Summary Report

Evaluation of Gender at the Workplace
Volume II of the Evaluation of Gender in CGIAR

APRIL 2017

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CGIAR

Independent
Evaluation
Arrangement

The Evaluation of Gender in CGIAR is the first independent, System-wide evaluation of gender in CGIAR. It is one of three, cross cutting, thematic evaluations commissioned by the Independent Evaluation Arrangement (IEA) in 2016.

The Evaluation of Gender in CGIAR covers both gender in research and gender at the workplace. The two dimensions were evaluated using different methodologies, and the results are published in two separate volumes of the Evaluation of Gender in CGIAR, Volume I on Gender in CGIAR Research and Volume II on Gender at the workplace.

This is the Summary Report of the *Evaluation of Gender at the Workplace* - Volume II of the *Evaluation of Gender in CGIAR*, commissioned by the Independent Evaluation Arrangement (IEA) of CGIAR.

Correct citation: CGIAR-IEA (2017), Evaluation of Gender in CGIAR – Volume II, Evaluation of Gender at workplace. Summary Report. Rome, Italy: Independent Evaluation Arrangement (IEA) of CGIAR

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BACKGROUND

System-level attention to Gender in the Workplace began with the founding of the CGIAR Gender Program in 1991. The program had two streams of work: one focusing on strengthening gender analysis in research, and the second on gender staffing with the aim of increasing the representation of women in scientific and leadership roles within CGIAR and the Centers. The program was comprehensive, developing knowledge and tools and working directly with Centers to help them strengthen the recruitment, advancement, and retention of women. At that time, women represented 12 percent of the internationally recruited staff.

In 1999, the two streams of work were separated, with the gender staffing component being integrated into the System-wide Gender and Diversity Program hosted at ICRAF in Nairobi. Under the Gender and Diversity program, the focus was broadened to include nationally-recruited staff, and more emphasis was placed on developing the pipeline of women scientists and senior administrators from economically developing countries. The mission was to "help research organizations leverage their rich staff diversity in order to increase research and management excellence". The Gender and Diversity Program aimed at helping "ensure that gender and diversity issues were fully integrated into the organization's activities, policies, and programs of the Centers. Examples included recruitment services, women's leadership courses, multicultural mentoring programs, and inclusive workplace policy models"[1]. The Gender and Diversity Program was closed in 2012 along with other System-wide programs as part of a System-wide reform within CGIAR. All of the published resources developed by the Gender Staffing Program and the Gender and Diversity Program, representing more than 50 Working Papers, are available through the CGIAR Library[2].

Since 2012, work on Gender at the Workplace has been largely devolved to the individual Centers, and has received limited attention at the System-level. The Human Resources Community of Practice is the only mechanism at the System-level for continuing to address gender and broader diversity issues in the workplace. The CGIAR Consortium Office (replaced by the current System Management Office) also produced annual performance reports on gender and diversity covering both research and staffing for the Fund Council since 2014. In 2014, at the request of the Fund Council, the Consortium Office also prepared a *CGIAR Consortium Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2016 – 2020* that was approved by the Consortium Board in 2015 but due to upcoming governance reform was never brought to the Fund Council.[3]

1 Wilde, V. (2012). CGIAR Gender and Diversity Program – Progress Report, 2010-2012. CGIAR Gender and Diversity Program. http://library.cgiar.org.

2 http://www.cgiar.org/consortium-news/gender-and-diversity-a-time-for-change. Resources available at http://library.cgiar.org/handle/10947/2515/browse?value=Gender+Diversity+Working+Papers&type=subject .

3 CGIAR Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2016-2020, October 2015. A first draft of the Gender and Diversity Strategy was submitted to the Fund Council in November 2014, at which time the Fund Council recommended that the strategy required considerable re-thinking regarding the overall approach and that further consultation across the Centres would be needed. A new version of the strategy was approved by the Consortium Board in October 2015 and was due to be approved by the May 2016 Fund Council but was not discussed at that meeting. (Michael Veltman, HR Director, CGIAR 7-20-16).

