some cases, a recommendation may have sub-recommendation(s). Formal recommendations must receive a written response regardless of whether the intervention management agrees with them or not.
2. **Informal recommendations:** an evaluation team may make a suggestion rather than a formal recommendation. Reasons for this include when the recommendation falls outside the scope of their ToR, the evaluation team wants to prioritize more substantive recommendations, or the

¹⁸ See also blog on [IAES's approach to evaluation inception reports](#).

¹⁹ [Example from Big Data evaluation](#); and [Evaluation Inception Reports - the CAS Approach \(blog\)](#).

recommendation is not likely to be feasible or actionable. For informal recommendations, intervention management is not required to respond.

(5) Management Response—next Section 3

The subsequent designated section 3 covers the fifth phase of the evaluation process: MR development.

3. MR—Key Considerations and Steps

A MR is **mandatory** for all formal recommendations of an evaluation. A MR is prepared for the recommendations during the **final phase of the evaluation. The MR requires that management indicates agreement with each recommendation and for partially or entirely agreed recommendations, as well as what steps will be taken to implement the actions.** For recommendations with which the respondent does not agree, a statement is provided to explain why. The PPU holds responsibility for coordinating MR development (see Text Box 7). A MR typically follows seven steps.

Text Box 7. PPU's Mandate to coordinate the development of MRs

In CGIAR, the PPU is the body responsible for coordinating the development of MRs and tracking and reporting on MR implementation. The PPU developed a related process note "Developing, Tracking and Reporting on Management Responses to Evaluations" (latest February 2023¹) which cover:

- MR development
- MR implementation tracking
- MR implementation progress reporting.

Step One: Scope and Parameters

The MR is a written response that targets **only formal evaluation recommendations.** For lessons learned or informal recommendations or suggestions, the management of the intervention may decide if a response is required (effectively adding their recommendation to the evaluation).

To allow reflections and general comments on the evaluation conduct, an After-Action-Review (AAR) is recommended. IAES has employed AAR processes, as explained in Text Box 8.

Text Box 8. AAR to complement MR for Evaluation Stakeholders

IAES developed an AAR survey as a learning tool to reflect on the evaluations and synthesis it commissioned under its approved multi-year workplan for the purpose of informing the refinement of its processes. The AAR tool targets both evaluand and evaluation team. The AAR was designed as a survey instrument with quantitative and qualitative questions to provide insights into good practice, identify specific strengths and weaknesses and provide critical feedback for improved performance. It provides an opportunity to rate satisfaction with an evaluation-related processes against the following parameters:

- Evaluation team induction and introductions
- Access to documentation
- Phases (inception, inquiry/data collection, reporting, knowledge management and dissemination)
- Peer review
- Logistics and procurement–timesheets and payments
- QA from IAES
- Systematic involvement of the evaluand
- Evaluand accuracy, effectiveness, efficiency.

Step Two: Preparation and Submission Timeframe

Preparing an MR may be a lengthy process, particularly when the implementation of actions requires the participation of partners and stakeholders, or when actions imply a strategic course correction or significant financial expenditure.

Once a final evaluation report has been approved, a MR must be completed within a pre-defined period, according to the evaluation type.

In CGIAR, slightly different timeframes and processes apply to MR to both independent and largely independent evaluations:

- **For independent evaluations:** to assure timely access to governance entities, IAES stipulates that a MR be delivered within two months of the date the final draft evaluation report is validated. During this period, the evaluation report is disseminated to stakeholders, and the lines of responsibility for evaluation recommendations are discussed (step 3) and the MR is prepared (step 4). Once the final report is shared with the SIMEC, the PPU is copied to formally commence the preparation of the MR within the stipulated timeframe.²⁰ MR must be endorsed (step 5) by the SB, whereas both evaluation report and MR should be presented to the SC.²¹
- **For largely independent evaluations:** the IAES's Evaluation Function recommends maximum two months to complete the MR (the timeframe is set according to the discretion of the evaluation commissioner). The MR process would be similar to that followed for an independent evaluation, with the major difference being who has the authority to approve/endorse the MR (step 5).

