

ISDC SC20 Meeting

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ISDC Feedback Structure

ISDC feedback is organized into 3 sections that provide a mix of high-level considerations while also providing details and questions for future discussions during Portfolio development.

Section 1 - focuses on overall feedback on the “Portfolio Level Narrative” with System Council members as the primary audience.

Section 2 - highlights high-level feedback on “Descriptions of Portfolio Components.”

Section 3 - the Annex provides detailed commentary on “Descriptions of Portfolio Components,” intended for CGIAR management and proposal writers.



*Future discussion points
in Executive Summary*

Note: ISDC's feedback is based on a Portfolio Narrative dated 8 May not available online. Changes exist in the versions, such as renaming Mega Programs to Science Programs and the individual names of the Programs, Accelerators, & Asset.



Overarching Snapshot Comments

- **Clear Statement of Work to Be Discontinued**
 - Tell us which projects or activities will no longer be pursued.
- **Clear Articulation of Portfolio Bundling**
 - Explain how the Portfolio, including bilateral and W1 funding, will be integrated into Mega Programs.
- **Balancing the Document's Target Audience**
 - Outlining science priorities versus attracting new investors.
 - Clearly state where CGIAR positions itself in the development/policy/research continuum.
- **Enhanced Value Proposition**
 - Strengthen the current Value Proposition to be more compelling, bold, and clear.
- **Post-December 2024 Plans**
 - Outline the expected activities after December 2024.
 - Will the MELIA and capacity-building sections be presented to SC?
 - What are the risks if the inception phase exceeds three months?



Sustainable Farming & Landscapes – Linking the Science Agenda

- The land sparing (sustainable intensification) and land sharing (regenerative agriculture/nature-based solutions) debate is ongoing and contested.
- Both work across scales and there is real or perceived duplication of work. Tailored solutions will be needed & both approaches urgently need good science to assess and debate benefits and trade-offs.
- The current structure of the two Mega Programs is unlikely to facilitate constructive debates, although CGIAR is well placed to narrow the gaps between these two approaches. Yet, CGIAR is in a unique position to facilitate constructive dialogue.
- Activities in both programs also appear to overlap with the Catalyzing Impact Mega Program.
- **Recommendation:** From a science perspective, CGIAR should consider merging these two Mega Programs to facilitate debate across hardened boundaries and assist in coordinated policy development. Whether this is desirable from a political or organizational perspective requires separate considerations.

Section 1: Portfolio Mega Program* Feedback Highlights

Portfolio Structure	Partnerships	Comparative Advantage	Theory of Change
Merge Sustainable Farming & Landscapes. Activities in both Programs appear to overlap with the Catalyzing Impact Mega Program.	Has CGIAR had as much impact as it should? If not, why? Outlining where there is scope for improvement would benefit proposals.	Comparative advantage analyses should happen at multiple levels with a clear understanding of the weaknesses and opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are Impact Areas best placed as end-goals or should they be the 2030 targets? - How does the ToC relate to the "Ways of Working?"
Organizational Structure & Ways of Working	Priority Setting	Impact	Accelerators & Asset
A summary of how each Portfolio component will address "Ways of Working" will provide a clearer path to implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How will pooled vs bilateral funding be managed & which work is prioritized for pooled funding? - Which areas have been deprioritized and why? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NARES are important partnerships to CGIAR. This warrants its own bullet in growing impact. - There could be specific mention of processes for linking outputs and outcomes from all MPs. 	Why are Accelerators needed, how will they work, and what will be achieved needs to be answered.

* Note that the terminology has changed to "Science Programs" since the ISDC review.