EVALUATION PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHODS

Evaluation Purpose

The *Evaluation of Gender in CGIAR* is the first independent, System-wide evaluation on this topic. The Evaluation was originally conceived as a single evaluation covering both gender in research and gender at the workplace. It was later recognized that these two dimensions, although contributing to the common objective of gender equity, relate to a distinct set of issues and actors, with different impact pathways making it conceptually difficult to treat them together. The two dimensions were therefore evaluated by different teams, using different methodologies, and the results are published in two separate volumes of the Evaluation of Gender in CGIAR: Volume I on Gender in CGIAR Research; and Volume II on Gender at the workplace. The two evaluations were conducted in parallel and findings and information were exchanged at key times during the evaluation process, leading to the formulation of a common recommendation (**see Recommendation 1** of both Volume I and Volume II of the *Evaluation of Gender in CGIAR*).

The main purposes of the Evaluation of Gender at the workplace are:

- **accountability** to the CGIAR System as a whole on progress made so far at System and Center levels in achieving gender diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace;
- **identification of lessons learnt and formulation of recommendations** with a view to making CGIAR and its Centers gender diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplaces that can attract top talent from around the world and harness the benefits of diversity to enhance organizational performance and delivery of mission[4].

Main stakeholders for this evaluation are the System Council, the System Management Board, and Center management, staff and Boards. Center Management will have primary responsibility to follow up on recommendations, while decisions and Recommendations targeting the System will be the responsibility of the System Council (upon recommendations of the System Management Board).

Evaluation scope, approach and methodology

The Evaluation of Gender at the workplace looked at profiles of, and trends in, the representation of men and women across different Centers and different roles and disciplines, drawing on a CGIAR Benchmark Survey from 2015; at human resources policies and practices; and at the organizational culture as well as decision-making structures and processes.

The Evaluation collected data and information using five methods: 1) document review; 2) survey of Human Resources Directors in 15 research Centers and Consortium Office; 3) a Workplace Perspectives Survey of staff from a subgroup of six Centers; 4) update of gender-disaggregated data on managerial, scientific, and professional employees; and 5) key informant interviews[5]. To examine changes in representation of men and women across staff categories, the evaluation drew on the 2008 survey carried out by the Gender and Diversity program, 2015 data on senior staff categories carried out by the CGIAR Consortium Office, and additional data collected from the Centers on representation across scientific levels. Given the lack of systematic use of performance indicators to measure progress on gender diversity, the Evaluation was not able to make comparisons or measure progress over time except in the area of representation.

4 As stated in Terms of Reference

5 Survey responses, both qualitative and quantitative, from HR Directors substituted for key informant interviews with these HR specialists.

MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Women currently represent 30 percent of leadership, managerial, scientific, and professional staff within CGIAR. However, at the senior management and senior and principal scientist levels, women only represent 21 percent. There is considerable variation among the Centers, with representation of women among scientists ranging from 17 to 40 percent, and from 5 to 39 percent among administrative leaders. Current overall representation represents an increase from 26 percent in 2008, but it is modest given that staffing at these levels almost doubled during this period.

While moderate progress has been made in increasing women's representation since 2008, particularly among Directors/Heads and at the lower ranks of scientists (Post-doctorates and Associate Scientists), women remain under-represented in professional, scientific, and leadership roles in the Centers at least to a moderate extent. Thirteen of the fifteen Human Resources Directors felt that women remain under-represented in the leadership roles in the Centers. In addition, almost 60 percent of staff responding to the *Workplace Perspectives Survey* perceive that women are under-represented in both informal leadership roles (e.g., those where women can have a leadership function without being formally designated such role) and formal leadership roles.

CGIAR has made a strong commitment to increasing the representation of women across all levels of the System and its Centers. This commitment is laudable and demonstrates the priority placed on enhancing gender diversity, equity, and inclusion. At the same time, CGIAR needs to revisit its goal of having 45 percent women across all professional roles and 50 percent in senior professional and management roles by 2020 (see **Recommendation 2b**)[6]. Meeting this goal would require a very high rate of increase of women in the Centers, which is a challenge especially given the constraints in supply of women scientists trained at the graduate level from economically developing countries. Setting the bar too high can discourage action and create a sense of insurmountable failure. An overall goal of 35 percent representation by 2020 would be a stretch goal, but could be attainable with focused efforts as outlined in the Evaluation report. Given the wide variation in women's representation across the Centers, defining appropriate targets at the Center level will need to take into account the current representation of women, and the supply of doctorate trained candidates in the major disciplines from which Centers recruit, and their geographical context.