²⁰ See Process Note on MR developed by PPU (latest TBC with PPU).

²¹ The approval process is outlined in more detail in step 5.

For either type of evaluation, in discharging its responsibilities under the Charter of the CGIAR System Organization, the CGIAR SB relies and draws on all sources of monitoring and evaluation across the CGIAR System.²² The SB is responsible for providing strategic oversight and direction to CGIAR management concerning the effective and efficient implementation of CGIAR's Strategy and Results Framework and the results achieved through CGIAR's operations.

Step Three: Review the Evaluation Report and make a Response Decision

Once a final draft of the evaluation report has been approved,²³ the management of the intervention must convene to discuss how to respond to it.

In this step, the focus is on the process of formulating a response. The IAES recommends a consensus-building review process (**Error! Reference source not found.**). The success of an MR will be judged by its timely implementation, which is why it is essential the MR is agreed upon and understood by stakeholders.

Text Box 9. Excellence in Breeding (EiB) Platform Evaluation-MR

The [MR to recommendations of the EiB Platform Evaluation](#) was prepared through a three-week structured participatory exercise with relevant leadership and staff across CGIAR's Divisions and Centers, under the overall leadership of the Global Director for Genetic Innovation. To produce an impactful MR, the Global Science director and team applied the following principles:

- ✓ A spirit of openness, engagement, self-reflection, and mutual respect in recognition of CGIAR's role as a learning organization
- ✓ Participatory engagement with the IAES and the evaluation teams to enhance learning
- ✓ Embracement of a constructive attitude towards shortcomings and a focus on the recommendations that emerge from these shortcomings. A collective, CGIAR-wide MR in recognition that actions and changes that will be carried forward go beyond specific Initiatives or teams.
- ✓ Agility, avoiding heavy-handedness and ensuring timely delivery (it was delivered in less than one month).

Step Four: Plan the MR using the CGIAR MR Evaluation Template

²² See Articles 6.c and 6.cc–6.hh in the [CGIAR System Framework](#) (2021).

²³ By SIMEC, in the case of IAES, approved for submission to SC.

Once the recommendations from the evaluation report have been discussed, validated and actions have been agreed upon, the development of a written draft Management Response document starts. The CGIAR [MR Template](#) provides parameters for responding to the *formal recommendations*, to ensure that all relevant information is included in the MR plan and that the plan is comprehensive and effective. The MR plan should be tailored to the specific evaluation and its recommendations and developed in collaboration with stakeholders where applicable. For example, for largely decentralized evaluations, if an evaluation reference group was created, they can be engaged.

For each recommendation, the management of the intervention may decide upon one of three response actions: (i) fully accepted; (ii) partially accepted; or (iii) not accepted. All three actions imply consequences (see Table 2). When the management of an intervention accepts a recommendation, they commit to a course of action that will be monitored over time to ensure its implementation.²⁴

Annex A: CGIAR Evaluation MR Template

Evaluation title:
 Date of Management Response:
 Overall response to the evaluation:
 Person-in-charge for Follow-up to Management Response:

RECOMMENDATIONS and ACTIONS:

Recommendation 1 (copied from the Evaluation Report):

Management Response	Fully accepted <input type="checkbox"/>	Partially accepted <input type="checkbox"/>	Not accepted <input type="checkbox"/>
Management Response (commentary):			

Brief explanatory statement if recommendation is rejected or partially accepted:

Management Follow-up

Actions to be implemented	Responsible	Timeframe	Is additional funding required to implement recommendation		If further funding required – how much and what is to be done if no funds available?
			Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	

Recommendation 2 (Copied from the evaluation report):

Table 2. Management Response Options and Implications

MR option	What does this mean?	What does this imply?
Fully accepted	Management wholly accepts the recommendation.	All parts of a recommendation must be acted upon within the timeframe stipulated in the MR.
Partially accepted	Management agrees with the recommendation in principle or accepts some components but does not agree to the full recommendation.	MR must state what parts of the recommendation are accepted and not accepted. An explanation must be provided to explain the decision. Agreed-upon actions must be implemented within the MR timeframe.
Not accepted	Management completely disagrees with the recommendation.	Management does not intend to implement the recommendation. The MR must include an explanation of the decision.