Additional comments arising from ongoing discussions

- Providing the best possible scientific information (evidence-based) to inform policy is one of CGIAR's core functions. Question: How can interactions among the MPs be improved considering they all have policy implications? How will the Policy MP work across the Portfolio?
- Each MP should contain a clear statement explaining how it explicitly supports the 2030 Research and Innovation Strategy and to ensure that the quality of science can be assessed.
- Many of the research questions will draw on common knowledge and approaches. Coordination will be crucial to avoid policy disconnects and a further deterioration of the public's trust in science.
- Multifunctional landscapes are needed to deal with complex landscapes such as forestry and water management. This could also be a natural gateway for the involvement of partner organisations that are essential for the Portfolio.

***Agricultural Systems* Special Issue Launch** **Enabling Inclusive Innovation in Agriculture and Food Systems**

#ISDCForum24

With
science
we can

- Side event at CGIAR Science Week, 4 July, 14:00 to 16:00
- Four papers with CGIAR authors to present with two early career corresponding/first authors

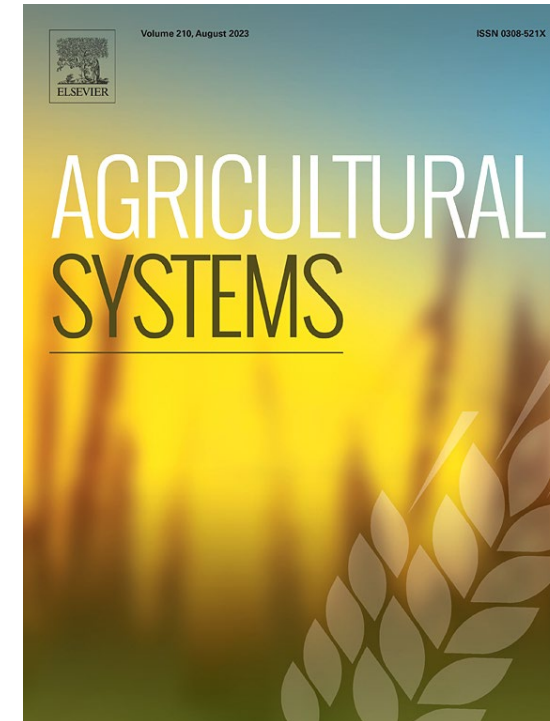
Presentations include:

Advancing inclusive and effective agri-food systems research for development: A short communication

Linguistic diversity, climate shock, and farmers-herder conflicts: Implications for inclusive innovations for agro-pastoralism systems

Innovation portfolio management for responsible food systems transformation in the public sector: Lessons, results and recommendations from CGIAR

Equity principles: Using social theory for more effective social transformation in agricultural research for development

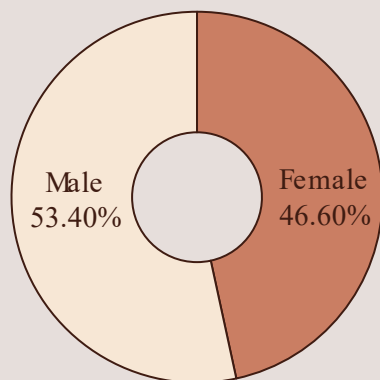


Agricultural Systems Inclusive Authorship



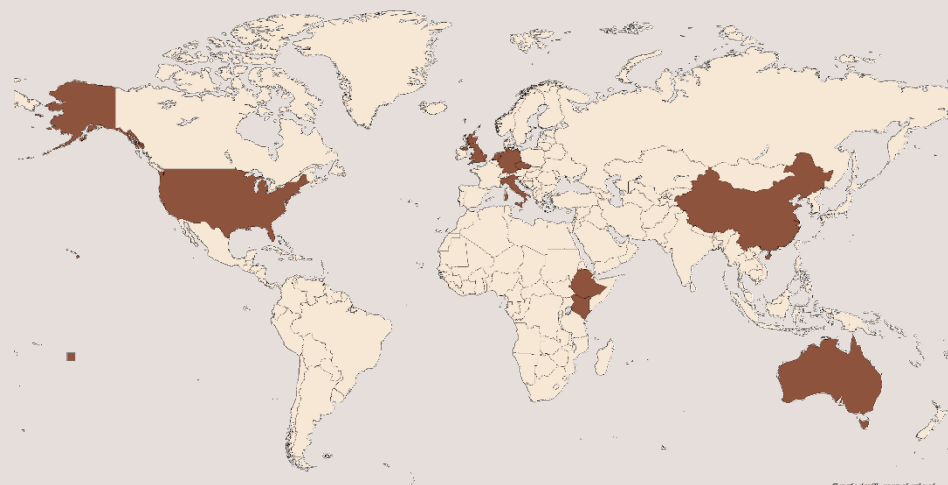
Independent
Science for
Development
Council