To garner the full benefits of gender diversity as a means to enhance organizational performance, priority should be given to increasing the representation of women in groups that have the strongest bearing on the delivery of the Center's missions: a) senior leadership/management; and b) scientists and scientific leadership. This will require target-setting and proactive recruiting. Increasing the representation in these roles will provide an additional benefit of enhancing the recruitment of more junior women who want to see role models at higher levels in the organization and be confident that there are viable career paths for women to reach leadership positons (see **Recommendations 2b and 8**).

Recruitment and advancement

The Evaluation found that Centers are, by and large, managing the review and hiring processes in a manner that is equitable and mitigates discrimination. However, in general, the Centers are not taking a proactive approach to seeking out high quality female candidates and attracting them to the Centers. Nor are they actively communicating their positive attributes as mission-focused, high achieving, engaging and prestigious research organizations that are committed to cultivating a workplace that values diversity and fosters a culture of excellence where each staff member can contribute to his or her fullest potential. To move forward in enhancing gender equity, Centers need to be more proactive in recruiting women.

6 CGIAR Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, 2016-2020. pp 9

They should also build a wider net of partnerships with universities, and research and development organizations that have strong representation of women, and women's professional associations to strengthen the pipeline of female talent. Finally, Centers should ensure that managers have the knowledge and skills to mitigate subtle unconscious bias in the hiring process (see **Recommendations 5 and 8**).

As with recruitment, policies that reinforce equity in performance assessment and promotion are well established. Areas for improvement include target setting for women's representation at higher levels in staff positions and regular monitoring of promotions and career progression for men compared to women to ensure equity of opportunity and fairness. Centers need a more intentional approach to developing women leaders. The analysis carried out by the Evaluation shows that attention should be given to strengthening women's opportunities for mentoring, networking, substantive coaching, and professional development. Managers also need to increase their awareness of how unconscious bias can impact their assessments of competence and decision-making on promotions (see **Recommendations 5 and 8**).

Retention

Senior Leaders and Managers included in the 'Workplace Perspectives Survey' as well as Human Resources Directors in all Centers believe they are doing quite well in retaining male and female talent and, in general, do not see higher attrition rates for women. However, the responses from the 'Workplace Perspectives Survey' reveal a more complex picture, with almost 38 percent of the respondents indicating an intent to leave, and a higher percentage of women considering leaving, and for different reasons than those cited by men. It is important that Centers continue to be vigilant about monitoring attrition and have sound systems in place to analyse patterns of attrition for men and women across different staff categories as well as their reasons for leaving (see **Recommendation 9**). The data shows that interventions to retain women will be quite different from those that will be meaningful to men. Women's retention is influenced by their perception of opportunities for career advancement and access to coaching, mentoring, and professional development as well as their perceptions of their Center's commitment to fostering gender equity and inclusion in the workplace. Family issues, such as lack of spouse employment opportunities and schooling opportunities for children, do not appear to be influencing women's retention more than men's.

Fostering a work culture and environment that supports gender diversity, equity, and inclusion

Most Centers have successfully mainstreamed policies and practices to create work environments that are safe, hospitable, family friendly, and supportive of staff in balancing their work and personal life responsibilities. In the majority of Centers, the senior leadership is seen as committed to fostering gender diversity and equity. However, that commitment is not perceived to be systematically communicated nor consistently modelled (see **Recommendation 9**).

The evaluation found a significant gap between the values espoused and policies established and actual practice at the managerial and operational levels. The gap in practice is attributed primarily to:

1. the lack of attention to developing and communicating a strong and motivating case for how gender diversity enhances organizational performance as well as explicit strategies and performance indicators for change;
2. limited use of proactive approaches to recruitment and professional development of women;
3. managers' dearth of knowledge and skills in working effectively with diversity; and

4. lack of explicit attention to the more intangible area of creating an organizational culture that strengthens inclusion of women in the workplace.

To address these issues, CGIAR needs to expand from its focus on equity and representation to include a stronger focus on the value of diversity and its contribution to organizational effectiveness. If diverse perspectives are not valued, intentionally harnessed, and brought to bear on the work, the positive benefits for organizational performance will not be fully realized.

The analysis shows that Centers should invest more time, energy, resources and systematic attention to creating gender inclusive work environments. Men's and Senior Leaders/Managers' experiences and perceptions of inclusion are significantly more positive in almost all dimensions than those of women, and women scientists are the least positive in their assessments. This suggests that considerably more work needs to be done to cultivate workplaces in which women feel fully included, respected, and their perspectives valued. In particular, Centers need to examine the extent to which women are included in systems of influence and decision-making and take corrective action if these are found wanting (see **Recommendation 9**).