The recommendation compliance period is 12 months from the MR finalization. However, the responses to an evaluation recommendation are likely to have far-reaching implications for effectiveness and sustainability of an intervention. The MR action and implementation of the actions must be feasible within the 12 months. Therefore, MR implementation requires careful planning, commitment, and systematic follow-up. The completed MR should be reviewed, approved, and endorsed by relevant parties to its implementation.

Step Five: MR Approval and Endorsement

²⁴ The PPU is tasked with monitoring and recording implementation, as per the MR Status Note.

Once the draft MR has been completed, it needs to be formally approved. In most cases, this involves ratification by CGIAR management, and endorsement by respective governance bodies, CGIAR Board and SC. See [Annex 2](#) for overview of roles and responsibilities.

In the case of largely independent evaluations, the approval process follows the internal governance structure of the commissioning body (i.e., Board), since the MR is approved through the relevant internal governance process.²⁵

For independent evaluations, the MR is received and endorsed by the CGIAR SC (see Table 3). In most cases, the MR will be endorsed by the SC at the same time it endorses the evaluation report. In rare cases, either SIMEC or the SC can ask for revisions to either the evaluation or MR.

Table 3. MR approval Process for Independent Evaluations (commissioned by the IAES) (see [Annex 3: Roles and Timelines for Development of Management Responses](#))

Step	MER Process	Milestone/ timeline	Responsible
C	Pre-final discussion version of the evaluation report is transmitted for endorsement, Copy to PPU	10-day review by SIMEC	Evaluation team & IAES/Evaluation Function
D	MR: input is coordinated, drafted and reviewed/cleared by EMD, SLT, etc.) using Management Response Template	3-6 weeks from report transmission to SIMEC, depending on the scope of recommendations	Evaluand in coordination with PPU
	MR document with embargoed evaluation report transmitted to the SB	2 weeks	PPU via Board and Council Secretariat
E	SIMEC-endorsed embargoed final evaluation report & MR transmitted to SC	10 days before SC meeting or virtual drop-in event	IAES/Evaluation Function via Board and SC Secretariat

Step Six: Evaluation and MR: Publish and Disseminate

Once a MR is approved, it must be published. The evaluation manager publishes the approved management response (on the IAES website and [CG Space](#)). Together with the report and any supporting knowledge management products, MR is then disseminated to stakeholders. In coordination with IAES, and for largely independent evaluations, the PPU is tasked with uploading the response in the joint evaluation [Management Response Tracking System](#). For initiative/project-based evaluations, and evaluability assessments, the Project Coordination Units is a key stakeholder to this step.

Regardless of who commissions an evaluation, the CGIAR evaluation policy requires “full and timely electronic publication” of all management responses.²⁶

Step Seven: Follow-up and tracking the MR

In approving a MR, the management of an intervention is committing to take specific actions within a reasonable period. Monitoring the implementation of action is only completed and closed for each recommendation when all the planned actions are taken or are no longer applicable (**Error! Reference source not found.**).

²⁵ If a management response is not approved, appropriate and timely remedies must be made until it is approved.

²⁶ CGIAR IAES. (2022). [CGIAR Evaluation Policy](#). Rome: CGIAR Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service. 10.