First/Corresponding authors

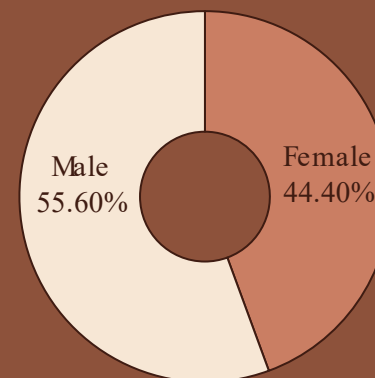


73.3 %
CGIAR
Affiliates

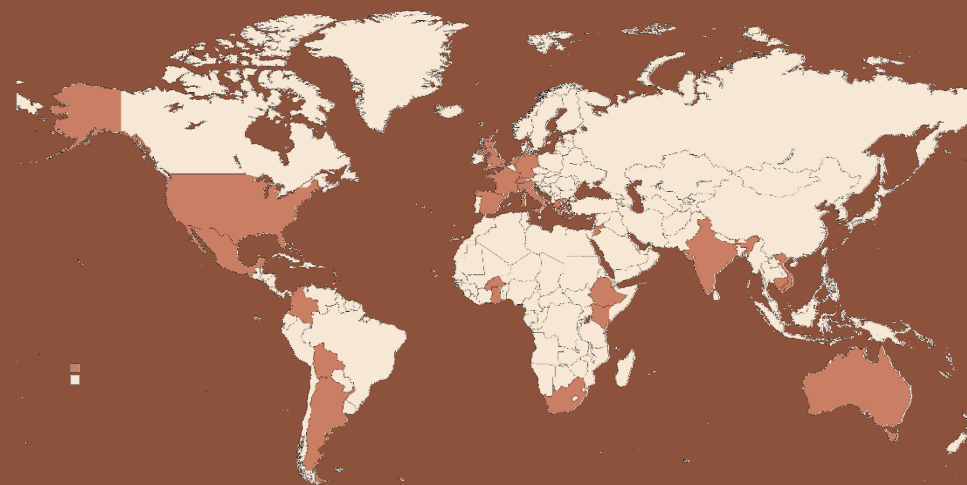
64.2 %
Early
Career
Scientist



All authors



38.9 %
CGIAR
Affiliates



Analysis of 13 papers published or in production.



Independent
Science for
Development
Council



Photo: N. Palmer/The Alliance



Section 2: Highlights from Portfolio Components

Genetic Innovation

- The MP needs to clearly define the selection criteria for participating countries.
- The MP needs emphasis on inclusivity for optimal effectiveness and impact.

Sustainable Farming

- The MP would benefit from a diagram explaining the interconnections between the MPs and how these will be operationalized. The link to the Landscapes MP must be clear.
- There is only a brief mention of engaging with national partners on capacity building and R&D support. A comparative advantage analysis that outlines the establishment of new partnerships needs to be included in the next iteration.

Landscapes

- The MP is framed as working at the landscape scale, the program of work is very broad in scope and there are activities with the potential to overlap with other Mega Programs. Collaboration and differentiation of aims should be clear in the full proposal.
- Develop a mechanism to facilitate debate across hardened boundaries between the land sparing and the land sharing agenda to assist in coordinated policy development.