Finally, Centers have invested very little in training managers, team and project leaders, and employees about diversity and the skills required to harness the full benefits of diversity at the workplace. CGIAR, and the Centers individually, need to give priority to investing in training to raise awareness, build knowledge, and develop skills for managing diverse work groups successfully (see **Recommendation 5**). These skills are critical if Centers are to be able to increase diversity in their staff, maximize the benefits of diversity for organizational performance, and move to a level of excellence in terms of diversity and inclusion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To reinvigorate and strengthen CGIAR's capacity to strengthen gender diversity, equity, and inclusion and reap its full benefits for organizational performance, the Evaluation makes nine recommendations that span System and Center levels. The recommendations are summarized below:

System-Level Recommendations

- **Recommendation 1.**
  High-level CGIAR Vision statement on gender equity. The System Council should adopt a high-level Vision Statement on Gender Equity, covering both gender in research and gender in the workplace.
- **Recommendation 2.**
  Revised CGIAR Strategy. The System Management Board should require that the 2015 CGIAR Diversity and Inclusion Strategy be revised in light of the findings and recommendations of the 2016 IEA Evaluation and the changes in governance structure of the CGIAR System. It is recommended that the new strategy focus explicitly on gender diversity and adopt a more proactive, diversity management, organizational effectiveness approach to supplement the predominantly affirmative action/anti-discrimination approach of the 2015 Strategy. The new strategy should set targets for gender representation across major staff categories and define a core set of key performance indicators to be used uniformly across the Centers and rolled up to provide a System-wide picture.
- **Recommendation 3.**
  Strengthened Organizational Infrastructure and Funding. To make progress, CGIAR needs to reinstate the organizational infrastructure, processes and mechanisms to advance gender diversity, equity,

and inclusion. This should include: a "Gender "Champion" on the System Management Board; a Task Force, supported by a consultant, to revise and update the 2015 CGIAR Diversity and Inclusion Strategy; the hiring of a Gender at the Workplace Senior Advisor to provide expert advice and support to the System Management Board and individual Centers; and the reestablishment of the Gender at Work Focal Points in the Centers to assist their Senior Administration move their strategy forward. Recognizing constraints to unrestricted funding in CGIAR, the infrastructure should be lean and funded through a partial allocation from central unrestricted funds as well as contributions from all Centers and bilateral donors committed to advancing gender diversity, equity, and inclusion in the CGIAR workplaces as a means to improve organizational effectiveness.

◊ Recommendation 4.

Community of Practice. A new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Community of Practice should be established to enable members, drawn from both the Center and System levels, to stay current with the field, share knowledge and best practices, collectively maintain a web-based resource and communication hub.

◊ Recommendation 5.

System-wide Training Program. A comprehensive System-wide Training Program for working with diversity and implicit bias should be developed and customized for CGIAR. The training program should develop knowledge and skills for managing and leveraging diversity in work groups as well as managing implicit or unconscious bias in managerial decision-making.

◊ Recommendation 6.

Monitoring Mechanism. The System Management Board should require reporting from the Centers every two years to the System Management Board on progress against the key performance indicators defined in the Gender and Diversity Policy and the System-Level Gender at the Workplace Strategy as well as a compilation of innovative experiences or lessons learned in advancing gender diversity.

Center-Level Recommendations

◊ Recommendation 7.

Center Case and Strategy. All Centers should develop a compelling case outlining the benefits of gender diversity for their organizational performance in terms of its mission, strategic goals, workplace efficacy and impact within one year of the approval of the System-level policy and strategy.

◊ Recommendation 8.

Proactive Attention to Strengthening Diversity and Inclusion. Centers should move beyond policies to take a more proactive and systematic approach to strengthening diversity and inclusion. Particular emphasis should be given to proactive mobilization of female candidates in recruitment, particularly at the leadership and scientist levels.

◊ Recommendation 9.

Strengthen Work Culture of Inclusion. Centers should prioritize building inclusive workplaces by ensuring that Senior Leaders and Managers communicate systematically and regularly their commitment to fostering gender diversity and inclusion, take critical steps to strengthen inclusion, and assess progress every two years to determine whether they are closing the gap between men's and women's experiences of inclusion in the Centers. The findings and resulting action items should be shared with the Center Board.

For more information, please visit: iea.cgiar.org