Text Box 10. PPU Responsibilities and Timeline for MR

For evaluations¹, the PPU is responsible for monitoring the implementation status of the MR by requesting a bi-annual follow-up report from the management of the intervention. In line with the new CGIAR Technical Reporting Arrangements and an evolving CGIAR organizational structure, the draft PPU process note clarifies the following key issues:

Key point 1: The PPU is responsible for coordinating development of MR and tracking and reporting on MR implementation.

Key point 2: The PPU will check on progress of MR implementation in January and June of each year.¹

Key point 3: The annual Type 3 report includes a section on implementation progress of actions outlined in the MR.

Each evaluation recommendation and the corresponding management action response will be recorded by the PPU in the joint Evaluation Management Response reporting system. For its part, the IAES will liaise with the PPU to facilitate an annual report of the implementation status of evaluation recommendations. In its annual report, the IAES Evaluation Function will provide an overall snapshot of MR implementation in CGIAR using the metrics in Figure 4.

Regardless of the type of action response from management, the MR is an integral component of the overall evaluation process and its follow-up. In steps 3 and 4, the MR should have been formulated to avoid commonly known risks to its implementation. However, changes to the context may require additional adjustments to the actions and roles in the MR, including those in Table . Indicator on implementation status in Figure 3 would allow to track adjustments needed.

Table 4. Typical Risk and Mitigation Measures for the MR implementation

S/N	Typical risks	Minimum expected mitigation measure (relative to each risk identified)
1	No/insufficient funding for implementation of an agreed action	An MR template includes a field with planned budget/cost implications for implementing a recommendation. If an action plan is no longer feasible due to insufficient funding or contextual changes, the committed action may be reformulated to reflect ground realities or considered no longer applicable. Management must provide a clear justification in either case.
2	Longer timeframes for implementation than anticipated	Management reports the ground realities and implementation bottlenecks in a timely fashion using the PPU Management Response Tracking Tool and advises stakeholders of the delay.
3	The program ended, and future management	Clear articulation of the forward governance plan, with appropriate accountabilities, including how the recommendations can be taken forward to inform future programs' design and integration into the wider system.

