

Principles and Criteria for CGIAR Collaboration: Guiding Integration, Coordination, and Independence

Preamble

In the spirit of fostering a unified and impactful global research partnership, the CGIAR Integration Framework Agreement (IFA) Parties are committed to advancing an agenda that maximizes collaboration, efficiency, and innovation across our diverse network. Recognizing the complexity of global challenges related to food-land-water systems in a climate crisis, it is imperative that our collective efforts are strategically aligned, leveraging the strengths and expertise within our network to achieve greater impact.

To this end, we hereby establish a set of guiding principles¹ designed to inform and direct our decisions on the integration, coordination, and independent operation of functions, policies, and business processes across the CGIAR System. These guiding principles reflect our shared values of effectiveness, efficiency, transparency, flexibility, inclusivity, accountability, and strategic alignment in order to provide the best value for money to all stakeholders. They are intended to ensure that our collaborative efforts are both impactful and sustainable, addressing the urgent needs of our time while preparing for the challenges and opportunities of the future. These efforts are complementary processes being undertaken like the implementation of the CGIAR memorandum of governance recommendations or any additional initiatives that may be initiated for a similar purpose. In the process of integration, coordination and independence, decisions need to be reviewed from a short and long-term basis. Short term principles include flexibility and efficiency, whereas the long-term considerations are driven more from a sustainability and strategic integration perspective.

By applying these principles, we aspire to create a CGIAR Integrated Partnership that is more than the sum of its parts—a system characterized by enhanced collaboration, reduced duplication, and a shared commitment to excellence in research and development. We recognize the value of agility in our operations, even if it generates redundancies and occasionally sacrifices efficiency in the short term. Given the inherently unstable nature of CGIAR's funding model, it is also crucial to consider the implications of increased fixed costs carefully. Moreover, aligning responsibility with accountability, roles, and responsibilities, and keeping within the scope of governing instruments is essential. By thoughtfully considering the relevance, comparative advantage, risk, resource implications, legal and regulatory compliance, and impact on stakeholders of our functions, we aim to make informed decisions that strengthen our collective ability to deliver science and innovation for a food-secure future.

¹ **Principles** are the bedrock of the Integrated Partnership ethos, offering a compass by which we navigate our strategic direction and actions. They embody the values and overarching philosophy that guide our approach to integration, coordination, and independence across the CGIAR Integrated Partnership.

Principles for Integration, Coordination, and Independence

1. **Value for Money²:** Policies, business processes and related services, should be integrated or coordinated or kept independent to maximize effectiveness and efficiency. The design should maximize the outcome while reducing costs in a way that is sustainable for the centres/ Alliance.
2. **Transparent and Inclusive Decision-Making:** Ensure that decisions on integration, coordination, and independence are made transparently, avoiding information asymmetries among the actors, involving all relevant stakeholders to ensure alignment with diverse interests and needs and with accountability and responsibility.
3. **Accountability and Outcome-Oriented Focus:** Establish clear lines of accountability and base decisions on the potential to maximize impact towards the Integrated Partnership's strategic objectives, ensuring that efforts contribute to improved outcomes and the efficient achievement of the mission and do not harm specific Centers/Alliance.
4. **Adaptive and Flexible Approach:** Adopt a flexible approach that allows for modifications in collaboration and management structures in response to changing circumstances and evolving landscapes, that may include fit for purpose agile business processes structures that may be managed by third parties on behalf of the Integrated Partnership.
5. **Autonomy for Innovation:** Maintain degrees of independence, in addition to where legally required, where autonomy is crucial for fostering innovation, agility, and responsiveness to emerging challenges and opportunities, to also benefit, over time, the Integrated Partnership.
6. **Strategic Alignment and Complementarity:** Align integration, coordination, and independence decisions with the CGIAR's overall strategic direction, ensuring that

² Value for Money is defined differently by the different funders. For example:

- USAID : USAID emphasizes cost-effectiveness and efficiency in its approach to Value for Money. The focus is on maximizing the impact of its investments by designing investments that achieves the desired outcomes at the lowest possible cost.
- FCDO (or DFID) : FCDO's approach to VfM focused on three key aspects: economy (minimizing the cost of inputs), efficiency (maximizing the outputs for any given set of inputs), and effectiveness (ensuring that the outputs achieved contribute to the desired outcomes).
- EU approach to Value for Money in development cooperation emphasizes the principles of efficiency, effectiveness, economy, and sustainability. The aim is to achieve the best possible results with the resources available, taking into account the long-term sustainability of the outcomes.
- World Bank's approach to Value for Money focuses on achieving development results efficiently and effectively. The aim is to focus on design that delivers maximum impact for the resources invested.

efforts enhance the unique strengths and contributions of different business processes and are aligned with the 2030 Research and Innovation Strategy.

7. **Stakeholder Engagement and Synergy:** Engage with a broad spectrum of internal stakeholders³ to identify opportunities for impactful integration and coordination, prioritizing efforts that lead to exponential improvements in outcomes and respecting the need for independence in areas critical to stakeholder interests.

³ Internal stakeholders will include Center Boards, Management, IPB, System Council.