ACTION PLAN FOR ADVANCING CULTURE AND ENGAGEMENT (C&E) IN CGIAR'S WORKPLACES

Activities and Key Progress Indicators

2025 - 2027

OUTCOME 1
INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

CGIAR's leadership is inclusive and able to build environments of trust, collaboration, innovation and creativity, where people are heard, recognized, and empowered to contribute.

Rationale

- The 2023-24 Workforce Engagement Survey indicated managers need to enhance and develop skills for better team dynamics, performance management and effectiveness, in particular providing opportunity and fair and objective feedback.

- Since 2020, leadership representation has become more balanced across all groups. As of 2025, CGIAR's restructuring led to the formation of a Global Leadership Team, with women making up 20% of its members. This underscores the importance of building a more gender-balanced leadership pipeline.

- Broader evidence from a McKinsey study suggests that change comes from the top, and leaders have the power to create environments of collaboration, trust, innovation and creativity. Cross Center Collaboration will need to be visibly driven by CGIAR's leadership team. Per the Workforce Engagement Survey, 43% of respondents disagreed or were neutral on the statement, "The different Centers across CGIAR work well together." 41% disagreed or were neutral on the statement, "I find it easy to collaborate with other parts of CGIAR."

- Discussions with Center Director Generals highlight the need for building futuristic leadership skills, including a growth mindset, collaboration, transparent communication and a culture of development.

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CGIAR's leadership is inclusive and able to build environments of trust, collaboration, innovation and creativity, where people are heard, recognized and empowered to contribute.	In collaboration with CGIAR Centers and the System Organization, develop and implement a comprehensive framework that clearly defines a common standard of inclusive leadership behaviors and skills.	X		• A co-developed leadership competency framework is designed and endorsed by Centers and the System Organization. • Number of Centers and System Organization adopting the competency framework.	• Overall improvement in staff perception of leadership, demonstrated through % improvement in Engagement /Pulse survey scores and increased retention rates. • Number of Centers and the System Organization that track and measure improvement in leadership competencies (e.g. performance review, 360, Pulse or Engagement surveys). • Overall satisfaction with the Inclusive Leadership E-learning module.

	Collaborate with Centers and System Organization to integrate Inclusive Leadership skills and behavior as a core competency, through:
	• Job descriptions
	• Terms of reference
	• Performance evaluation criteria
	• Promotion guidelines
	• Incentive programs
	• Leadership development programs
		X	X	A common standard of Inclusive Leadership skills and behaviors will be measured through:
				• Number of Centers and the System Organization that adopt the Leadership Competencies and integrate into, for example:
				  ○ Job descriptions and ToRs
				  ○ Performance Criteria
				  ○ Promotion Criteria	

	Equip leaders to support a culture that is curious, agile and collaborative, through various strategic programs and interventions: • A comprehensive Leadership Development Program that equips participants with critical skills built from the competency framework: growth mindset, self-awareness, team leadership, change management, continuous learning and development, effective collaboration, and mentorship. • An accessible E-learning module on Inclusive Leadership.	X	X	Indicators for the Leadership training program: • A minimum of 100 staff across Centers and the System Organization attend the Leadership training program broken down by various dimensions. • Performance improvement tracked through supervisor feedback on the extent to which leaders apply their learning outcomes to achieve better results at work. Indicators for the E-learning module: • Inclusive leadership E-learning module launched. • Number of staff that complete the E-learning module.	

OUTCOME 2
WORKPLACE CULTURE

Staff across CGIAR feel valued, respected, and supported to reach their full potential.

Rationale

- Culture was highlighted as an area of development in the Workforce Engagement Survey with a focus on trust, communication and collaboration between functions and Centers.

- Wellbeing and Mental Health was the least positive topic in the Workforce Engagement Survey, as with previous CGIAR surveys, for all staff categories.

- The Independent Advisory and Evaluation Service and the feedback from the Workforce Engagement Survey both highlighted the need for a transparent and robust approach to performance management and a competency framework that includes behavorial skills and attitudes.

- McKinsey's 2023 State of Organizations research states 20 percent of the more than 2,500 people polled said the top reasons employees gave for leaving a job were that they did not feel they were truly valued and appreciated, and they didn't feel a sense of belonging.