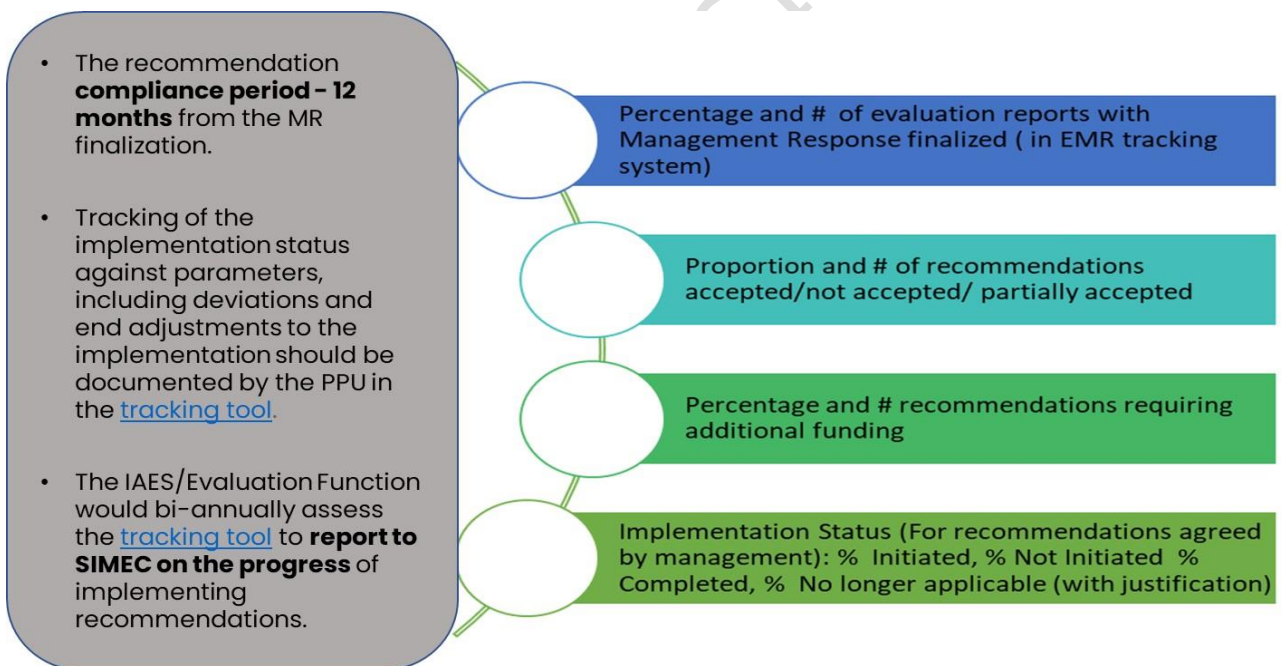
S/N	Typical risks	Minimum expected mitigation measure (relative to each risk identified)
	structures are not clear	
4	Bias in data collection	Bias in data collection tools and analysis is challenging to eliminate but can be controlled. In a worst-case scenario, the existence of bias can derail an evaluation. A review of the IR offers the first opportunity to guard against the introduction of bias in data collection tools and analysis. Other sources of bias may be challenging to detect because they are only visible in the evaluation inputs and process. In all cases, it is recommended that a rigorous QA process spans all phases of the evaluation to control and mitigate for bias.
5	Differences of opinion	Differences of opinion should be noted in written feedback to the evaluator(s), but the evidence-based opinion of the evaluator(s) should ultimately inform evaluative judgements. If divergence emerges during an evaluation, it should be transparently reported in the evaluation report.
6	Evaluator confusion	Evaluation of large interventions can be challenging, particularly when the evaluand's scientific research is highly technical in nature. To avoid confusion on part of the evaluator(s), ensure that the evaluator selection criteria are appropriate so that evaluators have the required competencies. However, even in the best circumstances, frequent communication with the evaluation manager(s) through planned and informal meetings may help avoid simple misunderstanding.
7	Lack of stakeholder cooperation	Socializing the evaluation with stakeholders is essential during the preparation phase. Stakeholders may lack understanding or buy-in as to why an evaluation is being conducted and consequently refuse to cooperate. To avoid this, management engagement and communication about the purpose of the evaluation is critical, as well co-development of the objectives that meet their needs.
8	Missing or incomplete data	If an EA has been conducted, the missing or incomplete data should be noted, and evaluative questions adjusted accordingly. If an EA has not been conducted, the evaluators should provide a written acknowledgement of the limitation and suggest methods for mitigation.
9	Narrowly focused evaluation findings	CGIAR interventions occur in complex contexts. This needs to be acknowledged in the evaluation ToR and integrated into all aspects of the process. Evaluators should be encouraged throughout the process to consider how unintended consequences may influence attaining desired positive results. Evaluations that fixate on intended results and overlook unintended consequences can lead to misguided recommendations.
10	Review of draft evaluation report delays	After the draft evaluation report has been submitted, its review may delay the dissemination of findings and associated learning activities. There may be no easy way to lessen the impact of a delayed evaluation report except to emphasize the importance of the QA process.

S/N	Typical risks	Minimum expected mitigation measure (relative to each risk identified)
	dissemination of findings	
11	Evaluand anxiety and stakeholder apathy	Stakeholders may be apprehensive to the idea of being judged and consequently regard the evaluation as a form of micro-management. Again, management engagement and effective communication with stakeholders is essential to ensure buy-in. Understanding why the evaluation is required and how it will be used often helps to mitigate stakeholder apathy.

The recommendation compliance period runs for 12 months from the date that the MR is developed. The MR action and implementation of the actions must be feasible within this timeframe.