Section 2: Highlights from Portfolio Components

Animal and Aquatic-based Foods

- The MP overview would benefit from more emphasis on systems perspectives, especially integration of crop—animal/aquatic systems and a clear rationale for the scope of areas of work.
- The system's implications will need careful integration with other MPs, such as the Sustainable Farming and Landscapes, and more explicit linkages to the Catalyzing Impact MP.

Nutrition and Diets

- The narrative would benefit from greater conceptual, theoretical, and operational clarity, as well as internal cohesion.
- Establishing clear operational links to relevant Mega Programs is imperative for a cohesive and impactful strategy.

Climate

- Trade-offs and risks should be highlighted. Also, the interaction and function towards the other Mega Programs and Accelerators should be described to increase scientific credibility and applicability.
- The generation of climate data and information could be of great benefit for local stakeholders, but these are mostly not available in countries in the Global South. Which MP would conduct the necessary data analysis, generation, and provision?



Section 2: Highlights from Portfolio Components

Policy

- This MP comprises of four interconnected activity blocks: research, policy engagement and communications, capacity building, and finance. Every MP will have activities in these domains, so the question is how will these overlaps be leveraged to avoid confusion, contradictions, replication, and duplication? Are there missed economies of scale?

Frontiers

- The mapping of Initiatives into the MP is logical with evidence of demand. Whether this demand for food systems transformation translates into demand for research to facilitate food systems transformation is not clear. A stronger articulation of the role of scientific knowledge through research is needed.

Catalyzing Impact

- A clear definition of the key pathways to impact, and the activities included in the scope of work, would enhance the clarity of the description. Increased emphasis on approaches to local involvement would strengthen the MP.



Section 2: Highlights from Portfolio Components

Gender and Social Inclusion Accelerator

- The Accelerator would benefit from conceptual clarity on terms and definitions, including what is covered by concepts of “gender” and “social inclusion” and what the proposed research aims to address.

Capacity Sharing for Development Accelerator

- The specific narrative presented for this item in the Portfolio is among the most generic ones. The proposals and Companion Document would benefit from more specific examples, building on lessons learned in this area (external Evaluation findings are available).



Section 2: Highlights from Portfolio Components

Digital and Data Accelerator

- As an enabling Accelerator, which sustains all MPs, the relevance is high, however, the impression is that the objectives and general actions are diffused, and the borders of the proposed actions should be better defined in the proposal.

Genebanks

- Five key areas of work are described, that aim to conserve biodiversity, ensure plant health, and allow wide access to the materials. It would be useful to have more clarity on how the Asset will work together and with national genebanks for mutual benefit.
 - There is a description of intended outputs and outcomes at global scale in each of the five work areas. More detail should be provided in the full proposal on the intended impact that will be delivered by the MPs.
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ISDC Portfolio Advisory Timeline

1

June: SC20

- SC20 pre-meetings
- SC20 intervention

2

July-August

- External Subject Matter Expert matchmaking, contracting, & onboarding

3

October/November

- Subject Matter Expert ISDC moderated review
- ISDC review of Companion Document expected 1 November

4

December

- SC21 pre-reads: Companion Document & Reviews
- SC21 pre-meetings and intervention

ISDC Member Search

- Dr. Fetien Abay's term ends 30 June 2024
- New member search will begin in summer. As per ISDC ToR, System Office manages search with SIMEC Chair serves as Search Committee Chair
- Open and competitive process
- Seek individuals with expertise in water management, animal and aquatic systems, and/or foresight techniques
- Only 7 members until new member starts. Goal of start date of 1 November, if feasible



Agricultural Systems ISDC Short Communication

Article Highlights

- **Context specific actions** are needed to address gaps in progress toward global sustainability and equity goals.
- **Inclusive agri-food system innovation models** foster and promote context-specific (tailored) actions.
- Strategies exist to advance inclusive agri-food system **innovation models in agricultural research for development (AR4D)**.
- **Institutional change strategies** are a cornerstone for inclusive and effective AR4D.