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Foster a culture of fairness, opportunity and respect across CGIAR's workplaces and the communities in which we serve.	In collaboration with Centers and the System Organization develop and implement workplace culture transformation that establishes common standards and ways of working. • Create an implementation road map with short term and long-term key performance indicators. • Design and deliver culture workshops across CGIAR Centers. • Develop and publish culture guidebook/guideline document. • Partner with Center and System Organization P&C leaders and incorporate culture into frameworks, strategies, policies, procedures, processes, delegations of authority, internal rules and agreed ways of working. • Implement continuous improvement and monitoring to gauge cultural shift progress, annual reporting on key culture-related actions and initiatives.	X	X	• Design of the framework and completed consultation and endorsement by all Centers. • A pilot across two Centers as proof of concept. • Implementation roadmap.	• Trends in leadership behaviors and performance system. • Deep data analysis being leveraged to build development programs. • Higher retention rates. • Positive results in the engagement survey.
	• Implement an annual CGIAR-wide Workforce Engagement Survey to gather comprehensive feedback on workplace culture and staff wellbeing. • Analyze survey results to identify areas of improvement to inform the development of targeted interventions.	X	X	• Improved response rate for Workforce Engagement Survey. • Improved trends in Workforce Engagement Survey outcomes.	• Annually report on Workforce Engagement Survey progress trends. • Improved retention and promotion trends.

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Foster a culture of fairness, opportunity and respect across CGIAR's workplaces and the communities in which we serve.	Co-develop a common standard of behavior that is reflective of CGIAR's values and culture principles, by designing and integrating core competencies into: • Standard Job descriptions • Terms of reference (ToRs) • Performance evaluation criteria • Talent development initiatives • Promotion guidelines	X	X	• A co-developed core competency framework endorsed by Centers and the System Organization is available to adopt and adapt. • Number of Centers, including the System Organization, that adopt and adapt the framework, as shown in their: ○ Standard Job descriptions ○ Terms of reference (ToRs) ○ Performance evaluation criteria ○ Talent development initiatives ○ Promotion criteria	• Annually publish a best practice guideline that details perfomance management approaches across CGIAR as a learning tool. • Improved capacity to accommodate a range of staff needs. • Improved perception of performance evaluation, as measured in the Workforce Engagement Survey.
	Co-develop performance management guidelines to support Centers, the System Organization and staff with transparent, developmental and objective performance evaluations.	X	X	Performance management guidelines and practices are co-developed and adopted by Centers and the System Organization and published on an internal dashboard for learning purposes.	

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Strengthen and expand the Culture & Engagement function to deliver a community-driven ecosystem across CGIAR.	Educate staff on contributing to respectful, rewarding workplaces through: • A co-developed E-learning module on Respectful Workplace (RWP) training. • Mainstream Introduction to Culture and Engagement module as part of regular onboarding by Centers. • Additional learning content available on the Knowledge Hub on: o Conscious inclusion – working with people who are different o Unpacking bias o Cross-cultural communication in a global workforce o Disability	X	X	• Design and development of RWP training E-learning module, participation rate and satisfaction scores. • Effective learning content delivered through a range of channels. • Improved engagement with resources on the Knowledge Hub.	• Annually report on Workforce Engagement Survey progress trends. • Improved retention and promotion trends. • Annually publish a best practice guideline that details performance management approaches across CGIAR as a learning tool. • Improved capacity to accommodate staff needs. • Improved perception of performance evaluation as measured in the Workforce Engagement Survey.
	• Offer targeted capacity-building resources for the P&C Community based on the topics above. • Celebrate staff members and teams who exemplify CGIAR's culture through an annual CGIAR workplace awards program (CGIAR Oscars).	X	X	• Number of nominations received for Oscars by Center. • Work of winners is showcased and published.	
	• Support colleague communities and roundtables to positively inform CGIAR's workplace culture. • Share learnings from colleague communities and roundtables with P&C COP and CGIAR leadership to improve staff experience and culture.	X	X	Regularity of colleague communities meetings and active member involvement.	
	Build and continue to amplify CGIAR-wide campaigns and programs, e.g.: • Women and Girls in Science • International Women's Day • Wellness • Career Development • Embracing Differences • Caregiving	X	X	Staff participation in events and satisfaction scores.	

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Strengthen and expand the Culture & Engagement function to deliver a community-driven ecosystem across CGIAR.	Co-develop Guidelines for Centers and the System Organization to inform their own policies on: • Performance Management • Flexible Workplaces • Onboarding and Culture • Exit Interviews • Parental and Caregiving support	X	X	• Number of guidelines produced on the mentioned topics. • Number of guidelines adopted by Centers and the System Organization.	• Annually report on Workforce Engagement Survey progress trends. • Improved retention and promotion trends. • Annually publish a best practice guideline that details performance management approaches across CGIAR as a learning tool. • Improved capacity to accommodate a range of staff needs. • Improved perception of performance evaluation as measured in the Workforce Engagement Survey.
	Increase reach and availability of programs, resources and trainings: • Make training available on Learning Management Systems • Translation of key resources • Continue to offer diverse times and live interpretation of webinars • Continue to promote Mentoring and Connect programs • Scale Advance Together program	X	X	• Number of Centers and the System Organization that add training resources onto their own Learning Management Systems. • Increase in active membership in Mentoring and Connect programs.	