Tracking of the implementation status should be conducted against parameters outlined in Figure 4. Deviations and end adjustments to the implementation should be documented by the PPU in the [tracking tool](#). The IAES/Evaluation Function would engage annually with data from the [tracking tool](#) to report to SIMEC on the progress of recommendation implementation.

Figure 4. Common Metrics for tracking MR in CGIAR



Annex 1: Indicative Tasks for Evaluand Management Engagement by Evaluation Type

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Evaluation phase	Completely independent evaluations	Largely independent/decentralized evaluations	
Scoping/ pre-Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct an EA in accordance with CGIAR Evaluation Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Provide evaluation and learning questions to IAES as an input to the selection of evaluation questions <input type="checkbox"/> Designate a MEL professional (or any other relevant staff, if there is no MEL professional within the team structure) to function as a co-evaluation manager who works in collaboration with an IAES evaluation manager (see 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reach out to the IAES/Evaluation Function if support and advice is needed to design and plan the evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct an EA guided by CGIAR guidelines on conducting an EA <input type="checkbox"/> Designate an evaluation manager <input type="checkbox"/> Write evaluation ToR (e.g., purpose, scope, evaluation criteria and questions) <input type="checkbox"/> Develop evaluation budget <input type="checkbox"/> Develop an evaluation management plan (e.g., a detailed plan used by the evaluation manager that includes everything in the evaluation ToR, plus information related to evaluation governance, roles and responsibilities, knowledge management, and intended use of the evaluation) <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment of evaluator(s) (e.g., develop evaluator ToR, interview selection process, contract finalization) <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-identify core stakeholders if an EA has not been conducted. 	
	Evaluation phase		MEL focal point key
	Scoping/pre-planning		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Assemble relevant data for the evaluation against the request <input type="checkbox"/> Constitute the evaluation report <input type="checkbox"/> Provide access to a cloud storage for document upload, or upload documents <input type="checkbox"/> Review key evaluation questions
	Inception		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in the EA; provide data. Complete the spreadsheets and guidelines on conducting an EA and documentation where necessary <input type="checkbox"/> Review the evaluation questions and sources (e.g., Annex 2 in an IAES report) <input type="checkbox"/> Co-facilitate engagement with the evaluation team <input type="checkbox"/> Review the evaluation questions and Big Data. <input type="checkbox"/> Review questionnaire and data collection tools <input type="checkbox"/> Contribute to the review of the evaluation
	Inquiry/data collection & analysis		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Support/facilitate data collection from the evaluation team. <input type="checkbox"/> Serve as a key informant for the online survey.
Reporting/ dissemination & use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in the validation of recommendations. <input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate communication and any sub-studies, and ensure they are integrated into the main report <input type="checkbox"/> Contribute to the development of the report <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor and report to the evaluation manager 		

Evaluation phase	Completely independent evaluations	Largely independent/decentralized evaluations
	Annex for ME-related roles) <input type="checkbox"/> Review and comment on the evaluation ToRs.	
Inception	<input type="checkbox"/> Endorse the EA and assign resources in accordance with CGIAR guidelines <input type="checkbox"/> Provide necessary supporting documentation and evidence to the evaluation manager <input type="checkbox"/> Review the evaluation design matrix and comment on the methods/and data sources <input type="checkbox"/> Co-facilitate engagement meetings with stakeholders <input type="checkbox"/> Review the evaluation IR and provide feedback to the evaluation co-managers <input type="checkbox"/> Provide feedback on data collection tools to evaluation manager <input type="checkbox"/> Socialize the evaluation exercise, e.g., build awareness among stakeholders of the evaluation purpose, how it will be used, and introduce the evaluator(s).	<input type="checkbox"/> Endorse the EA and assign resources, if required, in accordance with CGIAR guidelines (if applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Provide necessary supporting documentation and evidence to evaluation manager <input type="checkbox"/> Review and approve evaluation design matrix and methodology <input type="checkbox"/> Review stakeholder mapping <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitate evaluator engagement meetings with stakeholders <input type="checkbox"/> Provide feedback on data collection tools <input type="checkbox"/> Review and approve the evaluation IR <input type="checkbox"/> Socialize the evaluation exercise, e.g., build awareness among stakeholders of the evaluation purpose, how it will be used, and introduce the evaluator(s).
Inquiry/data collection & analysis	<input type="checkbox"/> Facilitate access to interviewees/key informants identified based on the stakeholder analysis and sampling strategy by the evaluation team	<input type="checkbox"/> Facilitate access to interviewees/key informants identified based on the stakeholder analysis and sampling strategy by the evaluation team <input type="checkbox"/> Serve as key informants for interviews and respond to data collection efforts