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Build a robust enterprise-wide approach to improved workplace wellbeing.	Continue to build on the CGIAR-wide staff wellbeing program with a comprehensive calendar of year-round events, informed by data-driven insights.	X	X	Number of wellbeing sessions delivered, attendance and overall participant feedback.	• Annually report on Workforce Engagement Survey progress trends. • Improved retention and promotion trends. • Annually publish a best practice guideline that details performance management approaches across CGIAR as a learning tool. • Improved capacity to accommodate a range of staff needs. • Improved perception of performance evaluation as measured in the Workforce Engagement Survey.
	Collaborate with Center and System Organization Health and Safety teams to evaluate facilities and infrastructure capacity in HQ locations to accommodate multi-dimensional staff, e.g. persons with disabilities, lavatory facilities, breast feeding rooms, creches etc.	X		Publication of a best practice dashboard detailing capacity available at CGIAR to accommodate a range of staff needs.	
	Co-develop a comprehensive stress and wellness mitigating training for managers and P&C staff (Mental Health First-Aider training program) to recognize signs of stress and burnout on an annual basis. This will allow staff to be directed to relevant professionals on a proactive basis.	X	X	Number of people trained in mental health first aid and their satisfaction scores.	
	Continue to support staff by providing free access to professional counselling services via the Rome Institute.	X	X	Number of counselling sessions provided to staff by the Rome Institute.	

OUTCOME 3
WORKFORCE REPRESENTATION

Through equitable recruitment, retention, and advancement, CGIAR works to reflect the world it serves with a sharp focus on workforce representation and talent analytics to enable data-based decisions and talent development.

Rationale

- The Workforce Engagement Survey responses call for more transparent, consistent and fairer recruitment processes.

- Using talent analytics to monitor workforce representation will augment assessment of recruitment trends and processes.

- Building a cross-system people data approach will improve data compatibility, accuracy and provide greater insights.

- Leveraging high-quality data for people and talent analytics provides a fact-based foundation to evaluate efficiency, enhance processes and positivitely impact employee retention and turnover, as current research indicates.

- Analyzing workforce sentiment will deliver key data insights to support Culture and Change Management.

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Deepen understanding of workforce data to uncover actionable insights, improving workforce dynamics.	Continue annual workforce data collection on: • Representation • Promotions • Turnover/ Separation	X	X	Publication of a comprehensive internal data dashboard covering all CGIAR Centers and the System Organization, incorporating newly collected data and self-reporting metrics.	Positive progress is measured in CGIAR's workforce data at a System Organization and Center level.
	Broaden workforce data to gain deeper insights into trends, focusing on areas such as: • Representation in the Integrated Partnership Board • Annual leave usage	X	X		
	Explore avenues to collect self-declared information, such as: • Disabilities • Skills • Experience	X	X		

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Deepen understanding of workforce data to uncover actionable insights, improving talent management processes.	Introduce co-developed Recruitment Guidelines to ICI (Integration, Coordination, Independence) as a standard process to increase recruitment effectiveness in attracting top talent.	X		The Recruitment Guidelines process becomes the common standard at CGIAR.	Positive progress is measured in CGIAR's workforce diversity at a System Organization and Center level.
	Staff composition analytics on the Science Portfolio and Accelerators to build balanced leadership to positively impact people, performance and management.	X	X	Representative staffing of Science Portfolio and Accelerators.	
	Gain an understanding of cross-Center and System Organization movement, tenure, and separation by leveraging the CGIAR 360 People Database.	X	X	Number of Centers and System Organization sharing data via CGIAR 360 People Database to enable accurate reporting and analysis.	
	Co-develop a proposal for a unified CGIAR approach to collecting exit data, aimed at enhancing cross-system separation analysis.	X	X	Number of Centers and System Organization adopting compatible exit data practices.	

OUTCOME 4
ACCOUNTABILITY

Everyone is held accountable to deliver CGIAR's vision, and support collaboration, continuous learning, service, and respect as critical components of how we look at ourselves and how we deliver our science.

Rationale

- Accountability is the bedrock of the Action Plan.

- Progress is continuously tracked and regularly reported to governance bodies and the public.

- C&E Index helps ensure Centers and the System Organization are delivering the Action Plan, and set a common standard across CGIAR.