Evaluation phase	Completely independent evaluations	Largely independent/decentralized evaluations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Serve as key informants for interviews and respond to data collection efforts <input type="checkbox"/> Provide documentation to the evaluation team to fill in evidence gaps. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provide documentation to the evaluation team to fill in evidence gaps. Provide real-time reporting of evaluative learning and lessons for immediate course correction.
Reporting/ dissemination & use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in the validation of preliminary findings, conclusions, and recommendations, and provide written feedback with factual corrections and supporting documentation <input type="checkbox"/> Cultivate readiness for review of the draft evaluation report and any sub-studies, and ensure they are shared with IAES within the stipulated time²⁷ <input type="checkbox"/> Review intermediary deliverables, e.g., survey results or sub-studies and ensure they are shared with IAES within the stipulated time²⁸ <input type="checkbox"/> Lead development of the MR <input type="checkbox"/> For IAES evaluations, ensure that the MR is sent to IAES within the stipulated time and engage with IAES on a presentation to SIMEC and/or other funders <input type="checkbox"/> Present evaluation results to stakeholders <input type="checkbox"/> Help identify opportunities for joint dissemination of evaluation products <input type="checkbox"/> Promote the use of evaluations in programming and ensure the time-bound implementation of agreed upon actions in the MR and partake in the follow-up process <input type="checkbox"/> Respond to AAR survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in the validation of preliminary findings, conclusions, and recommendations, and provide written feedback with factual corrections and supporting documentation <input type="checkbox"/> Cultivate readiness for review of draft evaluation report and any sub-studies <input type="checkbox"/> Review intermediary deliverables, i.e., survey results or sub-studies <input type="checkbox"/> Lead development of the MR <input type="checkbox"/> Contribute to the presentation of results along the approach to knowledge management and dissemination <input type="checkbox"/> Present evaluation results to stakeholders <input type="checkbox"/> Help identify opportunities for joint dissemination of evaluation products <input type="checkbox"/> Promote the use of evaluations in programming and ensure the time-bound implementation of agreed upon actions in the MR, and partake in the follow-up process.

²⁷ For independent evaluations.

²⁸ For independent evaluations.

Annex 2: Core Points of Engagement and Tasks for a MEL Professional in an Evaluation²⁹

(Tasks for MEL or other designated professional in an Evaluability Assessment are presented in the ToR for EA of RILs)