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CGIAR governing bodies are fully informed on, and hold accountability for, C&E progress and future advancements.
 	
Senior leaders have clear accountability to improve collaboration and workplace culture to fuel innovation, and propel us toward our 2030 goals.
	• Seek endorsement on Action Plan and associated budget from DEMD and EMD.
	• Progress updates on metrics to be shared with DEMD, EMD, Integrated Partnership Board, System Council, to include:
	  ○ Annual report on CGIAR's workforce data
	  ○ Annual update on the C&E Index
	  ○ Annual update on Workforce Engagement survey findings
		X	X	• The C&E 2025-2027 Action Plan is fully resourced.
				
				• The DEMD, EMD, Integrated Partnership Board and System Council are regularly updated on progress as per the Action Plan.
					• Number of Centers and the System Organization meeting their commitments based on the C&E index.
					
					• Number of Centers and the System Organization that adopt the Culture Framework.
					
					• 2/3 year progress report shared with GLT, IPB, SC.

	Co-develop C&E Index as a mechanism to track current state and identify areas of progress at Centers and the System Organization on the Action Plan.	X	X	• C&E Index is co-developed with P&C CoP and further endorsed by GLT, IPB and SC. • Publication of the C&E Index covering all Centers and the System Organization.	
	C&E continues to engage with and support Audit and Evaluation, to enhance oversight by providing guidelines, information and updates as required.	X	X	The Audit and Evaluation functions consider the C&E lens while carrying out their mission.	

APPENDIX:
Glossary of Relevant Terms

Certain terms and concepts used in this document are defined below to ensure their shared understanding. These definitions draw on a number of sources.

"access" means the ability of a person or group to obtain needed resources and services, and is impacted by many factors including access to information and technology, power dynamics, gender and other diversity dimensions.

"attrition" means the rate at which an organization loses its workforce (see "retention").

"bias" means an attitude, habit, inclination or preference that interferes with impartial and objective judgment.

"CGIAR Center" or "CGIAR Centers," when used in this Action Plan and associated documents, refers to current and future CGIAR operating unit(s).

"Colleague Communities" are groups of individuals within workplaces who join together in a network, based on shared characteristics or life experiences to develop a sense of belonging.

"competencies" means the skills, attributes and/or behaviors, or combination thereof, directly related to successful performance on the job.

"disability" means visible or non-visible differences in abilities, inclusive of sensory, cognitive, emotional, and physical issues. Disability covers a wide range of different physical, psycho-social, sensory and/or intellectual impairments which may or may not affect a person's ability to carry out their day-to-day activities, including their jobs.

"diversity"/**"diversity dimensions"** means the variety of similarities and differences among people, including but not limited to: gender, gender identity, ethnicity, native or indigenous origin, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socio-economic difference, appearance, language and accent, disability, mental health, education, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role and function, staff position (covering hierarchy and national/international status), thinking style, and personality type.

"ethnicity" means a category of people who identify with each other, usually on the basis of a presumed common genealogy or ancestry or on similarities such as common language or dialect, history, society, culture or nation.

"gender" means a socially constructed system of classification that ascribes certain qualities of masculinity and femininity to people.

"inclusion" means a dynamic state of operating in which organizational culture is leveraged to create a welcoming, fair, healthy, and high-performing organization or community.

"inclusive language" is language that is free from words, phrases or tones that reflect prejudiced, stereotyped or discriminatory views of particular people or groups.

"nationality" means the nation of legal citizenship, as this is what is reported on in CGIAR workforce data. A person can hold multiple nationalities. While nationality may form a significant part of many people's identity, it is important to note that this is not necessarily the case for all (e.g. someone who was born in and has citizenship from a place they did not live in most of their lives.)

"performance management" means a set of activities that ensure goals are met in an effective and efficient manner. Performance management can focus on the performance of an organization, a department/ business unit, a workforce member, or the processes in place to manage particular tasks.

"retention" means the ability (or rate) of an organization to retain its workforce and their talents.

"talent management" means the process of nurturing, developing and retaining talent in the organization.

"values" means shared principles that underpin the work of an organization and guide the actions of its workforce.

"workforce" means individuals who have a contractual relationship with a CGIAR Entity, such as members of regular staff cadres, members of non- regular special assignments categories, holders of short-term contracts, holders of job-contracts, learner-participants and third-party contractors; regardless of their position, type of employment, or duty station.

"workforce engagement" means a workforce member's involvement with, commitment to, and satisfaction with work.

"workplace" means the locations within a CGIAR Entity at which workforce members complete duties, in line with CGIAR Center policies and practices, including those related to flexible and remote working.