Evaluation phase	MEL focal point key tasks
Scoping/pre-planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Assemble relevant and reliable extant program documentation and data for the evaluation against the requested detailed list of required documentation. This will constitute the evaluation repository. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide access to a designated, secure SharePoint (SP) folder for the evaluation document upload, or upload to designated SP folder of IAES. <input type="checkbox"/> Review key evaluation questions.
Inception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in the EA; namely, provide the supporting documentation and reliable data. Complete the spreadsheet based on the condensed core parameters of the CGIAR guidelines on conducting an evaluability assessment (2022) and provide supporting documentation where necessary.³⁰ <input type="checkbox"/> Review the evaluation design matrix and comment on the methods/and data sources (e.g., Annex 2 in an IR from evaluation of Big Data Platform). <input type="checkbox"/> Co-facilitate engagement(s)/meetings, with evaluation team members. <input type="checkbox"/> Review the evaluation IR, developed based on the ToR, see above example for Big Data. <input type="checkbox"/> Review questionnaire for online survey. <input type="checkbox"/> Contribute to the review of the stakeholder analysis.
Inquiry/data collection & analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Support/facilitate access to interviewees/key informants to answer questions from the evaluation team. <input type="checkbox"/> Serve as a key informant about the MEL system for an interview and respond to online survey.
Reporting/ dissemination & use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in the validation of preliminary findings, conclusions, and recommendations. <input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate comments from the evaluand team on the draft evaluation report and any sub-studies, and ensure they are sent to IAES within the stipulated time. <input type="checkbox"/> Contribute to the development of the MR, e.g., from Big Data Platform Evaluation. <input type="checkbox"/> Monitor and report to the PPU and other stakeholders on implementation of MR.

²⁹ Similar table is available for engagement points during the EA ([link to ToR for RILs](#))

³⁰ In line with the CGIAR Evaluability Assessment guidelines, this follows if the EA was conducted as an integrated part of the inception phase.

Annex 3: Roles and Timelines for Development of Management Responses

No.	MER Process	Action	Milestone/ timeline	Responsible
A	MER Guidelines are introduced to evaluand	During induction, the MER Guidelines are introduced with the Management Response Template	As part of formal induction of the evaluand	IAES/Evaluation Function
B	MR template is shared with evaluand	The Management Response Template is shared with the slide-deck and presented during validation meeting, during discussion of recommendations	As part of validation meeting of evaluation results with evaluand	IAES/Evaluation Function
C	Pre-final discussion version of the evaluation report is approved and transmitted for endorsement	Pre-final evaluation report shared with SIMEC and the evaluand, Copy to PPU	10-day review by SIMEC	Evaluation team & IAES/Evaluation Function
D	Input to MR coordinated, drafted and cleared	Evaluand and/or with PPU seek input for MR for the recommendations, compile towards Management Response Template	From 3-6 weeks, depending on the scope of recommendations	Evaluand in coordination with PPU
D1	Managing Director & EMD review and clear MR	Draft MR reviewed and cleared by relevant MDs & EMD	2 weeks	Evaluand in coordination with PPU
D2	MR with embargoed evaluation report transmitted to the SB	MR is shared with SB		PPU via Board and Council Secretariat
E	SIMEC-endorsement of final evaluation report & MR transmitted to SC	MR is shared with SC	10 days before SC meeting or virtual drop-in event	IAES/Evaluation Function via Board and Council Secretariat
	Publication of the final evaluation report & MR		Within 1 week of SC approval	IAES/Evaluation Function
	Entry of MR into the PPU tracking tool	Updating the tracking tool with the entries in the MR for follow-up	Within 1 week of report and MR publication on IAES website	PPU
F	Monitoring MR implementation	PPU sends a formal request to evaluand and those implicated in MR	Every 6 months and bi-annual assessment	SC and SB, via PPU

No.	MER Process	Action	Milestone/ timeline	Responsible
		implementation; PPU updates tracking tool		

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Annex 4: Further reading

1. [International Organization for Migration: Management Response and Follow-Up on IOM Evaluation Recommendations](#)
2. [Evaluation Management Response: Guidance for UNICEF Staff](#)
2. [United Nations Evaluation Group \(UNEG\) Guidance on Preparing Management Responses to UNDAF Evaluations](#)
3. [UNAIDS Guidance for Management Response to Evaluations](#)
4. [International Labour Organization \(ILO\) Guidance Note: Management Follow-Up to Recommendations](#)
5. [Evaluation Flash Cards: Embedding Evaluative Thinking in Organizational Culture](#)

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Contact

CGIAR Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service (IAES)

Via di San Domenico 1, 00153 Rome, Italy

Email: iaes@cgiar.org

Follow the Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service on social media

